

FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 12 September 2024. Minute of Meeting of the FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor McLellan, Convener; and Councillors Allard, Brooks, Cooke, Delaney (as substitute for Councillor Yuill), Farquhar, Greig, Malik and Watson.

The agenda and reports associated with this minute can be found [here](#).

Please note that if any changes are made to this minute at the point of approval, these will be outlined in the subsequent minute and this document will not be retrospectively altered.

DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT BUSINESS

1. The Convener proposed that the Committee consider item 14.1 (Operation of a Future Aberdeen eBike Hire Scheme), item 15.1 (Condition and Suitability 3 Year Programme – Exempt Appendices) and item 15.2 (Work Plan and Business Cases – Exempt Appendices) with the press and public excluded from the meeting.

The Committee resolved:-

in terms of Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the above items so as to avoid disclosure of information of the classes described in the following paragraph of Schedule 7(A) to the Act:- articles 15, 16 and 17 (paragraph 8).

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS

2. Members were requested to intimate any declarations of interest or transparency statements in respect of the items on today's agenda, thereafter the following were intimated:-

- (1) Councillor Cooke advised that he had a connection in relation to agenda item 8.1 (City Centre and Beach Masterplan – Annual Update) by virtue of him being an observer on Sport Aberdeen Board. Having applied the objective test, he did not consider that he had an interest and would not be withdrawing from the meeting; and
- (2) Councillor Malik advised that he had a connection in relation to agenda item 9.1 (Capital Programme Delivery: Projects Update) by virtue of him being the Captain of Bon Accord Cricket Club. Having applied the objective test, he did not consider that he had an interest and would not be withdrawing from the meeting.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 7 AUGUST 2024

3. The Committee had before it the minute of meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee of 7 August 2024.

The Committee resolved:-

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to approve the minute.

COMMITTEE PLANNER

4. The Committee had before it the Committee Business Planner prepared by the Interim Chief Officer - Governance.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note the reasons for deferral in relation to item 6 (District Heating – Network Expansion/Waste Heat Utilisation (City Centre Link), item 9 (Fleet Replacement Programme (Annual Report) and item 13 (School Estate Plan: Denominational Primary Schools);
- (ii) to note the reason for transferring item 13 (Housing Revenue 30 Year Account Business Plan) to the Council Planner;
- (iii) to remove item 23 (Denis Law Trail) for the reason outlined within the planner; and
- (iv) to otherwise note the Committee Planner.

NOTICE OF MOTION BY COUNCILLOR KUSZNIR

5. The Committee had before it a Notice of Motion by Councillor Kuzsnir in the following terms:-

that the Committee –

- (1) note the resignation of the Rt Hon Humza Yousaf MSP as First Minister of Scotland;
- (2) consider that as First Minister Humza Yousaf spent little time in Aberdeen beyond attending SNP Conference and never formally met with the Council Co-Leaders; and
- (3) therefore agree to instruct the Chief Executive to write to the new First Minister of Scotland:-
 - (i) reconfirming the Council's willingness to work with the devolved administration in delivering projects of benefit to the people of Aberdeen;
 - (ii) outlining the contribution of Aberdeen to Scotland and the UK's economy;
 - (iii) noting the historic underfunding of Aberdeen City Council by Holyrood and calling for remedial action; and
 - (iv) asking them to meet with the Co-Leaders at the earliest opportunity, given the failure of both previous First Ministers to meet the Co-Leaders.

Councillor Kuzsnir moved his motion and explained the rationale behind it and was seconded by Councillor Farquhar.

Councillor Allard, seconded by Councillor Greig, moved as an amendment:-

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that the Committee –

- (1) note that the Co-Leaders wrote to the Prime Minister, Sir Keir Starmer MP, making the case to locate GB Energy's headquarters in Aberdeen;
- (2) note Chief Executive, Angela Scott, also wrote to Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, the Rt Hon Ed Miliband MP, reinforcing that it is the view of Aberdeen City Council that GB Energy should be headquartered in Aberdeen (see attached);
- (3) acknowledge the response received from UK Government's Minister for Energy, Michael Shanks MP, from within the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) (see attached);
- (4) agree that Aberdeen, with its offshore engineering expertise, concentration of supply chain companies, world class Universities, and highly skilled work force, is the only sensible option for the UK Government to locate the headquarters of GB Energy; and
- (5) instruct the Chief Executive, Angela Scott, to write to UK Government's Minister for Energy, Michael Shanks MP, inviting him to meet with Co-Leaders and Opposition Group Leaders, and any other relevant stakeholders the Chief Executive may deem appropriate, so the case for Aberdeen can be made directly to the Minister, to ensure the UK Government make the right decision and locate GB Energy in Aberdeen.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) note that the Co-Leaders wrote to the Prime Minister, Sir Keir Starmer MP, making the case to locate GB Energy's headquarters in Aberdeen (see attached);
- (ii) note that the Chief Executive, Angela Scott, also wrote to Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, the Rt Hon Ed Miliband MP, reinforcing that it is the view of Aberdeen City Council that GB Energy should be headquartered in Aberdeen (see attached);
- (iii) acknowledge the response received from UK Government's Minister for Energy, Michael Shanks MP, from within the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) (see attached);
- (iv) agree that Aberdeen, with its offshore engineering expertise, concentration of supply chain companies, world class Universities, and highly skilled work force, is the only sensible option for the UK Government to locate the headquarters of GB Energy;
- (v) instruct the Chief Executive, Angela Scott, to write to UK Government's Minister for Energy, Michael Shanks MP, inviting him to meet with Co-Leaders and Opposition Group Leaders, and any other relevant stakeholders the Chief Executive may deem appropriate, so the case for Aberdeen can be made directly to the Minister, to ensure the UK Government make the right decision and locate GB Energy in Aberdeen; and
- (vi) agree to instruct the Chief Executive to write to the new First Minister of Scotland:-
 - (a) reconfirming the Council's willingness to work with the devolved administration in delivering projects of benefit to the people of Aberdeen; and
 - (b) outlining the contribution of Aberdeen to Scotland and the UK's economy.

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NOTICE OF MOTION BY COUNCILLOR KUSZNIR

6. The Committee were advised that the Notice of Motion had been withdrawn by Councillor Kuszniir following the circulation of this [Service Update](#).

CITY CENTRE AND BEACH MASTERPLAN – ANNUAL UPDATE - CR&E/24/231 - REFERRED FROM COUNCIL ON 21 AUGUST 2024

7. The Committee had before it by way of a referral from Council on 21 August 2024, a report by the Director of City Regeneration and Environment, which provided an annual update on the City Centre and Beach Masterplan.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the progress made to advance a wide range of projects contained within the City Centre and Beach Masterplan (Appendix 1);
- (b) agree that Officers report future activity and updates on projects through the Council's Capital Planning process through the Finance & Resources Committee;
- (c) note, in relation to city centre mobility and accessibility, the roundtable meeting hosted by the Co-Leaders with key stakeholders in July 2024, and instruct the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to arrange for a programme of similar roundtable meetings with key stakeholders, in addition to the ongoing regular Masterplan engagement and consultation programme;
- (d) agree the need for continued understanding of perceptions, insights, attitudes and experiences on City Centre Masterplan objectives, particularly around mobility and accessibility, and instruct the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to use Bus Lane Enforcement surplus (capped at £20,000) to set up a professionally facilitated bi-annual focus group to collect data on opinions and personal experiences on this topic; and
- (e) in relation to the Beach, and in line with the Budget decisions taken by Council in March 2024, note the update provided in paragraphs 3.5 - 3.6 and agree that the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning pause the preparation of a Development Framework for the Beach Phase 2 area, until such a time as additional resources can be identified through future Budget setting processes.

The Convener, seconded by Councillor Greig, moved:-

that the Committee approve the recommendations contained within the report.

Councillor Malik, seconded by Councillor Watson, moved as an amendment:-

that the Committee –

- (1) note the contents of the report;
- (2) note that it's the view of the Labour Group that the Finance and Resource Committee have no powers to overrule a decision of Council and therefore

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- recommendation 2.2 contained within the report cannot be agreed at this meeting;
- (3) agree that it was the SNP Councillor Hutchison who proposed matters relating to the Masterplan be sent to full Council rather than Finance and Resources Committee, therefore agrees the status quo position on reporting until Council determines otherwise;
 - (4) agree the SNP Administration has got itself into a complete mess with the City Centre and Beach Masterplan undoing all the good work of the previous administration which worked with citizens, business organisations, cross party to deliver for the people of Aberdeen;
 - (5) agree this SNP Administration excel in bringing forward reports such as George Street mini masterplan but fail to provide the money for implementation;
 - (6) agree to suspend Standing Order 42 (Altering Previous Decisions) and thereafter agree to no longer proceed with the Queen Street Urban Park and reallocate that money within the agreed Masterplan; and
 - (7) agree that, to give certainty to the public of Aberdeen, budgets where available for each of the projects outlined in appendix 1 must be presented to members via the 2025/26 budget process.

Councillor Farquhar, seconded by Councillor Brooks, moved as an amendment:-
that the Committee –

- (1) approve the recommendations contained within the report;
- (2) agree to explore the option for removal of the amphitheatre from phase one of the Beach Masterplan and to report this back to the Committee; and
- (3) direct savings from this towards the plan to rebuild the Beach Leisure Centre.

In terms of Standing Order 29.20, a vote was taken between the two amendments.

On a division, there voted:- for the amendment by Councillor Malik (2) – Councillors Malik and Watson; for the amendment by Councillor Farquhar (2) – Councillors Brooks and Farquhar; declined to vote (5) – the Convener and Councillors Allard, Cooke, Delaney and Greig.

As there was a tied vote, in terms of Standing Order 32.7, the Convener had the casting vote, however in terms of Standing Order 32.7.1, the Convener chose not to exercise his casting vote, therefore the Clerk advised that a ‘toss of a coin’ would be the method to decide the outcome of the tied vote. Following which, the amendment by Councillor Malik was successful and would be put to the vote against the motion.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (5) – the Convener and Councillors Allard, Cooke, Delaney and Greig; for the amendment by Councillor Malik (2) – Councillors Malik and Watson; declined to vote (2) Councillors Brooks and Farquhar.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to adopt the motion; and

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- (ii) to note that the Masterplan Manager would circulate to members, the link to the Generation Aberdeen website showing details of the successful application.

ABERDEEN MARKET - JULY 2024 UPDATE - F&C/24/207 - REFERRED FROM COUNCIL ON 21 AUGUST 2024

8. The Committee had before it by way of a referral from Council on 21 August 2024, a report by the Director of Families and Communities, which provided an update on the progress with the redevelopment of the site as 91 – 93 Union Street and 3 – 6 Market Street..

The report recommended:-

that the Committee note the report and the updated risk section in relation to progress with the Project.

The Convener, seconded by Councillor Greig, moved:-

that the Committee approve the recommendation contained within the report.

Councillor Malik, seconded by Councillor Watson, moved as an amendment:-

that the Committee –

- (1) note the recommendation; and
- (2) Agree before any signoff of Lease that the Chief Officer - Finance brings forward a report to ensure that the Council and its Auditors are satisfied regarding the following:-
 - (a) Strength of financial covenant;
 - (b) A Summary of the Financial aspects of the Lease, showing what has been agreed;
 - (c) Proposed Guarantees if any;
 - (d) Cost to Council on any upkeep costs;
 - (e) Service charge agreement if any; and
 - (f) Quarterly updates on the construction costs of the project to the Finance and Resources Committee.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (5) – the Convener and Councillors Allard, Cooke, Delaney and Greig; for the amendment (4) – Councillors Brooks, Farquhar, Malik and Watson.

The Committee resolved:-

to adopt the motion.

TRANSPARENCY STATEMENT

At this juncture, Councillor Cooke advised that he had a connection in relation to the following item by virtue of him being a Council appointed

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observer on the Sport Aberdeen Board. Having applied the objective test, he did not consider that he had an interest and would not be withdrawing from the meeting.

CAPITAL PROGRAMME DELIVERY: PROJECTS UPDATE - CR&E/24/273

9. With reference to article 9 of the minute of meeting of 15 March 2024, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of City Regeneration and Environment which (1) summarised the general progress of delivery of key capital expenditure projects identified within the approved Capital Programme from the General Fund and Housing Revenue Accounts; (2) highlighted those issues considered worthy of particular note which were specific to individual programmes/projects; and (3) incorporated a review of any recent reprofiling of the General Fund Capital Programme, which had been carried out to take account of any current project related factors.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the status of delivery of the Section 3.0 highlighted programmes/projects contained within the approved Capital Programmes
- (b) note that the report aligns with the Council Budget report COM/24/061 as reported on 6 March 2024 to Council, and the Q1 update report to Finance & Resources committee on 7 August 2024 (CORS/24/223);
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer – Finance to vire the necessary monies from the General Fund Capital Programme as shown in Appendix B; and
- (d) note that, following the virement as indicated in Appendix B, the General Fund Capital Programme budget spend has not increased.

The Convener, seconded by Councillor Greig, moved:-

that the Committee approve the recommendations contained within the report.

Councillor Malik, seconded by Councillor Watson, moved as an amendment:-

that the Committee –

- (1) note the recommendations contained within the report;
- (2) agree once again the SNP are robbing “Peter” to pay “Paul” highlighting the inability of the Finance and Resources Committee Convener to understand his brief;
- (3) agree any further money required for Bucksburn Pool is a matter for Sport Aberdeen, therefore instructs the Executive Director of Corporate Services to enter into discussions with Sport Aberdeen in relation to providing a total budget for this project to the Council budget setting process in 2025/26;
- (4) agree that the three Schools mentioned within the report, namely Countesswells, Greyhope School and Riverbank, were all commissioned by the previous Administration;
- (5) agree the Press Release issued by the Council on 1st March 2023, which suggested that Bucksburn Pool was required for Bucksburn School, was

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- false and asks the Chief Executive to publicly apologise to members and the public for issuing a false press release;
- (6) agree the SNP has let pupils, parents and guardians down by its failure to fulfil its promise to deliver free school meals for p6 and p7 children. Agree that the proposal to take £2m from the expansion of free school meals fund and put it towards Ferryhill School suitability improvements shows the SNP in its true light as political imposters; and
 - (7) agree not to vire money for the Bucksburn Pool and to ask the Executive Director of City Regeneration and Environment to bring a report as part of the budget process in 25/26 to allow elected members to determine their position.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (5) – the Convener and Councillors Allard, Cooke, Delaney and Greig; for the amendment (4) – Councillors Brooks, Farquhar, Malik and Watson.

The Committee resolved:-

to adopt the motion.

TRANSPARENCY STATEMENT

At this juncture, Councillor Greig advised that he had a connection in relation to the following item by virtue of him being a Council appointed member on the Aberdeen Performing Arts Board. Having applied the objective test, he did not consider that he had an interest and would not be withdrawing from the meeting.

COMMON GOOD BUDGET REVIEW - CORS/24/272

10. With reference to article 4 of the minute of meeting of the Council of 6 March 2024, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Corporate Services, which responded to an instruction for the Chief Officer - Finance to carry out a review of the Common Good budget, and the grant application criteria, and to report to the Finance and Resources Committee by September 2024.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the draft 2025/26 Common Good Budget detailed in Appendix 1; and
- (b) approve the amended grant application criteria detailed in section 3.20.

The Convener, seconded by Councillor Greig, moved:-

that the Committee –

- (1) note the draft 2025/26 Common Good Budget detailed in Appendix 1;

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- (2) note the proposal from officers to amend the grant application criteria, as detailed in section 3.20; and
- (3) agree to maintain the status quo and reject the amended grant application criteria as detailed in section 3.20 of the report.

Councillor Malik, seconded by Councillor Watson, moved as an amendment:-
that the Committee –

- (1) note the draft 2025/26 Common Good Budget detailed in Appendix 1; and agree that the SNP are using the Common Good for items that would normally come out of the General Revenue Account;
- (2) agree that using almost £1.6m to cover park and shrubbery maintenance means that those organisations that require a grant from the Common Good will be unable to obtain a grant as the money will have gone to cover parks and shrubbery rather than going to good causes such as those involved in anti-poverty; and
- (3) agree to maintain the status quo and reject the amended grant application criteria as detailed in section 3.20 of the report.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (5) – the Convener and Councillors Allard, Cooke, Delaney and Greig; for the amendment (4) – Councillors Brooks, Farquhar, Malik and Watson.

The Committee resolved:-
to adopt the motion.

FAIR TAX MARK - CORS/24/271

11. With reference to article 6 of the minute of meeting of 30 January 2024, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Corporate Services which responded to an instruction for the Chief Officer - Finance following consultation with the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord and the Head of Commercial and Procurement Services to bring a report back to the Committee on the implications of implementing a Notice of Motion by Councillor Thomson regarding the promotion by the Council of the Fair Tax Mark certification.

The report recommended:-
that the Committee –

- (a) note the Fair Tax Mark accreditation application process as detailed at paragraph 3.3 and the current monitoring processes of existing exclusion criteria detailed in paragraph 3.8 of the report; and
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer - Commercial & Procurement Services to insert clauses into the Council's formal tender documentation that

The Committee resolved:-
(i) to approve the recommendations; and

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- (ii) to note that the Chief Officer – Commercial and Procurement Services would circulate the response from the Federation of Small Businesses regarding their view of the Fair Tax Mark to members of the Committee and Councillor Thomson.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK REPORT - CORS/24/268

12. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Corporate Services which provided details of the status of key operational performance measures and activity indicators relating to those Functions and Clusters within the remit of the Finance and Resources Committee at conclusion of Quarter 1 2024.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee note the report and provide comments and observations on the performance information contained in the report Appendix.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the performance information contained in the report Appendix.

CONDITION & SUITABILITY 3 YEAR PROGRAMME - F&C/24/283

13. With reference to article 9 of the minute of meeting of 13 September 2023, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Families and Communities, which sought approval of an updated 3-year Condition and Suitability (C&S) Programme.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the projects completed or legally committed to date in 2024/25 as shown in Appendix A;
- (b) note the currently approved projects and approves the amended estimated budgets for each project as shown in Appendix B;
- (c) approve the new projects listed in Appendix C for inclusion in the Condition & Suitability Programme, approves the estimated budget for each project, and delegates authority to the Chief Officer - Capital, following consultation with the Chief Officer - Commercial and Procurement Services, to: consider and approve procurement business cases for each of these projects for the purposes of Procurement Regulation 4.1.1.2; and thereafter to procure appropriate works and services, and enter into any contracts necessary for the projects without the need for further approval from any other Committee of the Council;
- (d) approve the removal of the projects listed in Appendix D; and
- (e) delegate authority to the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord, following consultation with the Capital Board and the Convener and Vice-Convener of this Committee, to amend the C&S Programme should priorities change due to unforeseen circumstances during the year, with such changes to be reported retrospectively to the Committee.

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The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

WORK PLAN AND BUSINESS CASES - CORS/24/260

14. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Corporate Services which presented procurement work plans where expenditure was included for the Corporate Services, City Regeneration & Environment and Families and Communities Functions to Committee for review and sought approval of the total estimated expenditure for the proposed contracts as contained in the Procurement Business Cases appended to the report.

The Procurement Business Cases were for the following:-

- AVC's Salary Sacrifice;
- Waste Collection Management System
- Mechanical, Electrical & Plumbing Works;
- Quantity Surveying Consultancy Services;
- Roads Services Framework;
- Automated Taps Corporate Offices; and
- Funeral Services 2024-28

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) review the workplan as detailed in the Appendices for the Corporate Services, City Regeneration & Environment and Families and Communities Functions;
- (b) approve the procurement business cases, including the total estimated expenditure for the proposed contract; and
- (c) note the content of Appendix 3 – 3.10 Memo Approvals.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

In accordance with the decision taken at Article 1 of this minute, the following items were considered with the press and public excluded.

OPERATION OF A FUTURE ABERDEEN EBIKE HIRE SCHEME - CR&E/24/275

15. With reference to article 12 of the minute of meeting of the Committee of 8 May 2024, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of City Regeneration and Environment which sought approval to progress a procurement exercise for a future eBike hire scheme in Aberdeen based upon the recommended option.

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The report recommended:-

that the Committee instruct the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to undertake a procurement exercise to identify a private partner to enter into a public/private partnership model with the Council to deliver a new eBike hire scheme for the city, with public funding to support the programme identified as being taken from the Bus Lane Enforcement surplus.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendation.

CONDITION & SUITABILITY 3 YEAR PROGRAMME - EXEMPT APPENDICES

16. The Committee had before it for consideration exempt appendices relating to the Condition and Suitability 3 Year Programme report. (Article 13 of this minute refers)

The Committee resolved:-

to note the information contained within the exempt appendices.

WORK PLAN AND BUSINESS CASES - EXEMPT APPENDICES

17. The Committee had before it for consideration, exempt appendices relating to the Work Plan and Business Cases report. (Article 14 of this minute refers)

The Committee resolved:-

to note the information contained within the exempt appendices.

- **COUNCILLOR ALEX MCLELLAN, Convener**