

THE FIFE COUNCIL - KIRKCALDY AREA COMMITTEE – REMOTE MEETING

05 October, 2021

2.00 pm – 3.55 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Neil Crooks (Convener), Lesley Backhouse, Alistair Cameron, Ian Cameron, Rod Cavanagh, Judy Hamilton, Gordon Langlands, Kathleen Leslie, Carol Lindsay and David Ross.

ATTENDING: Julie Dickson, Community Manager (Kirkcaldy Area), Communities and Neighbourhoods; David Thomson, Customer Experience Lead Officer / SPSO Liaison Officer, Customer & Online Services; Ronnie Hair, Property Investment & Development Manager, Ian McCrory, Lead Professional (Economic Regeneration), Economy, Planning & Employability Services; Lesley Robb, Lead Officer (Committee Services), Legal & Democratic Services.

URGENT BUSINESS BEING BROUGHT BY THE CONVENER

The Convener advised of an additional item which they had agreed to take as urgent business, which was relevant and competent and due to local Members having received representations from their constituents on proposed changes by Scotrail to the timetable for rail services from Kirkcaldy Railway Station. The Convener moved its consideration, in terms of Standing Order 3.8 (2), to allow the Committee to determine a Committee position on the proposals which had a negative impact on the Kirkcaldy Area Service provision. This was unanimously agreed and a Motion was considered at Para. 287 below.

281. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were submitted in terms of Standing Order 7.1.

282. MINUTE

The Committee considered the minute of the meeting of Kirkcaldy Area Committee of 24 August 2021.

Decision

The Committee approved the minute.

283. SUPPORTING THE LOCAL COMMUNITY PLAN - KIRKCALDY AREA LOCAL BUDGETS ADDITIONAL ALLOCATIONS

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods allocating further spending from the following Kirkcaldy Area Budgets:

- (1) Local Community Planning Budget 2021-22, under the Plan 4 Kirkcaldy Area Change Fund budget allocation; and
- (2) Anti-Poverty Carry Forward 2020-21 and Anti-Poverty Budget 2021-22.

Decision/

Decision

The Committee:

- (1) noted a correction to the published report at Para. 2.3, last sentence and should read "the allocation requested for this proposal from October to April is £3,900.";
- (2) agreed to the proposed allocation of £7,230 to Linton Lane Centre for IT and fundraising support, from the Local Community Planning Budget 2021-22 - Plan 4 Kirkcaldy Area Change Fund; and
- (3) agreed to the proposed allocation of £25,500 for a Welfare Support worker to work alongside the Test of Change Team, covering the period October 2021 to September 2022, from the remaining 2020-21 Anti-Poverty carry forward and the 2021-22 Anti-Poverty Budget.

284. KIRKCALDY CHARRETTE PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Business and Employability providing Members with an update on implementation of the recommendations of the Kirkcaldy Charrette that took place in early 2014.

Decision

The Committee:

- (1) commented on the ongoing progress made against objectives of the 2014 Kirkcaldy Charrette;
- (2) agreed that the ambition to regenerate the area remains consistent with the objectives of recently published Fife Council documents such as the Mid-Fife Economic Investment Prospectus (April 2021) and the Leading Economic Recovery (LER) Action Plan (March 2021); and
- (3) acknowledged that the report built on the annual Economic Profile Report (December 2020) presented to the Area Committee in January 2021 that outlined a wide range of challenges and opportunities for the local economy.

285. COMPLAINTS ANNUAL UPDATE REPORT

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Communities providing Members with an overview of complaints received relating to the Kirkcaldy Area for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

Decision

The Committee:

- (1) noted a correction to the published report at Para. 2.0 "Volume & Responsiveness" where final bullet point should read "Overall responsiveness has improved over the last year where the percentage of all complaints closed in target timescales has improved from 86% and is above the Council average. Similarly stage 1 has increased from 84% and stage 2 cases improved from 94%";
- (2) considered the report received; and
- (3) noted the complaints responded to in target timescales and the proportionality of Service complaints.

286. PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment advising Members of action taken using the List of Officer Powers in relation to property transactions.

Decision

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

287. URGENT ITEM - MOTION

Motion

Councillor Ross, seconded by Councillor Hamilton, moved as follows:

"The Area Committee notes the motion agreed at the meeting of Fife Council held on 23 September 2021, in respect of concerns with the proposed changes to the Scotrail timetable, which would have the overall effect of reducing services for Fife.

The negative impact on services in Kirkcaldy Area in particular, is significant and public concern warrants a specific response from local Members.

The Area Committee expresses concerns at the impact of the proposed changes for the Kirkcaldy Area and its residents, specifically the downgrading of the Kirkcaldy Rail Hub, which would have an impact on Employability and Tourism in the area, as well as the direct service from Kirkcaldy to Queen Margaret Hospital in Dunfermline.

We call upon the Area Convener to write on behalf of the Area Committee, to Scotrail highlighting local concerns at the proposed timetable changes.

We also call upon the Area Convener to write on behalf of the Area Committee, in similar terms to the Scottish Government requesting they reject the current proposals and come forward with a comprehensive plan to encourage the public back onto rail services safely, following the COVID pandemic impact."

First Amendment

Councillor Leslie, seconded by Councillor Crooks, moved as the first amendment that the following statement be added to the proposed Motion.

"Additionally, expresses concern about the impact on those using the rail network with accessibility requirements, who will be further limited by proposed timetable changes."

Second Amendment

Councillor Ian Cameron, seconded by Councillor Backhouse, moved as the second amendment that the following statement be added to the proposed Motion, in addition to that proposed by the First Amendment.

"We ask that no decision is made on the proposed timetable changes until an impact assessment is undertaken with a focus on the local economy and local communities, by Fife Council."

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After discussion Councillor Ian Cameron and Councillor Backhouse agreed to withdraw the second amendment.

The Committee unanimously agreed to conjoin the Motion and First Amendment.

Decision

The Committee unanimously agreed the following:

The Area Committee notes the motion agreed at the meeting of Fife Council held on 23 September 2021, in respect of concerns with the proposed changes to the Scotrail timetable, which would have the overall effect of reducing services for Fife.

The negative impact on services in Kirkcaldy Area in particular, is significant and public concern warrants a specific response from local Members.

The Area Committee expresses concerns at the impact of the proposed changes for the Kirkcaldy Area and its residents, specifically the downgrading of the Kirkcaldy Rail Hub, which would have an impact on Employability and Tourism in the area, as well as the direct service from Kirkcaldy to Queen Margaret Hospital in Dunfermline.

The Committee additionally, expresses concern about the impact on those using the rail network with accessibility requirements, who will be further limited by proposed timetable changes.

We call upon the Area Convener to write on behalf of the Area Committee, to Scotrail highlighting local concerns at the proposed timetable changes.

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288. KIRKCALDY AREA COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Decision

The Committee noted:

- (1) the contents of the Kirkcaldy Area Committee forward work programme;
and
- (2) a report on “Car Parking and Placemaking Review – Update on Motion agreed at meeting 24 August, 2021” would be presented at the next meeting of Kirkcaldy Area Committee on 30 November, 2021.