

URGENT BUSINESS COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 20 March 2020. Minute of Meeting of the URGENT BUSINESS COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Laing, Convener; Councillor Lumsden, Vice Convener; and Councillors Boulton, Cameron (as substitute for Councillor Jackie Dunbar), Grant, Houghton, McRae, Alex Nicoll and Yuill.

The agenda 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 Council minute and this document will not be retrospectively altered.

DETERMINATION OF URGENT BUSINESS

1. In terms of Section 1.3 of the Committee Remit and in accordance with Section 50B(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the Committee was informed that it had to determine (1) that the items 4 to 9 on the agenda were of an urgent nature; and (2) that the Committee required to consider the items and take decisions thereon.

The Committee resolved:-

to agree that items 4 to 9 on the agenda were of an urgent nature and required to be considered this day to enable the Committee to consider the matter at the earliest available opportunity and take decisions thereon.

DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT BUSINESS

2. The Committee was requested to determine that the item 9 (Workplans and Business Cases - Exempt Appendices) of business, which had been identified as containing exempt information as described in Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, be considered in private.

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 item 9 so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the classes described in paragraph 8 of Schedule 7A to the Act.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3. The following declaration of interest was intimated:

Councillor Boulton declared an interest in relation to the item 6 (Financial Resilience – COVID19) on the agenda by virtue of being a Council appointed members of Aberdeen Performing Arts, but chose to remain in the meeting as Aberdeen Performing Arts was a body being a company established wholly or mainly for the purpose of providing services to the local authority, and which had

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entered into a contractual arrangement with the local authority for the supply of goods and/or services to the local authority, as set out in paragraph 5.18(2)(d)(i) and (ii) of the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

COVID-19 UPDATE - VERBAL UPDATE

4. The Committee received a verbal update from the Chief Executive regarding the current position in respect of Covid-19, wherein she advised of the role of public bodies in respect of health epidemics and explained that the Grampian Local Resilience Partnership (LRP) had been activated with NHS Grampian leading the response, following the Infectious Disease Plan. In addition, the Council's own resilience structures had been activated (CMT, Tactical and Operations) and provided an overview of the measures implemented to date. She also advised that given the dynamism situation further measures would be taken as appropriate and Members would be kept informed accordingly.

The Chief Executives expressed thanks for the large amount of offers of support from the public to the Council and other partners and explained that consideration was being given how to mobilise this goodwill. She also thanked all group leaders for their cross-party support, as well as to Council staff who were described as exemplary.

The Committee resolved:

- (i) to note the verbal update from the Chief Executive in relation to COVID-19; and
- (ii) to commend and thank all staff for their exemplary response to the situation to date.

GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS - COVID-19 - GOV/20/076

5. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer of Governance which presented recommendations to facilitate and enable decision-making in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and UK and Scottish Government advice for people to restrict social contact.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee -

- (a) agrees that all Full Council, Committee, Sub-Committee and Working Group meetings be cancelled from 23 March to 21 August 2020 (inclusive), with the exception of the:-
 - Planning Development Management Committee;
 - Appointments Panel; and
 - the Sub-Committees listed in recommendations (d) and (e) below;
- (b) agrees that Urgent Business Committee meetings be arranged between 23 March and 21 August 2020, as required, to determine business of an urgent nature which might otherwise have been reported to Full Council, other Committee or Sub-Committee meetings;

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- (c) revises the membership of the Urgent Business Committee from 9 members to members, consisting of each Group Leader;
- (d) appoints a Convener to the Appeals Sub-Committee and confirms the membership number for the Sub-Committee as 5 members with a quorum of 3, noting that the pool of Members would be drawn from the membership of the Staff Governance Committee on the basis that names could be provided to the Chief Officer - Governance after the meeting and that he be authorised to finalise membership where required;
- (e) in respect of the following Sub-Committees: (1) appoints a Convener; (2) confirms the membership number for each as 5; and (3) sets a composition and appoints members on the basis that names could be provided to the Chief Officer Governance after the meeting and that he be authorised to finalise membership where required:-
 - Business Rates Appeals;
 - Community Asset Transfer; and
 - Licensing;
- (f) approves a new temporary Standing Order 16 with immediate effect (with the existing Standing Order 16 becoming Standing Order 17 and so on) as contained within paragraph 4.1 of the report, and instructs the Chief Officer - Governance to make the relevant amendments to Standing Orders as a result of this change, and agrees that the temporary Standing Order be reviewed by the Urgent Business Committee in accordance with recommendation (h) below;
- (g) agrees to amend the Powers Delegated to Officers - General Delegations to Chief Officers 33 (regarding Duty Emergency Response Coordinator), and Chief Executive 1 (regarding emergencies etc) - and approve an additional General Delegation to Chief Officers, all as outlined within paragraph 5.2 of the report with immediate effect; and
- (h) notes that the Urgent Business Committee would review whether Full Council, Committee, Sub-Committee and Working Group meetings should proceed from 24 August 2020 and delegates authority to the Chief Officer – Governance to determine any necessary arrangements.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to approve recommendations (b), (f), (g) and (h) as contained above;
- (ii) to agree that all Full Council, Committee, Sub-Committee and Working Group meetings be cancelled from 23 March to 21 August 2020 (inclusive), with the exception of the Planning Development Management Committee, Appeals Sub-Committee, Business Rates Appeals Sub-Committee, Community Asset Transfer Review Sub-Committee and Licensing Sub-Committee;
- (iii) to revise the membership of the Urgent Business Committee from 9 members to 5 members, with a composition of 1 (Aberdeen Labour) +1 (Conservative) +1 (Independent Alliance) +1 (Liberal Democrat) +1(SNP) and agreed to keep this under review from the next meeting of Urgent Business Committee;
- (iv) to appoint Councillor Allan as Convener to the Appeals Sub-Committee and confirms the membership number for the Sub-Committee as 5 members with a quorum of 3, noting that the pool of Members would be drawn from the membership of the Staff Governance Committee and that names be provided to

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- the Chief Officer - Governance after the meeting and that he be authorised to finalise membership where required; and
- (v) to agree the appointments of Conveners, membership number and compositions for appoints for the Sub-Committees as set out in the table below and that names be provided to the Chief Officer - Governance after the meeting and that he be authorised to finalise membership where required;

Sub Committee	Membership Number	Composition	Convener
Business Rates Appeals	5	3 Administration, 2 Opposition	Councillor Lumsden
Community Asset Transfer	5	3 Administration, 2 Opposition	Councillor Houghton
Licensing	5	3 Administration, 2 Opposition	Councillor Boulton

FINANCE RESILIENCE - COVID-19 - RES/20/077

6. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer of Finance which described the initial financial measures the Council was putting in place to support the resilience of the city, by supporting the financial resilience of the cities businesses as well as individuals, citizens and families. In addition, the report considered the financial resilience of the council, the group family and our supply chain during the constantly changing and evolving operating environment.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee -

- (a) note the Financial Resilience Plan at Appendix 1;
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer - Customer Experience to implement the relief / grant schemes announced for businesses in line with Scottish Government guidance;
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer – Customer Experience to suspend new recovery activity for unpaid debts across all Council accounts i.e. Council Tax, rents, sundry debts, for businesses and individuals until 1 May 2020, and delegate authority to the Chief Officer – Finance to extend this suspension, following consultation with the Convener of the City Growth and Resources Committee, should circumstances require it;
- (d) instruct the Chief Officer – Customer Experience to delay Non-Domestic Rates annual billing as appropriate, following consultation with Convener of the City Growth and Resources Committee;
- (e) instruct the Chief Officer – Customer Experience to provide businesses with flexible payment terms on Non-Domestic Rates and sundry debts as appropriate, following consultation with Convener of the City Growth and Resources Committee;

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- (f) delegate authority to the Chief Officer – Finance to, following consultation with the Convener of the City Growth and Resources Committee, take any necessary steps to support the Council Group entities and Tier 1 ALEOs;
- (g) instruct the Chief Officer – Finance to prepare a report for the Urgent Business Committee on proposals for use of the additional funding expected to be received by the Council, as part of the Scottish Government support to Communities announcement; and
- (h) instruct the Chief Executive, through the CMT Strategic Group, to monitor the development of, and the actions arising out of the financial resilience plan at Appendix 1, and for the Chief Officer – Finance to report as appropriate to the Urgent Business Committee.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to approve recommendations (a), (b), (d), (e), (f), (g) and (h) as contained above; and
- (ii) to instruct the Chief Officer – Customer Experience as appropriate to suspend new recovery activity for unpaid debts across all Council accounts i.e. Council Tax, rents, sundry debts, for businesses and individuals until 1 May 2020, and delegate authority to the Chief Officer – Finance to extend this suspension, following consultation with the Convener of the City Growth and Resources Committee, should circumstances require it.

UPDATES TO SPECIAL LEAVE POLICY - RES/20/073

7. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer of Organisational Development which sought approval to make changes to the Special Leave Policy to add a provision for 5 days paid leave for Cadet Force Adult Volunteers as part of the Council's commitment to staff who support the Armed Forces, and to add a provision offering employees contractual pay for Parental Bereavement leave.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee -

- (a) approve the addition of 5 days paid leave for Cadet Force Adult Volunteers within our workforce into the Special Leave Policy;
- (b) approve the provision of offering employees contractual pay for Parental Bereavement leave; and
- (c) thereby approve the amended Special Leave Policy as attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

WORKPLANS AND BUSINESS CASES - COM/20/078

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8. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Operating Officer which presented procurement workplans where revenue expenditure was included for the Operations Function to Committee for review and sought approval of the total estimated revenue expenditure for each proposed contract as contained at item 9 of the agenda.

The list of procurement business cases was as follows:-

Reference	Cluster	Business Case
OPS086	Integrated Children and Family Services	Secure Care Framework Agreement
OPS087	Operations & Protective Services	Horticultural Supplies
OPS089	Operations & Protective Services	Public Toilets Servicing
OPS090	Operations & Protective Services	Green Space Infrastructure

The report recommended:-

that Committee –

- (a) to note the workplans of the Operations function as detailed in the appendices;
- (b) to approve each of the individual procurement business cases, including the estimated revenue expenditure for each proposed contract; and to approve the direct awards of contract where there were special circumstances outlined in the each of the respect procurement business cases which justified not issuing a tender or calling off a framework agreement:-
 - OPS086
 - OPS087
 - OPS089
 - OPS090

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

In accordance with the decision recorded under article 2 of this minute, the following item of business was considered with the press and public excluded.

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WORKPLANS AND BUSINESS CASES - EXEMPT APPENDICES IN RELATION TO ITEM 8

9. The Committee had before it exempt appendices relating to the Workplans and Business Cases Revenue report on the agenda (article 8 of this minute refers).

The Committee resolved:-
to note the exempt appendices.

- **COUNCILLOR JENNIFER LAING, Convener.**

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