

**MINUTES of MEETING of POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE held in the COUNCIL
CHAMBERS, KILMORY, LOCHGILPHEAD
on THURSDAY, 29 OCTOBER 2015**

Present:

Councillor Dick Walsh (Chair)

Councillor Rory Colville	Councillor Ellen Morton
Councillor Robin Currie	Councillor James Robb
Councillor Roderick McCuish	Councillor Len Scoullar
Councillor Iain Stewart MacLean	Councillor Isobel Strong
Councillor Aileen Morton	Councillor Sandy Taylor

Also Present:

Councillor Michael Breslin	Councillor D MacMillan
Councillor Neil Macintyre	Councillor Elaine Robertson

Attending:

Sally Loudon, Chief Executive
Douglas Hendry, Executive Director of Customer Services
Pippa Milne, Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure Services
Patricia O'Neill, Central Governance Manager
Kirsty Flanagan, Head of Strategic Finance
Jane Fowler, Head of Improvement and HR
Anne MacColl-Smith, Procurement and Commissioning Manager
Fergus Walker, Revenue and Benefits Manager
Fergus Murray, Head of Economic Development and Strategic Transportation
Ishabel Bremner, Economic Development Manager

The Executive Director of Customer Services advised of a request from Councillor Michael Breslin, under Standing Order 22.1, to speak and vote in relation to item 15 of the agenda (Update of Sale of Castle Toward Estate) as the matter had a direct impact on his ward. The Chair granted his request.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mary Jean Devon, Donald Kelly, Alistair MacDougall, Gary Mulvaney and Douglas Philand.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none intimated.

3. MINUTES

(a) Policy and Resources Committee held on 20 August 2015

The Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 20 August 2015 were approved as a correct record.

(b) Special Policy and Resources Committee held on 8 October 2015

The Minutes of the Special Policy and Resources Committee held on 8 October 2015 were approved as a correct record.

4. FINANCIAL REPORTING 2015/16 - MONITORING PACK - AUGUST 2015

The Committee considered a report providing a summary of the financial monitoring reports as at the end of August 2015.

Decision

The Committee –

1. Noted the Revenue Budget Monitoring Report as at 31 August 2015.
2. Noted the current assessment of the Council's financial risks.
3. Noted the overall level of reserves and balances and noted the monitoring of the earmarked reserves.
4. Noted the Capital Plan Monitoring Report as at 31 August 2015.
5. Noted the Treasury Monitoring Report as 31 August 2015.

(Ref: Report by Head of Strategic Finance dated 16 October 2015, submitted)

5. MODERN APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the Council's position with regards to the implementation of the Council's position with regards to the implementation of the Council's Modern Apprenticeship Scheme since its launch in July 2014.

Decision

The Committee –

1. Noted the progress of the report and the implementation of the Council's Modern Apprenticeship Scheme, including the promotional activities.
2. Noted the position with the number of apprentices appointed and their progress and achievements to date.
3. Noted the current situation with regards to the numbers of eligible applicants.
4. Agreed that a further 25 Modern Apprenticeship opportunities will be created by the Council in the next year.
5. Agreed to offer assistance with obtaining a drivers licence for eligible Modern Apprentices, by funding 5 driving lessons each.
6. Agreed to extend the age criteria for Modern Apprentices from 16-19 to 16-24.
7. Noted that the costs will be met from existing departmental budgets.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director – Customer Services dated 29 September 2015, submitted)

6. RECOGNITION OF NHS SERVICE

The Committee considered a report which recommended that the Council recognises NHS continuous service for service related entitlements such as annual leave and occupational sick pay, but not for statutory employment rights.

Decision

1. Approved the recommendation that the Council approves recognition of NHS Scotland employment as continuous service for service related entitlements.

The report has been discussed with the Trade Unions and the TU Liaison meeting on 4 September and this is proposed with their full support. A collective agreement will be drawn up by HR and Tus to formulise the change to the Council's conditions of service.

2. Recognition is effective from 1 January 2016 and will apply to existing employees of Argyll and Bute Council with continuous service with NHS Scotland and any new employees joining the Council from that date.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director – Customer Services dated 30 September 2015, submitted)

7. EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Committee considered a report which sought approval of the Argyll and Bute Council Employee Engagement Strategy which is informed by consultation and engagement with the Joint Trade Unions, management teams and uses information gathered from employees through the employee surveys that have been carried out.

Decision

The Committee approved the Employee Engagement Strategy for implementation.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director – Customer Services dated September 2015, submitted)

8. COMMUNITY BENEFITS CLAUSES IN PROCUREMENT GUIDE

The Committee considered a report which sought approval for a revised version of the Community Benefits Clauses in Procurement Guide.

Decision

The Committee approved the revised guide to Community Benefits Clauses in Procurement as detailed in Appendix 1 and the upgraded guidance for tenderers as detailed in Appendix 2 of the submitted report.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director – Customer Services dated 7 October 2015, submitted)

9. UPDATE ON COUNCIL'S SUPPLIER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the Supplier Development Programme work to date and provided information on future proposals to support the local supply base of Argyll and Bute.

Decision

The Committee noted the detail provided in the report and agreed to the proposals to augment this by holding quarterly procurement surgeries across the Council area to supplement the work of the Supplier Development Programme.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director – Customer Services dated 7 October 2015, submitted)

10. SPSO CONSULTATION ON SCOTTISH WELFARE FUND

The Committee considered a report which advised that the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) launched a consultation on 4 September 2015 to help inform the way they will approach and manage reviews about Scottish Welfare fund decisions. The consultation sets out a draft statement of practices which closes on 27 November 2015.

Decision

The Committee approved the draft response as detailed in Appendix 1 to the submitted report for submission by the deadline of 27 November 2015.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director – Customer Services dated 12 October 2015, submitted)

11. MONITORING OF GRANTS TO THE THIRD SECTOR 2014/15

The Committee considered a recommendation by the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee with regard to the allocation of Third Sector Grants which is outwith the delegation of the Area Committee.

Motion

That the Policy and Resources Committee:-

1. Without prejudice recognise the exceptional weather circumstances that resulted in the cancellation of the entire Helensburgh Highland Games and partial abandonment of the Rosneath Highland Games and agrees:-
 - a) that grant recipients provide evidence to the council of the costs incurred due to losses, to enable the amount of “unspent grant” to be determined in each case;
 - b) a variation to the contract with both community organisations to allow them to carry forward these ‘unspent grant’ funds to 2016/17;
 - c) the organisation provide an assurance that the event is planned to take place in 2016/17. In the event that the organisation cannot provide an assurance, that ‘unspent grant’ is refunded.
2. Allow the Area Committee to carry forward any Third Sector Grant balances in excess of the 10% of the total available.
3. Delegate Officers to review the contract conditions in terms of unspent grant money.

Moved Councillor Dick Walsh, seconded Councillor Ellen Morton.

Amendment

1. That in terms of third sector grant contracts, the cost of cancellation, in part or whole, of an event is an allowable cost.

2. Allow the Area Committee to carry forward any Third Sector Grant balances in excess of the 10% of the total available.

Moved Councillor James Robb, seconded Councillor Sandy Taylor.

Decision

Following a show of hands vote the Motion was carried by 7 votes to 4 and the Committee resolved accordingly.

(Ref: Recommendation by the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee of 11 August 2015 and reports to that Committee, submitted)

12. POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE WORK PLAN AS AT OCTOBER 2015

The Committee considered the Policy and Resources Work Plan as at October 2015.

Decision

The Committee noted the updated Work Plan.

(Ref: Policy and Resources Work Plan dated October 2015, submitted)

The Committee noted that, in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the Appendices of the following item of business contained exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 8 & 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

13. LORN ARC - UPDATE REPORT AS AT 21 SEPTEMBER 2015

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on progress in delivering the Lorn Arc Tax Incremental Financing Programme led by Development and Infrastructure Services. The Highlight report outlined the current position of the three most immediate projects and on key issues that will impact on the successful delivery of the projects from development stage through to procurement and implementation.

Decision

The Committee:-

- (a) Noted the current progress with the Lorn Arc Programme.
- (b) Approved the rescheduling of the quarterly update to coincide with the capital regeneration projects quarterly update schedule.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director – Development and Infrastructure Services dated 13 October 2015, submitted.)

The Committee resolved in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the public for the following item of business on the grounds that it was likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 & 8; and 8 & 9 respectively of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

* **14. ARGYLL AND BUTE EMPLOYABILITY TEAM - OPTIONS FOR FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY**

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the financial sustainability of the Argyll and Bute Employability Team and the associated contractual obligations of the team into 2016/17 and 2017/18.

Motion

Councillor Dick Walsh moved a motion which was seconded by Councillor Ellen Morton.

Councillor James Robb who had moved an amendment which failed to find a seconder requested that his dissent be recorded from the foregoing Motion.

Amendment

Councillor Sandy Taylor moved an amendment which was seconded by Councillor Iain MacLean.

Decision

On a show of hands vote the Motion which included a recommendation to Council was carried by 7 votes to 4 and the Committee resolved accordingly.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director – Development and Infrastructure Services dated 29 October 2015, submitted)

15. UPDATE OF SALE OF CASTLE TOWARD ESTATE

The Committee considered a report updating them on the progress in relation to the sale of Castle Toward.

Decision

The Committee noted the content of the report.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Customer Services dated 19 October 2015, submitted)