

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting held via Microsoft Teams and in Committee Room 1 Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 12 August 2020

Chair:

Councillor John Ross (ex-officio)

Councillors Present:

Councillor Alex Allison, Councillor John Anderson, Councillor John Bradley, Councillor Robert Brown, Councillor Stephanie Callaghan, Councillor Maureen Chalmers (Depute), Councillor Gerry Convery, Councillor Margaret Cooper, Councillor Poppy Corbett (*substitute for Councillor Colin McGavigan*), Councillor Peter Craig, Councillor Maureen Devlin, Councillor Isobel Dorman, Councillor Joe Fagan, Councillor Allan Falconer, Councillor George Greenshields (*substitute for Councillor Jackie Burns*), Councillor Eileen Logan, Councillor Katy Loudon, Councillor Joe Lowe, Councillor Catherine McClymont (*substitute for Councillor Monique McAdams*), Councillor Kenny McCreary, Councillor Jim McGuigan, Councillor Gladys Miller, Councillor Lynne Nailon, Councillor Richard Nelson, Councillor David Shearer, Councillor Margaret B Walker, Councillor Josh Wilson

Councillors' Apologies:

Councillor Jackie Burns, Councillor Monique McAdams, Councillor Colin McGavigan

Attending:

Chief Executive's Service

C Sneddon, Chief Executive

Community and Enterprise Resources

M McGlynn, Executive Director

Education Resources

T McDaid, Executive Director

Finance and Corporate Resources

P Manning, Executive Director; J Burke, Administration Assistant; T Little, Head of Communications and Strategy; P MacRae, Administration Adviser; G McCann, Head of Administration and Legal Services

Housing and Technical Resources

D Lowe, Executive Director

Social Work Resources/Health and Social Care

V de Souza, Director; A Singh, Service Manager (Children and Justice)

Chair's Remarks

The Chair advised that a request to deal with an additional item of business had been received but that, in terms of Standing Order No 4(c) of the Council's Standing Orders on Procedures, this item was not considered to constitute Urgent Business.

1 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 24 June 2020 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

Councillor Brown intimated that, with regard to the minute item relating to the outcome of the mid-term review of Connect, there should be reflection of an agreement that information on the impact of COVID-19 be added to Connect, the Council Plan. The inclusion of wording in the minute to that effect was accepted by the Committee

The Committee decided: that the minutes be approved as a correct record subject to the inclusion of a reference in the minute relating to the outcome of the mid-term review that the impact of COVID-19 be added to Connect, the Council Plan.

3 Revenue Budget Monitoring for Period 3 – 1 April to 19 June 2020

A report dated 8 July 2020 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted:-

- ◆ providing an update on 2020/2021 Revenue Budget for the General Fund, taking account of the financial implications of the coronavirus pandemic
- ◆ comparing actual expenditure against budgeted expenditure for the period ending 19 June 2020
- ◆ detailing the expenditure and income position for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to 19 June 2020

The figures showed an underspend of £0.120 million on the General Fund Revenue Account, after COVID-19 spend and funding, and a breakeven position on the Housing Revenue Account. The forecast to 31 March 2021 on the Housing Revenue Account was a breakeven position.

Details of the COVID-19 pressures across Resources were included in Appendix 1 to the report. Details were also provided on the Council's predicted COVID-19 spend of £29.062 million for 2020/2021.

The financial pressures in Children and Families Services were highlighted. This was as a result of additional external residential placements made at the start of 2020. Work was ongoing to reduce the overspend.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the net underspend of £0.120 million on the General Fund Revenue Account at 19 June 2020, after COVID-19 spend and funding, be noted;
- (2) that the breakeven position on the Housing Revenue Account at 19 June 2020 and the forecast to 31 March 2021 of a breakeven position be noted;
- (3) that the total net expenditure and lost income of £6.216 million in relation to COVID-19, offset by Government Grant included in the Council's position as at 19 June 2020, be noted;
- (4) that an additional payment of £1.269 million in relation to COVID-19 lost income to South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture (SLLC) at period 3 be approved;
- (5) that the pressures experienced in Children and Families Services be noted; and
- (6) that the Council's predicted COVID-19 spend of £29.062 million for 2020/2021 be noted.

4 Capital Programme 2020/2021 Update

A report dated 10 July 2020 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the physical and financial progress at 19 June 2020 on the various capital programmes.

The General Fund Capital Programme totalled £91.192 million and the Housing Capital Programme £97.303 million.

The delivery of both the General Services and Housing Capital Programmes had been affected by lockdown due to COVID-19. The ongoing implications of this, including the closure of construction sites in advance of the financial year end, had an impact on the level of capital spend achieved in 2019/2020 and would continue to impact on the 2020/2021 Capital Programmes.

At 19 June 2020, £3.947 million had been spent on the General Fund Capital Programme and £3.357 million had been spent on the Housing Capital Programme.

A report reviewing Council's Capital spend in light of COVID-19 restrictions would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the position of the various capital programmes for 2020/2021, as detailed in the report, be noted; and
- (2) that the revised programmes be monitored by the Financial Resources Scrutiny Forum.

5 Additional Funding from Scottish Government and Other External Sources

A report dated 9 July 2020 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on additional revenue funding, totalling £3.245 million, and capital funding, totalling £1.253 million, which had been made available to the Council by the Scottish Government and other external sources.

The funding had been allocated as follows:-

Revenue Funding

Resource	2020/2021 (£m)
Community and Enterprise	1.776
Education	0.447
Finance and Corporate	1.022
Total	3.245

Capital Funding

Resource	2020/2021 (£m)
Education	1.253
Total	1.253

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

6 Supplier Development Programme – Update

A joint report dated 28 July 2020 by the Executive Directors (Community and Enterprise Resources) and (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the Supplier Development Programme (SDP).

The SDP was a business support initiative which aimed to help Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) improve their performance in winning public sector contracts through offering information, support and training to help them compete in tendering processes.

Initially founded by Glasgow City, East Renfrewshire and South Lanarkshire Councils, the SDP now had subscription from all 32 local authorities. It was managed through a Board of Directors, comprised of elected members and senior officers from 12 of its member authorities. The current membership of the Board was detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

The Council had initially hosted the SDP for a 2 year period, following which the Executive Committee, at its meeting of 14 April 2016, extended this arrangement by a further 2 years and, subsequently, for another 2 years at its meeting on 28 March 2018.

The team of 1 full time equivalent (FTE) SDP Manager and 3 FTE SDP Officers was employed by South Lanarkshire Council and seconded to the SDP, with fixed-term contracts for the period of the agreement. One of those officers had acquired permanent employment status due to length of service as their employment with Glasgow City Council had transferred under TUPE. The remaining officers were now due to achieve permanent employment status.

The key achievements of the SDP were outlined in the report, including:-

- ◆ 16,219 SME suppliers now registered with SDP, with 1,177 of those in South Lanarkshire, a 44% increase from 2019
- ◆ numerous webinars and training events delivered throughout the year
- ◆ a pan-Lanarkshire event in March 2020 which had attracted 551 bookings from local businesses, although it was noted that this event had been postponed due to COVID-19

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the positive performance of the Supplier Development Programme, hosted within South Lanarkshire Council since 2014, be noted;
- (2) that the Council continue to host the Supplier Development Programme within the Planning and Economic Development Service until further notice; and
- (3) that 1 post of SDP Manager at Grade 4, Level 5 (£47,776 per annum excluding on-costs) and 2 posts of SDP Officer at Grade 3, Level 4 (£38,779 excluding on-costs) respectively, be made permanent and added to the Community and Enterprise Resources' establishment.

[Reference: Minutes of 13 April 2016 (Paragraph 11) and 28 March 2018 (Paragraph 9)]

7 Children in Need of Care and Protection – Inspection Outcome – Evaluation

A report dated 21 July 2020 by the Director, Health and Social Care was submitted on the Joint Inspection of Services for Children in Need of Care and Protection in South Lanarkshire.

Following on from the introduction of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and subsequent Child Protection Improvement Programme and National Care Review, the Care Inspectorate had reviewed and updated its inspection methodology. In the revised model, self-evaluation and inspection would both be used to actively focus on Children in Need of Care and Protection.

The Care Inspectorate methodology for the Joint Inspection of Services for Children in Need of Care and Protection posed 5 inspection specific questions of Children's Services Partnerships which were detailed in the report.

Those self-evaluation questions were posed in conjunction with a series of quality indicators that were subject to inspection by the Care Inspectorate.

The Community Planning Partnership was notified by the Care Inspectorate on 6 August 2019 that it would receive a joint inspection. The inspection took place on the weeks beginning 28 October and 2 December 2019, respectively.

Staff briefings were delivered to over 500 staff and a series of surveys were put to staff, children and young people and parents. The Care Inspectorate also undertook a number of case file readings in terms of child protection and corporate parenting cases.

Based on the inspection, the Partnership had received 'Good' evaluations in respect of leadership and meeting the needs of stakeholders and 'Adequate' in the areas of impact on children and young people and improvements in the safety, wellbeing and life chances of vulnerable children and young people.

The "Adequate" evaluations predominantly related to the Corporate Parenting agenda. Actions recommended in the Improvement Report included actively engaging with care experienced children and young people through the establishment of a Champions Board and the testimony of care leavers of services and supports available to them when leaving care.

The Care Inspectorate concluded in its report that it was confident that the South Lanarkshire Partnership had the capacity to continue to improve on and address the points for action highlighted in its report, and several examples of good practice were highlighted.

The Partnership would actively engage with the Care Inspectorate Link Inspector on the improvement plan, which would be overseen by the Children's Services Strategy Group and reported to the Getting it Right for South Lanarkshire Children's Partnership Board.

Further information on the actions to be taken in respect of the improvement plan would be submitted to future meetings of the Social Work and Education Resources Committees.

Officers responded to members' questions on various aspects of the report.

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

8 Recovery Board Activity

A report dated 28 July 2020 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the business items considered by the Recovery Board.

The Board had met on 2 occasions, on 8 and 22 July 2020, respectively. A summary of the business considered at those meetings was provided at Appendix 2 to the report.

Officers responded to members' questions on various aspects of the report.

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

9 South Lanarkshire Council Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

A report dated 3 August 2020 by the Chief Executive was submitted on actions taken by the Council to support residents, communities and businesses in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The pandemic had made a significant impact on the Council. Some services had to be withdrawn or reduced to allow physical distancing measures to be followed, to take account of higher than usual staff absence levels or to allow resources to be concentrated on key frontline services.

Details were given on additional services delivered in support of:-

- ◆ vulnerable residents
- ◆ communities
- ◆ businesses
- ◆ other initiatives

Details were also given to the continued delivery of Council Services, despite the implications of the coronavirus pandemic in respect of:-

- ◆ each of the Council's Resources
- ◆ the Health and Social Care Partnership
- ◆ South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture (SLLC)

A corporate recovery plan had been presented to the Recovery Board on 8 July 2020, outlining plans in relation to the delivering of Council services, both in the short and long term. The position was, fluid and depended on a number of factors, including future Scottish Government advice relating to the pandemic and the finances available to the Council.

Council and SLLC officers would continue to monitor financial and other pressures on services and reports would continue to be presented to elected members through the appropriate forums to keep them informed as the situation developed.

Members were heard on various aspects of the report.

Councillor Brown, seconded by Councillor Fagan, proposed an amendment to the recommendations detailed in the report in light of the Scottish Qualifications Authority exam results situation that had developed. Councillor Loudon, seconded by Councillor Wilson, proposed a further amendment to the wording of those recommendations, which was accepted by Councillors Brown and Fagan. The amendment was accepted by the Committee.

The Chair and Depute, on behalf of all elected members, expressed their gratitude to staff for their work during the pandemic. The Committee unanimously commended all the management and staff working behind the scenes, at home and on the front line.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the report be noted;
- (2) that the announcement by the Deputy First Minister that the 2020 Scottish Qualifications Authority awards would now be based on teacher assessments and the "no detriment" principle, and the Priestley review into the next year's process be welcomed;

- (3) that it remained greatly concerned that the Scottish Qualifications Authority caused huge upset and worry to South Lanarkshire students by initially downgrading 8,590 awards from those assessed by teachers (approximately a quarter of the total) on a moderation process which appeared to lack equity and fairness and which particularly disadvantaged young people from more deprived areas;
- (4) that the pledge by the Deputy First Minister that no one would be “crowded out” of a university or college place they would otherwise have been awarded be noted;
- (5) that the re-grading provided an opportunity, particularly in view of high youth unemployment expected over the next 2 years resulting from the COVID-19 economic crisis, for many more students from disadvantaged backgrounds to attend university or college and that the Scottish Government be called on to develop an ambitious programme to fund and support more students to attend, engage and prosper there in a way which would aid the country’s sustainable economic revival;
- (6) that the Executive Director (Education Resources) provide a report on the effect of Pupil Equity Funding and other initiatives in narrowing the educational gap and on the further challenges resulting from COVID-19; and
- (7) that a further and full debate take place on this matter at the next meeting of the Education Resources Committee.

10 Elected Member Representation on Committees/Forums

A report dated 21 July 2020 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on:-

- ♦ temporary amendments to Committee and Forum memberships during Councillor Hamilton’s period of family leave.
- ♦ the membership of the Recovery Board
- ♦ a change in membership of the Climate Change and Sustainability Committee

The Chair, on behalf of the members, extended congratulations to Councillor Hamilton on the birth of her child and on the commencement of her family leave.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the following changes to Committee/Forum memberships, on a temporary basis during the period of Councillor Hamilton’s family leave which commenced on 3 August 2020, be noted:-
 - ♦ Councillor Hamilton’s replacement by Councillor Walker as a member of the Executive Committee, with Councillor Thomson taking Councillor Walker’s place as a substitute member
 - ♦ Councillor Hamilton’s replacement by Councillor Walker as a member of the Climate Change and Sustainability Committee, with Councillor Thomson taking Councillor Walker’s place as a substitute member
 - ♦ Councillor Hamilton’s replacement by Councillor Thomson as a member of the Appeals Panel
 - ♦ Councillor Hamilton’s replacement by Councillor Logan as a member of the Tackling Poverty Working Group, with Councillor Convery taking Councillor Logan’s place as a substitute member
 - ♦ Councillor Hamilton’s replacement by Councillor Walker as a member of the South Lanarkshire Adoption and Fostering Panel

- (2) that the nomination of the members and substitutes of the Recovery Board, outlined in the report, be noted; and
- (3) that the change to the Conservative Group's membership and substitute membership on the Climate Change and Sustainability Committee, as detailed in the report, be approved.

11 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.