

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Minute of hybrid meeting of Perth and Kinross Council held in the Council Chamber, 2 High Street, Perth on Wednesday 28 June 2023 at 10:30am.

Present: Provost X McDade, Depute Provost A Parrott, Bailies C Ahern, A Bailey, R Brock, C McLaren and M Williamson, Councillors K Allan, H Anderson, L Barrett, P Barrett, B Brawn, S Carr, A Chan, D Cuthbert, S Donaldson, E Drysdale, J Duff, A Forbes, M Frampton, N Freshwater, K Harvey, D Illingworth, I James, N Khogali, G Laing, B Leishman, I MacPherson, I Massie, S McCole, T McEwan, J Rebbeck, C Reid, W Robertson, C Shiers, F Smith, C Stewart, G Stewart, R Watters and J Welch.

In Attendance: T Glen, Chief Executive; L Simpson, Head of Legal and Governance Services; S Devlin, Executive Director (Education and Children's Services); B Renton, Executive Director (Communities); S MacKenzie, Head of Finance; S Walker, K Molley, A Brown and M Pasternak (all Corporate and Democratic Services).

Provost X McDade, Presiding.

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Provost McDade welcomed all those present to the meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declaration of Interests in terms of the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

3. MINUTE OF MEETING OF PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL OF 10 MAY 2023 FOR APPROVAL

Minute of Meeting of Perth and Kinross Council of 10 May 2023 was approved as correct record.

4. OUTSTANDING BUSINESS STATEMENT

The Outstanding Business Statement was noted, and it was agreed to remove the completed actions.

5. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

(i) Motion to amend Standing Order 9.1

Motion By Councillors P Barrett And G Laing

9.1 Meetings of the Council, Committees or Sub-Committees are ordinarily held in the Council Chamber at 2 High Street, Perth. These meetings are open to the public in terms of Section 50A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 and are generally recorded for broadcast online after the meeting (except for the Licensing Committee).

Propose deletion of the text “(except for the Licensing Committee)”.

Resolved:

In accordance with the Motion.

(ii) Motion on Use of Air Travel within the UK

Motion By Councillors G Laing and G Stewart

Council agrees that representatives of Perth and Kinross Council, whether Officers, Elected Members, or other staff, will not use air travel within the UK mainland for business travel purposes unless there is other no other means of suitable travel available to them.

Amendment Councillors A Forbes and N Freshwater

Council agrees that representatives of Perth and Kinross Council, whether Officers, Elected Members, or other staff, will consider our climate change objectives when deciding what means of transport, they use for business travel.

In terms of Standing Order 21.1, a roll call vote was taken:

26 Members vote for the Motion, as follows:

Provost X McDade, Depute Provost A Parrott, Bailies A Bailey, R Brock, C McLaren, M Williamson, Councillors L Barrett, P Barrett, S Carr, D Cuthbert, S Donaldson, E Drysdale, M Frampton, K Harvey, G Laing, B Leishman, I MacPherson, I Massie, S McCole, T McEwan, J Rebbeck, W Robertson, C Stewart, G Stewart, R Watters and J Welch

14 Members voted for the Amendment, as follows:

Bailie C Ahern, Councillors K Allan, H Anderson, B Brawn, A Chan, J Duff, A Forbes, N Freshwater, D Illingworth, I James, N Khogali, C Reid, C Shiers and F Smith.

Resolved:

In accordance with the Motion.

(iii) Motion on Ending Roma/Gypsy/Travellers Hate Discrimination

Motion by Councillors M Frampton and T McEwan

For too long now The Roma/ Gypsy/Travellers Communities have been stigmatised, because of their own Ancestral and Cultural beliefs and ways of life.

They face racial hate, prejudice, and discrimination, which is extremely harmful, and are one of the most marginalised and disadvantaged Communities in Scotland.

Gypsy/travellers are more likely to be in high risk of poverty and social exclusion, there is educational and employment inequalities and healthcare inequalities which are detrimental to them as a community.

I would ask all Councillors to agree that Perth and Kinross Council pledges to stand against all hate and discrimination of Roma/ Gypsy / Travellers, and commits to breaking down barriers within Education, Healthcare and Employment.

Resolved:

In accordance with the Motion.

Following a Point of Order raised by Councillor G Laing, the mover and seconder of motions (iv) and (v) agreed to remove the reference of the Chief Executive.

(iv) Motion on Scottish Fire and Rescue Services Cuts

Motion by Councillor J Duff and Bailie C Ahern

In an effort to address the consequences of the Scottish Government's flat cash budget settlement over the next four years, which will require budget cuts of £36million, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service has announced the removal of fire appliances from a number of fire stations across Scotland including one of the three fire appliances based at Perth's only fire station. This will also be accompanied by a reduction in the number of firefighter posts at Perth.

These latest cuts follow on from significant underinvestment in the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service over many years, including the loss of nearly 600 wholetime operational firefighter posts in the decade to 2021-22, and response times for emergency call-outs rising every year since the Fire and Rescue Service was centralised.

While these latest cuts are purported to be temporary, the reduction of a fire appliance and firefighters from Perth will place our communities and firefighters at greater risk and is of significant concern to this Council.

This Council therefore calls upon the Chief Executive and Council Leader to meet with the Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs and with our Community Planning Partners in the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to express this Council's serious concerns for these proposals and to call upon the

Scottish Government to provide sufficient additional funding to reverse these cuts.

The Mover and Seconder of the Motion agreed to remove the reference of the Chief Executive from their motion.

Resolved:

In accordance with the Revised Motion.

(v) Motion on University of the Highlands and Islands Perth

Motion by Councillors J Duff and C Shiers

Following the Scottish Government's flat cash budget settlement for the college sector, UHI Perth will be required to make cuts of £3million and a 10% reduction in its academic credits in 2023/24. This will result in up to 50 job losses and fewer students being taught at UHI Perth at a time when skills training is even more important than ever.

These cuts come on the back of the Scottish Government's removal of £46million from the College/University sector's budget to help fund the recent Local Government teacher pay awards with no assistance being provided to help UHI Perth settle its own 2022/23 and 2023/24 staff pay award. The latest pay offer has been rejected by staff and industrial action remains ongoing which is particularly unsettling for everyone involved.

Thankfully, the proposed cuts to the nursery have been deferred for 2023/24 allowing the college to look at a different funding model for nursery provision, which is a vital facility for the staff, students and others.

Perth and Kinross Council has a successful working partnership with UHI Perth. For example, with the Highland Perthshire Learning Partnership based at Pitlochry High School which is helping to meet the educational needs of pupils and adult learners in the area.

The financial consequences of the Scottish Government's failure to fund UHI Perth is a significant cut to teaching staff at all levels, the potential loss of a number of courses from the curriculum and a reduction in the overall number of students who can find a place at UHI Perth.

This Council therefore calls upon the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive to meet with the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills to call for additional funding for UHI Perth to prevent these job losses and course cuts.

THERE FOLLOWED A SHORT RECESS AND THE MEETING RECONVENED AT 11:45AM.

The Mover and Seconder of the Motion agreed to remove the reference of the Chief Executive from their motion.

Proposed Amendment by Councillor E Drysdale

In accordance with the motion but also to incorporate the following:

This Council calls upon the Council Leader to meet with the Principle of the University of Highlands and Islands and only if deemed necessary, then contact the Minister of Further and Higher Education to call for additional funding for UHI Perth to prevent these job losses and course cuts.

The Mover and Seconder of the Motion agreed to incorporate this amendment into their motion.

Councillor C Shiers made a further suggestion to the revised motion which was agreed:

The Council calls upon the Council Leader to arrange a Cross Party meeting (member from each Political Party) with the Principle of the University of the Highlands and Islands and only if deemed necessary, then contact the Minister of Further and Higher Education to call for additional funding for UHI Perth to prevent these job losses and course cuts.

Resolved:

In accordance with the Revised Motion.

6. ANNUAL TREASURY REPORT 2022/23

There was submitted a report by Head of Finance (23/204) reporting on the expected treasury activity for the forthcoming year (i.e. the Treasury and Investment Strategy) and the subsequent reporting of the actual results and activities (i.e. this Annual Treasury Report).

Resolved:

The contents of Report 23/204, be noted.

7. UPDATE TO SCHEME OF ADMINISTRATION

Resolved:

The proposed changes to the Scheme of Administration as set out on the agenda, be agreed.

8. ELECTED MEMBERS BRIEFING NOTES

Resolved:

The Elected Members Briefing Notes, issued since the previous Council meeting and as set out on the agenda, be noted.