

Committee Minutes

The City of Edinburgh Council

Year 2007/2008

Meeting 4 – Thursday 23 August 2007

Edinburgh, 23 August 2007 - At a meeting of The City of Edinburgh Council.

Present:-

LORD PROVOST

The Right Honourable George Grubb

COUNCILLORS

Elaine Aitken
Ewan Aitken
Robert C Aldridge
Jeremy R Balfour
Eric Barry
David Beckett
Angela Blacklock
Mike Bridgman
Deidre Brock
Gordon Buchan
Tom Buchanan
Steve Burgess
Andrew Burns
Ronald Cairns
Steve Cardownie
Maggie Chapman
Maureen M Child
Jennifer A Dawe
Charles Dundas
Paul G Edie
Nick Elliott-Cannon
Paul Godzik
Norma Hart
Stephen Hawkins
Ricky Henderson
Lesley Hinds
Allan G Jackson
Alison Johnstone
Colin Keir

Louise Lang
Jim Lowrie
Gordon Mackenzie
Kate Mackenzie
Marilyne A MacLaren
Elizabeth Maginnis
Mark McInnes
Stuart Roy McIvor
Tim McKay
Eric Milligan
Elaine Morris
Joanna Mowat
Rob Munn
Gordon J Munro
Ian Murray
Alastair Paisley
Gary Peacock
Ian Perry
Cameron Rose
Jason G Rust
Conor Snowden
Marjorie Thomas
Joanna Toomey
Stefan Tymkewycz
Phil Wheeler
Iain Whyte
Donald Wilson
Norrie Work

1 Requests for Deputations

(a) Children and Families Estate Review: Rationalisation and Development Programme

Requests for deputations on the proposed review of the Children and Families property estate (see item 3 below) had been received from:

- Malcolm Chisholm, MSP
- Nigel Griffiths, MP
- St Catherine's Parent Council
- Burdiehouse Primary Parents and Children
- Gorgie War Memorial Hall
- Craigentenny Primary School Parents/Drummond Community High School
- St Cuthbert's RC Primary School

In terms of Standing Order 62(3), Councillor Mrs MacLaren, seconded by Councillor Aldridge, moved that the deputations be not heard.

Voting

The requisite number of members having so required in terms of Standing Order 31(1), the vote was taken by calling the roll.

The voting was as follows:

Not to hear the deputations:

Lord Provost Grubb, Councillors Aldridge, Beckett, Bridgman, Brock, Buchanan, Cairns, Cardownie, Dawe, Dundas, Edie, Elliott-Cannon, Hawkins, Keir, Lang, Lowrie, Gordon Mackenzie, Mrs MacLaren, Mclvor, McKay, Morris, Munn, Peacock, Snowden, Thomas, Toomey, Tymkewycz, Wheeler and Work – 29.

To hear the deputations:

Councillors Elaine Aitken, Ewan Aitken, Balfour, Barry, Blacklock, Buchan, Burgess, Burns, Chapman, Child, Godzik, Hart, Henderson, Hinds, Jackson, Johnstone, Kate MacKenzie, Maginnis, McInnes, Milligan, Mowat, Munro, Murray, Paisley, Perry, Rose, Rust, Whyte and Wilson – 29.

There being an equal number of votes for and against hearing of the deputations, the Lord Provost used his casting vote against hearing of the deputations.

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Decision

Not to hear the deputations.

(References – list of deputation requests, submitted).

(b) Forth Tunnel Action Group (Forthtag) – Forth Crossing

John Carson and Keith Giblett explained that Forthtag had been formed to create public awareness of a serious alternative to a bridge for a second Forth crossing. The deputation urged the Council to support a proposal for an Immersed Tube Tunnel under the Forth west of Rosyth in preference to another bridge at South Queensferry. It was their view that a tunnel would prove a more cost effective option, enable the provision of high quality public transport links and increase connectivity between Scotland's major cities.

(Reference – e-mail from Forthtag dated 11 July 2007, submitted.)

(c) Save Glenogle Baths Group – Refurbishment of Glenogle Swim Centre

Linda Wilson presented a petition containing approximately 8,500 signatures in support of the campaign to conserve and maintain Glenogle Baths in their present form.

Linda Wilson explained that the group had been formed in response to concerns about the future of Glenogle Baths, because of the shortfall in funding to allow completion of the Council's programme to refurbish old Victorian facilities. She stressed that Glenogle was a valuable facility for the whole community and urged the Council:

- To make a clear commitment to maintaining the baths and keeping them open whilst investigating funding options for refurbishment works.
- To give a commitment to ensure Glenogle Baths were reinstated in the Council's Capital Investment Programme.
- To investigate funding options with external partners as proposed in the report to be considered later on the agenda (see item 19 below).

(Reference – e-mail dated 18 July 2007, submitted.)

(d) Sure Start Projects – Budget Issues

Jane Tecelli and colleagues referred to the implications for Sure Start Projects of the proposed measures to balance the budget of the Children and Families Department, which were to be considered by the Council (see item 17 below). These projects covered a wide range of issues, made an enormous difference to the lives of the most vulnerable people in

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the city and were more cost-effective than later intervention. The Council heard from two students who had attended childcare courses; each spoke of an increase in confidence and self esteem as a result of their involvement and the benefit this had brought to their children. The deputation therefore asked the Council to continue to fund these very important projects.

(Reference – e-mail dated 16 August 2007, submitted)

(e) Independent Review of Sports Facilities

The Council heard from representatives of Trinity Community Council, the Save Meadowbank Campaign, Craigentenny Community Council and Sighthill, Broomhouse and Parkhead Community Council on the report of the Chair of the Independent Working Group on the Review of Sports Facilities in the City (see item 2 below).

The deputations expressed concern over the recommendations in the report which did not represent the views of the majority of the review group. The Save Meadowbank Campaign had arranged two public meetings which had shown clear support for the Campaign's view that the Council should refurbish the existing facilities at Meadowbank and cancel the Sighthill project. The deputations therefore asked the Council to take account of the views of the public and of the majority of the review group.

(References – e-mails dated 21 August 2007 from Trinity Community Council and Save Meadowbank Campaign and letter from Craigentenny Community Council; e-mail dated 22 August 2007 from Sighthill, Broomhouse and Parkhead Community Council.

(f) UNISON – Budget Issues

George Lee, John Ross and Nancy Kelly referred to the report which the Council was due to consider on the Revenue Budget (see item 17 below). The deputation expressed disappointment that the Council had failed to consult the trade unions on the proposals in the report. The proposals were finance-driven not service-driven and, whilst UNISON recognised the severity of the Council's financial position, the Council should recognise that members were proud of the services they provided. The depth of feeling of members was shown by the thousands of members on strike because of the proposals. UNISON asked the Council to consider other options to make savings and to hold meaningful dialogue with the trade unions.

2 Independent Review of Sports Facilities

The Report of the Chair of the Independent Working Group on the Review of Meadowbank Sports Centre and Provision of Sports Facilities in the City was presented. The report detailed the Chair's conclusions and recommendations, together with dissensions from them by members of the review group.

The Chair recommended:

- Support for the proposals for the Royal Commonwealth Pool;
- A 'best option' for the sports facility which was the rebuilding of a modern stadium on the land at Meadowbank; and
- A 'second best option' for the sports facility, only to be considered after the Council had fully re-examined its funding options and failed to find alternative means, which favoured the sale of the Meadowbank site for housing and the building of a new stadium at Sighthill.

The Council had heard a number of deputations on this issue (see item 1(e) above).

Motion

- 1) To record the Council's appreciation of the sterling work of Terry Christie and the Independent Working Group on the review of Meadowbank Sports Centre and Provision of Sports Facilities in the City.
- 2) To agree that an athletics track and sports complex should remain at Meadowbank.
- 3) To note that Terry Christie's "best option" was to demolish the present Meadowbank Stadium and site a new sporting arena at Meadowbank.
- 4) To reaffirm the Council's commitment to upgrading the Royal Commonwealth Pool to provide a national/regional facility for swimming and diving.
- 5) To undertake full local consultation on what sports facilities were needed in the west of the city.
- 6) To ask the Chief Executive to complete a further report and present it to Council within two cycles on:
 - a) the proposals to refurbish and upgrade the existing facility at Meadowbank;

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- b) the feasibility of providing a new athletics track, 2,000 capacity seated stadium and associated sports facilities also at Meadowbank; and
- c) all funding options and possibilities in respect of a) and b) above.

- moved by Councillor Brock, seconded by Councillor Thomas.

Amendment 1

- 1) To note the work of the Independent Working Group on the Future of Meadowbank Sports Centre and the Provision of Sporting Facilities in Edinburgh and specifically the report of the independent Chair of the Group, Terry Christie.
- 2) To welcome the contribution of this report to the on-going debate on providing sports facilities in Edinburgh and to note the options outlined in Terry Christie's report.
- 3) In response to the report, to express the belief that the Council should immediately and urgently investigate the possibility of financing the delivery of these facilities on the Meadowbank site with **sport**Scotland and the Scottish Executive. Yet, to recognise that significant on-going delay would increase the cost of the project and that of the linked Royal Commonwealth Pool upgrade further.
- 4) To express a strong belief that there was a real need for Scotland's capital city to provide world-class sporting facilities and that any future proposals brought forward by the Council should at the very least provide minimum national sporting standards for the range of sports currently catered for at Meadowbank.

- moved by Councillor Godzik, second by Councillor Ewan Aitken (on behalf of the Labour Group).

Amendment 2

- 1) To thank Terry Christie and all those involved in the consultation and production of the Independent Review report for their efforts and for the input from all those interested in the debate.
- 2) To note the Chair's report and the opinions contained within.

Funding

- 3) To note that the Royal Commonwealth Pool refurbishment was required for the Commonwealth Games bid being pursued by the City of Glasgow, was of national and international importance and was a commitment that Edinburgh had given to support that bid.

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- 4) To note the significant shortfalls associated with all the schemes detailed in the Chair's report.
- 5) To note the pitiful level of financial support provided by national government for sporting facilities that were supposed to be of national and regional importance.
- 6) To seek an urgent meeting with the Minister for Communities and Sport to request a significant increase in the financial contribution from central government to provide facilities in line with national sports policy and befitting Scotland's capital city.
- 7) To call on **sportScotland** to commit immediately to release to the Council, for the purposes of upgrading the Royal Commonwealth Pool, the £6m which was originally designated to the aborted projects to provide a velodrome and football barn at Hunter's Hall Park.

Options

- 8) To reject the option contained within the Chair's report that suggested building a new stadium at the Sighthill site without providing any retained sports facilities on the Meadowbank site.
- 9) To reject the option of a refurbishment of the current Meadowbank building as it would be an inefficient use of public funds and would be unable to achieve modern sporting standards.
- 10) To call for a further option of a hybrid solution which would create new regional-level sporting facilities on part of the Meadowbank site.
- 11) To call for a report in one cycle to provide updated costs for all options along with suggestions as to how the funding gaps identified could be resolved.
- 12) To instruct the Director of Corporate Services to seek partnerships or sponsorship agreements with private sector interests to help deliver suitable sporting facilities for the city and thus reduce the costs to the Council Tax payer.
- 13) To insist that any proposal selected by the Council had as part of its business plan a full repairing maintenance regime and to investigate the possibility of achieving this through long term leases of the building(s) to Edinburgh Leisure.
- 14) To develop a long term strategy for sports facility provision across the city.

- moved by Councillor Buchan, seconded by Councillor Elaine Aitken (on behalf of the Conservative Group).

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Amendment 3

- 1) To express regret that the report was that of the Chair of the Working Group and did not fully reflect the majority view of the Group.
- 2) To agree that it was inappropriate for a Chair to repeatedly and strongly express an opinion.
- 3) To recognise that the majority of presentations to the Working Group were focused on a rebuild at Sighthill, with no detailed consideration given to refurbishment options, or indeed any options that did not involve obtaining maximum capital receipts from the Meadowbank site.
- 4) To note that information requested by the Working Group had yet to be provided.
- 5) To agree that the sale of public assets such as Meadowbank and the development of greenfield sites, ie Sighthill, was unsustainable.
- 6) To request detailed information and costings for refurbishment of the Meadowbank site.
- 7) To note that Berlin stadium built for the 1936 Olympics was successfully upgraded for last year's World Cup, that Stockholm Stadium built for the 1912 Olympics, the 1932 Los Angeles stadium and the 1952 Helsinki arena were still in use and were prominent features of their cities, and to agree to preserve and enhance this historic Scottish sporting venue.

- moved by Councillor Johnstone, seconded by Councillor Burgess.

Voting

In a first vote between the motion and the amendments, the voting was as follows:

For the motion	-	29 votes
For amendment 1	-	15 votes
For amendment 2	-	11 votes
For amendment 3	-	3 votes

As there was no clear majority, amendment 3 which had received the fewest votes fell and, in a second vote, the voting between the motion and amendments 1 and 2 was as follows:

For the motion	-	29 votes
For amendment 1	-	15 votes
For amendment 2	-	11 votes

Decision

To approve the motion by Councillor Brock.

(References – Act of Council No 1 of 26 April 2007; report no CEC/59/07-08/CS by the Director of Corporate Services, submitted.)

Declaration of Interests

Councillors Godzik and Whyte declared a non-financial interest in the above item as Directors of Edinburgh Leisure.

3 Children and Families Estate Review: Rationalisation and Development Programme

The Council's Smart School Initiative had delivered significant investment in the school and care estate through the management of the estate to align the number of school places with demand in parts of the city.

In response to the continued need to manage the supply of educational and care facilities to ensure the delivery of best value, a framework was set out for the review of the entire Children and Families property estate. The framework described a number of establishments which were proposed for closure and approval was sought for the scope of the proposed rationalisation programme.

Arrangements for consultation on the proposals were outlined, including a process for dealing with deputation requests.

Motion

- 1) To note the report by the Director of Children and Families and the requirement to deliver a series of savings for implementation over the period 2007-2010.
- 2) To approve the scope of the Children and Families estate rationalisation and development programme as detailed in the Director's report and at Appendix 1 to the report.
- 3) To call for the first tranche of detailed consultation papers for each proposal to be presented to the Education, Children and Families Committee on 28 August 2007 for approval to consult.

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- 4) To assume, for the purposes of the consultation, that the date for the closure of the six early years establishments be the end of the 2007/08 school year rather than January 2008, unless, during consultation, a different outcome was agreed.
- 5) To retain the income generated from the surplus sites associated with this project for reinvestment into buildings and supporting services for Children and Families.
- 6) To note the intention to invite each community affected by the rationalisation programme to bring an extended deputation to a meeting of the Education, Children and Families Committee on a phased basis and to authorise the Council Secretary to direct organisations making requests for deputations to this arrangement.

- moved by Councillor Mrs MacLaren, seconded by Councillor Beckett.

Amendment

- 1) Not to agree the proposed programme of school and community centre closures and to reject the scope of the Children and Families estate rationalisation and development programme as set out in the report by the Director of Children and Families.
- 2) To note that the proposals could lead to the re-establishment of numerous school annexes across the city after years had been spent trying to minimise the number of portakabin classrooms and split sites.
- 3) To agree that the plan was inadequate on several grounds, ie:
 - failure to provide full information on the flows of children to schools other than their district school;
 - failure to take proper account of parental wishes with regard to school choice;
 - failure to take account of potential flows indicated by unmet placing requests.
- 4) To note very recent press comments (Friday, August 17 2007) by the Executive Member for Education, Children and Families and the Director respectively:
 - “the closures were for educational, not financial, reasons”;
 - “we are not being driven by finance and savings”.

Yet, whilst accepting that finance was not the driving force, the current report indicated (which was welcome) that any savings made would be

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reinvested in services for Children and Families but did not say where the reinvestment would take place nor when.

- 5) To note that several elements of Conservative policy, if implemented, would give a far greater indication of which schools were unviable given the choices made by parents, would allow the city's most popular and successful schools to expand and thrive and would give greater access to popular schools to children of all backgrounds regardless of the affordability of housing in those catchment areas.
- 6) To note that falling school rolls were partly the result of failing to make Edinburgh family-friendly, particularly with regard to the provision of affordable housing and to agree that this could be addressed by making Edinburgh a city which offered an attractive environment for families to live in by tackling congestion and pollution, protecting and enhancing the city's green spaces and making the streets safer places to work and play in.
- 7) To note that sustainable communities existed where homes, workplaces and schools were as close together as possible and to ask whether the Council had studied the impact on pollution and congestion on the city from longer journeys caused by the proposals and that higher travel costs would cause hardship to those on low incomes.
- 8) To acknowledge that hearing from up to eight deputations on one day would prohibit genuine consultation.
- 9) To note that the consultation period for two nursery schools would begin in 10 days time, allowing little time for parents and children involved to prepare a case.
- 10) Therefore, to abandon the proposed rationalisation programme and request a new set of proposals which:
 - a) rectified the failures listed in paragraph 3 above, and on which the Council could consult, to be reported to a future meeting of the Council; and
 - b) included a commitment to retain any income generated from surplus sites to reinvest in improvements to the school estate, including the expansion of popular and high achieving schools where technically and educationally feasible.
- 11) To instigate meaningful dialogue with all interested and concerned parties before bringing any such proposals to the Council for decision.

- moved by Councillor Burns (on behalf of the Labour Group), seconded by Councillor Johnstone.

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Voting

The voting was as follows:

For the motion - 29 votes
For the amendment - 29 votes

There being an equal number of votes for the motion and the amendment, the Lord Provost used his casting vote in favour of the motion.

Decision

To approve the motion by Councillor Mrs MacLaren.

(References – Acts of Council No 8 of 21 December 2006 and No 1 of 23 August 2007; report no CEC/51/07-08/C&F by the Director of Children and Families; letter dated 22 August 2007 from Mark Lazarowicz MP; e-mail dated 23 August 2007 from Stockbridge Primary School, submitted.)

4 Questions

Questions put by members to this meeting, written answers and supplementary questions and answers, are contained in Appendix 1 to this minute.

5 Minutes

Decision

To approve the minute of the meeting of the Council of 28 June 2007, as submitted, as a correct record subject to an amendment to Appendix 3 to replace Councillor Rust with Councillor Rose in the membership of the Finance and Resources Committee.

Adjournment – At this point the Lord Provost adjourned the meeting while the Executive Committees and the Audit Committee met to appoint their Conveners and Vice-Conveners.

7 Appointment of Policy and Strategy Committee

Decision

To appoint members to serve on the Policy and Strategy Committee in accordance with the political balance approved by the Council on 28 June 2007:

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5 Scottish Liberal Democrat, 4 Scottish National Party, 4 Labour, 3 Conservative, 1 Green

- Leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrat Group (Councillor Dawe)
- Convener of the Health, Social Care and Housing Committee (Councillor Edie)
- Convener of the Finance and Resources Committee (Councillor Gordon Mackenzie)
- Convener of the Education, Children and Families Committee (Councillor Mrs MacLaren)
- Convener of the Transport, Infrastructure and Environment Committee (Councillor Wheeler)
- Convener of the Culture and Leisure Committee (Councillor Brock)
- Convener of the Economic Development Committee (Councillor Buchanan)
- Leader of the SNP Group (Councillor Cardownie)
- Councillor Munn
- Leader of the Labour Group (Councillor Ewan Aitken)
- Councillor Blacklock
- Councillor Hinds
- Councillor Murray
- Councillor Jackson
- Councillor McInnes
- Leader of the Conservative Group (Councillor Whyte)
- (Nominee of the Green Group) Councillor Johnstone

(References – Act of Council No 12 of 28 June 2007; report no CEC/63/07-08/CS by the Director of Corporate Services, submitted.)

Adjournment – At this point the Lord Provost adjourned the meeting while the Policy and Strategy Committee met to appoint its Convener and Vice-Convener.

7 Appointment to the Personnel Appeals Committee

Decision

To appoint Councillor Toomey to the Personnel Appeals Committee in place of Councillor Gordon Mackenzie.

(References – Act of Council No 2 of 24 May 2007; report no CEC/64/07-08/CS by the Director of Corporate Services, submitted.)

8 Social Work Complaints Review Committee

The Council was responsible for appointing a pool of independent volunteers to serve on the Social Work Complaints Review Committee. They were selected for their knowledge of social work services and/or experience of similar committees. New members were last appointed in December 2002. Following a recent interview process, the Council was invited to appoint additional members to the Committee.

Decision

To add the following to membership of the pool of members for the Social Work Complaints Review Committee, subject to a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure check:

- Anne Black
- Jean Downie (from 21 October 2007)
- Donald Ness
- Maureen Macmillan
- Gail Mainland
- Linda Veitch.

(References – Act of Council No 2(b) of 24 May 2007; report no CEC./65/07-08/CS by the Director of Corporate Services, submitted.)

9 NHS Lothian – Nomination

An invitation had been received from the Chair of NHS Lothian for the Council to nominate a member to its Board. Scottish Executive guidance asked local authorities to nominate either their Leader, Deputy Leader or the senior member with responsibility for public health related issues.

Decision

To note the action taken in terms of Standing Order 91 by the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to nominate Councillor Edie to the Board of NHS Lothian.

(Reference – report no CEC/37/07-08/CE by the Chief Executive, submitted.)

Declaration of Interests

Councillors Edie and Whyte declared a financial interest in the above item as Directors of NHS Lothian.

10 Leader's Report

The Leader presented her report to the Council. The following issues were raised:

- | | | |
|------------------------|---|---|
| Councillor Ewan Aitken | - | Content of Leader's report |
| Councillors Burns | - | School closures - consultation |
| | - | Procedure for hearing deputations |
| Councillor Paisley | - | Leader's report – electronic distribution |
| Councillor Buchan | - | Council publications – paper consumption. |
| Councillor Burgess | - | Leader's meetings with: |
| | - | environmental groups |
| | - | Scottish Executive on the Area Waste Strategy |

Decision

To note the Leader's report.

(Reference – report no CEC/49/07-08/L by the Leader, submitted.)

11 Edinburgh's Winter Festivals Annual Report 2006/07

A decision of the Executive on the Annual Report of Edinburgh's Winter's Festivals 2006/07 had been called into the Council in terms of Standing Order 58.

Motion

- 1) To note that Edinburgh's Winter Festivals generated £31.4 million in economic benefit to Edinburgh from a direct Council investment of £0.6million.
- 2) To note that Edinburgh's Winter Festivals continued to be a primary factor in increasing visitor numbers in the city, enhancing Edinburgh's international profile and establishing Edinburgh as a vibrant winter destination.

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- 3) To note that 2007/2008 was the final year of the current round of Cities Growth funding and that a decision was required by January 2008 to meet the resulting funding gap thereafter.
- 4) To recognise that equivalent levels of investment to 2006/07 were required to ensure that Edinburgh maintained its internationally competitive position against other winter festivals and city break destinations and in order to maintain Edinburgh's international status during December.
- 5) To note that a comprehensive report dealing specifically with funding issues, alternative courses of action and their implications would be presented to the Council no later than October 2007.
- 6) To note that David Jackson, Winter Festivals Manager, was leaving the Council and to express appreciation for the work he had done and wish him well for the future.

- moved by Councillor Cardownie, seconded by Councillor Dawe.

Amendment

To approve paragraphs 1)-5) of the motion and:

- 6) To welcome the positive impact the Winter Festivals had had on Edinburgh's economic health and international profile since the first Hogmanay celebration was set up by the then Labour Administration in 1993 and to congratulate all those that had contributed to the ongoing success of these now world famous events.
- 7) To lobby the Scottish Executive for the continuation of Cities Growth funding for the Winter Festivals.
- 8) To ensure that Edinburgh maintained its internationally competitive position against other winter festivals, to ask the Director to review the programme and suggest how it could be continually refreshed and renewed to ensure it continued to attract a strong audience.

- moved by Councillor Godzik, seconded by Councillor Maginnis (on behalf of the Labour Group).

Voting

The voting was as follows:

For the motion - 40 votes
For the amendment - 15 votes

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Decision

To approve the motion by Councillor Cardownie.

(Reference – report no CEC/42/07-08/CSec by the Council Secretary, submitted.)

12 Delivering the Scottish Housing Quality Standard

A decision of the Executive to consult on proposals to improve the quality of Council housing in the city had been called into the Council in terms of Standing Order 58.

Decision

- 1) To approve the draft Standard Delivery Plan through its Executive Summary as the basis for consultation on delivery of the Scottish Housing Quality Standard and that the relevant Committee receive a report in the autumn on the outcome of that consultation prior to the submission of the plan to Communities Scotland.
- 2) To commission a review of the rent charging structure and ask the Director of Services for Communities to bring forward a remit and project plan for this review.
- 3) To note that work would be undertaken to explore the scope to achieve assistance with historic housing debt in order to reduce the rental increases needed within this plan.
- 4) To note that further information would be provided regarding the impact of the proposed rent increases on various households and comparative information regarding rent levels of other landlords.
- 5) To ask the Executive Member for Health, Social Care and Housing to raise this issue with the Minister for Communities and Sport at the earliest possible opportunity.
- 6) To implement the Council's decision of 28 June 2007 to form an all-party delegation comprising group leaders or substitutes to meet with the Scottish Executive Minister with responsibility for Housing and to convene the group before meeting with the Minister to enable the case for affordable housing to be composed and agreed.

(References – Act of Council No 39 of 28 June 2007; report no CEC/43/07-08/CSec by the Council Secretary, submitted.)

13 Revenue Outturn 2006-2007 – Unaudited Budget Flexibility Scheme

The Executive had considered the financial outturn position on the Council's Revenue Account for 2006-2007 and recommended that the Council suspend application of the budget flexibility scheme to over/under spends arising in 2006-2007.

Decision

To suspend application of the budget flexibility scheme to over/under spends arising in 2006-2007.

(Reference – report no CEC/50/07-08/E by the Executive, submitted.)

14 Chief Executive's Annual Report

The Chief Executive's Annual Report for 2006/07 was presented. The report set out a review of progress during the year and focused on the continuous improvement of the Council and its action, alongside partner agencies, to improve the wellbeing of the city. It also identified targets for 2007/08 which reflected the Council's ongoing commitment to further organisational and culture change, performance improvement and new action in the community planning field.

Decision

- 1) To note the Chief Executive's Annual Report and to agree to its publication and wider dissemination.
- 2) To note the progress made and approve the revised targets for 2007/08 identified in the report.
- 3) To note, in particular, the Best Value Audit Commission's conclusions that the Council, at the time of the report, had

"ambition, vision, strategic direction, strong and effective leadership, was continuously improving at a rate better than other Councils and knew what other changes were needed."
- 4) To commend the Chief Executive and all Council staff for their contribution to the improvements made to services and customer satisfaction and the quality of life of their fellow citizens.

(References – Acts of Council No 7 of 29 June 2006 and No 14 of 28 June 2007; report no CEC/52/07-08/CE by the Chief Executive, submitted.)

15 Corporate Plan 2007-2011

Edinburgh's Corporate Plan covering the period 2007-2011 was presented.

Decision

- 1) To approve the new Council Corporate Plan for 2007-11 subject to the addition, on page 15 of the Plan after the bullet point relating to continuous improvement, of the following:
 - “• the Council displays sustainable and sound financial management in setting, monitoring and implementing budgets.”
- 2) To note the Chief Executive's intention to report annually to Council on progress.

(References – Act of Council No 11 of 28 June 2007; report no CEC/53/07-08/CE by the Chief Executive, submitted.)

16 Annual Efficiency Statement 2006/2007

The principles underpinning the “Efficient Government” agenda formed an inherent part of the context within which local authorities operated. In view of the increased emphasis in this area, the Scottish Executive had set specific efficiency targets for application across the public sector for the period 2005/2006 to 2007/2008.

The Council's first Annual Efficiency Statement for 2006/2007 was presented. This provided an overview of the actions taken and savings generated in this area during the year.

Decision

- 1) To note the efficiency projects undertaken within the Council during 2006/2007 and that despite the measures described in the Chief Executive's report, continuing efficiencies remained to be tackled, including examples such as the substantial backlog of personnel appeals and the serious mismatch in certain Departments between budget setting and outturns.
- 2) To note the Council's plans to deliver further efficiency gains in 2007/2008.
- 3) To note that a statement of the preceding financial year's efficiency gains would now be reported on an annual basis.

(Reference – report no CEC/54/07-08/CE by the Chief Executive, submitted.)

17 Budget Issues

(a) Revenue Monitoring 2007/08 – Month Three Position

The overall position of the Council's revenue budget at the three month stage and the projected outturn for the year were set out. Attention was drawn to the current projected financial deficit and actions were recommended to bring expenditure into line with approved budgets.

The Council had heard deputations on the matter from representatives of the Sure Start Projects and UNISON (see items 1(d) and (f) above).

Motion

- 1) To note with concern the scale of the pressures arising from underlying expenditure issues, the financial risks attached to budgets in current and future years and the depleted position on the unallocated general reserve.
- 2) In these circumstances to recognise as essential that immediate action be taken towards balancing the budget in the current year and to maximise sustainable expenditure savings to alleviate pressures for 2008/09.
- 3) To approve the following recommendations by the Director of Finance:
 - (a) To note the projected overspend of £2.847m.
 - (b) To reaffirm the instruction to all service Directors to balance their budgets in the current year.
 - (c) To instruct the Directors of Children and Families and Health and Social Care to identify specific further measures to bring expenditure into line with the approved budget and report these within one cycle.
 - (d) To instruct all Directors to prepare formal contingency plans to ensure expenditure remains within the approved budget.
 - (e) To note the balanced position on the HRA account.
- 4) To approve the measures being proposed by Directors in appendices 2, 3, 5 and 7 of the report by the Director of Finance.