

2022 FC 37

• THE FIFE COUNCIL - FIFE COUNCIL – BLENDED MEETING

29th September, 2022

10.00 a.m. – 1.20 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Jim Leishman (Convener), Tom Adams, David Alexander, Blair Allan, Naz Anis-Miah, Lesley Backhouse, Alistair Bain, Lynn Ballantyne-Wardlaw, David Barratt, Auxi Barrera, John Beare, Aude Boubaker-Calder, Patrick Browne, John Caffrey, James Calder, Ken Caldwell, Alistair Cameron, Alex Campbell, Rod Cavanagh, Al Clark, Eugene Clarke, Fiona Corps, Altany Craik, Colin Davidson, Dave Dempsey, Sean Dillon, Graeme Downie, Gavin Ellis, Linda Erskine, Derek Glen, Brian Goodall, David Graham, Peter Gulline, Jean Hall Muir, Judy Hamilton, Alycia Hayes, Cara Hilton, Stefan Hoggan-Radu, Gary Holt, Andy Jackson, Margaret Kennedy, Louise Kennedy-Dalby, Allan Knox, Robin Lawson, James Leslie, Kathleen Leslie, Rosemary Liewald, Carol Lindsay, Jane Ann Liston, Donald Lothian, David MacDiarmid, Julie MacDougall, Lea McLelland, Lynn Mowatt, Sarah Neal, Derek Noble, John O'Brien, Nicola Patrick, Gordon Pryde, Bailey Lee Robb, David Ross, Sam Steele, Alistair Suttie, Jonny Tepp, Ann Verner, Andrew Verrecchia, Ross Vettrano, Craig Walker, Darren Watt, Daniel Wilson, Jan Wincott and Conner Young.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors Ian Cameron and Mary Lockhart.

26. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were submitted in terms of Standing Order No. 7.1.

27. CIVIC BUSINESS BULLETIN

Decision

The Council noted the Civic Business Bulletin.

28. MINUTE

The Provost, seconded by Councillor Craik, moved that the minute of 9th June, 2022 be approved.

Decision

The Council approved the minute.

29. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

Minutes of the undernoted Committees and Sub-Committees, as contained in the volume of minutes, were submitted for accuracy:-

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- (1) West and Central Planning Committee of 29th June and 24th August, 2022.
- (2) North East Planning Committee of 22nd June and 17th August, 2022.
- (3) Fife Planning Review Body of 16th August and 22nd August, 2022.
- (4) Regulation and Licensing Committee of 9th August, 2022.
- (5) Cabinet Committee of 25th August, 2022.
- (6) Standards, Audit and Risk Committee of 30th June, 2022.
- (7) Pensions Committee of 30th June, 2022.
- (8) Glenrothes Area Committee of 10th August, 2022.
- (9) Levenmouth Area Committee of 14th September, 2022.
- (10) South and West Fife Area Committee of 10th August, 2022.
- (11) Cowdenbeath Area Committee of 31st August, 2022.
- (12) North East Fife Area Committee of 7th September, 2022.
- (13) Fife Health and Social Care Integration Joint Board of 22nd April, 2022.

Decision

The Council noted the minutes.

30. LEADERS REPORT

The Council considered a report by the Leader of the Council on a number of strategic issues. The Leader provided updates on a number of issues in response to questions from members.

Decision

The Council noted the report.

31. QUESTION TIME

In terms of Standing Order 1.7, the questions put by members to the meeting, the written answers and supplementary questions are contained in Appendix 1 to the minute.

Councillor Erskine, Spokesperson for Communities and Leisure answered Questions 1 and 2.

Councillor Craik, Spokesperson for Finance, Economy and Strategic Planning answered Questions 3 and 9.

Councillor Hamilton, Spokesperson for Housing and Building Services answered questions 4, 5 and 10.

Councillor Wincott, Spokesperson for Environment and Climate Change answered question 6.

Councillor Hilton, Spokesperson for Education answered questions 7 and 8.

Councillor Ross, Leader of the Council answered question 9.

32. ARRANGEMENTS FOR FUTURE COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

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The Council considered a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services which sought agreement on the governance approach for facilitating Council and Committee meetings.

Decision

The Council:-

- (1) noted the progress with work to facilitate the blended meetings in Council Chambers, Fife House committee rooms and in Area Committee meeting rooms;
- (2) agreed that blended meetings of Council and Committees would become the default approach, subject to the successful completion of testing the functionality of the technology;
- (3) noted that the Licensing Board and Regulation & Licensing Committee had both continued to meet in person over the pandemic and this was anticipated to continue;
- (4) noted that where the Committee requested that a meeting be held fully remotely or fully in person, it be remitted to the Proper Officer to consider the format of the meeting in consultation with the Convener (or Vice Convener in the absence of the Convener) of the Committee and the Lead Officer;
- (5) noted that, following Council's decision, detailed procedural notes would be finalised to support several operational issues that would arise and that the political groups would be consulted before these procedures become final;
- (6) delegated authority to the Head of Legal & Democratic Services to make any consequential administrative amendments to the Governance Scheme necessary to implement the decisions under the recommendations above; and
- (7) agreed for blended meetings that where there was a limit on members attending in the Committee room, places in the room would be allocated in proportion to the political group membership of the Committee.

33. APPOINTMENTS TO COSLA BOARDS AND SCOTTISH JOINT COUNCIL

The Council considered a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services seeking confirmation of the appointment of the Leader of the Council as the elected member representative to the Scottish Joint Council for Local Government Employees (SJC), to appoint Cllr Craik as a substitute member to that body and to appoint elected member representatives to COSLA Boards.

Motion

Councillor/

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Councillor Ross, seconded by Councillor Davidson, moved as follows:-

“Amend recommendation 2 to appoint the four Administration Spokespersons to the relevant COSLA Boards, namely:-

Health & Social Care – Councillor David Graham
Children & Young People – Councillor Cara Hilton
Environment & Economy – Councillor Jan Wincott
Community Wellbeing – Councillor Linda Erskine

Add an additional recommendation to appoint four members (one from each political group) to the Community Safety Partnership, with nominations to be advised to the Proper Officer.”

Amendment

Councillor Alexander, seconded by Councillor Mowatt, moved that Councillor Liewald be appointed to the COSLA Board for Health and Social Care and Councillor Walker be appointed to the COSLA Board for Children and Young People.

Roll Call

For the Motion – 38 votes

Councillors Tom Adams, Aude Boubaker-Calder, Patrick Browne, John Caffrey, James Calder, Alistair Cameron, Alex Campbell, Al Clark, Eugene Clarke, Fiona Corps, Altany Craik, Colin Davidson, Dave Dempsey, Sean Dillon, Graeme Downie, Gavin Ellis, Linda Erskine, David Graham, Peter Gulline, Judy Hamilton, Cara Hilton, Gary Holt, Margaret Kennedy, Allan Knox, Robin Lawson, Jim Leishman, James Leslie, Kathleen Leslie, Jane Ann Liston, Donald Lothian, Julie MacDougall, Derek Noble, Gordon Pryde, David Ross, Jonny Tepp, Andrew Verrecchia, Darren Watt and Jan Wincott.

For the Amendment – 32 votes

Councillors David Alexander, Blair Allan, Naz Anis-Miah, Alistair Bain, Lynn Ballantyne-Wardlaw, David Barratt, Auxi Barrera, John Beare, Ken Caldwell, Rod Cavanagh, Derek Glen, Brian Goodall, Jean Hall Muir, Alycia Hayes, Stefan Hoggan-Radu, Andy Jackson, Louise Kennedy-Dalby, Rosemary Liewald, Carol Lindsay, David MacDiarmid, Lea McLelland, Lynn Mowatt, Sarah Neal, John O'Brien, Nicola Patrick, Bailey-Lee Robb, Sam Steele, Alistair Suttie, Ann Verner, Ross Vettraino, Craig Walker and Daniel Wilson.

The motion was accordingly carried.

Decision

The Council:-

(1)/

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- (1) confirmed the appointment of the Leader of the Council as the elected member representative to the Scottish Joint Council for Local Government Employees (SJC);
- (2) agreed to appoint Councillor Altany Craik as the substitute elected member representative to the Scottish Joint Council;
- (3) agreed to appoint the following elected members to the COSLA Boards:-
 - Health and Social Care – Councillor David Graham
 - Children and Young People – Councillor Cara Hilton
 - Environment and Economy – Councillor Altany Craik
 - Community Wellbeing – Councillor Linda Erskine
- (4) agreed to appoint four elected members (one from each political group) to the Community Safety Partnership, with nominations to be advised to the Proper Officer.

Councillor Backhouse left the meeting during consideration of the above item.

The meeting adjourned at 11.35 a.m. and reconvened at 11.45 a.m.

Councillor Backhouse re-joined the meeting.

34. APPOINTMENT OF RELIGIOUS REPRESENTATIVES

The Council considered a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services requiring the appointment of a third person interested in the promotion of religious education from either of the nominations received as detailed in the report and to agree the appointment of Mary Caldwell as the Roman Catholic religious replacement following the resignation of George Haggarty.

As there had been no proposal to appoint either of the nominees, a roll call vote was taken.

Roll Call

For Alastair Crockett, Cupar Baptist Church – 27 votes

Councillors David Alexander, Naz Anis-Miah, Lesley Backhouse, Alistair Bain, John Beare, John Caffrey, Ken Caldwell, Alistair Cameron, Alex Campbell, Rod Cavanagh, Gavin Ellis, Judy Hamilton, Alycia Hayes, Stefan Hoggan-Radu, Margaret Kennedy, Louise Kennedy-Dalby, Robin Lawson, Kathleen Leslie, Rosemary Liewald, Lea McLelland, Lynn Mowatt, John O'Brien, Bailey-Lee Robb, Alistair Suttie, Ann Verner, Ross Vettraino and Craig Walker.

For Gerrard F Dillon, St Luke the Evangelist Scottish Episcopal Church – 10 votes

Councillors Patrick Browne, James Calder, Altany Craik, Linda Erskine, David Graham, Jim Leishman, Derek Noble, Gordon Pryde, David Ross and Jan Wincott.

Abstained/

Abstained – 33

Councillors Tom Adams, Blair Allan, Lynn Ballantyne-Wardlaw, David Barratt, Auxi Barrera, Aude Boubaker-Calder, Al Clark, Eugene Clarke, Fiona Corps, Colin Davidson, Dave Dempsey, Sean Dillon, Graeme Downie, Derek Glen, Brian Goodall, Peter Gulline, Jean Hall Muir, Cara Hilton, Gary Holt, Andy Jackson, James Leslie, Carol Lindsay, Jane Ann Liston, Donald Lothian, David MacDiarmid, Julie MacDougall, Sarah Neal, Nicola Patrick, Sam Steele, Jonny Tepp, Andrew Verrecchia, Darren Watt and Daniel Wilson.

Decision

The Council:-

- (1) agreed to appoint Alastair Crockett of Cupar Baptist Church as the third person interested in the promotion of religious education;
- (2) noted the resignation of George Haggarty and the subsequent nomination of Mary Caldwell as the Roman Catholic religious representative; and
- (3) agreed to appoint Mary Caldwell as the Roman Catholic religious representative.

35. APPOINTMENT TO LICENSING BOARD

The Council considered a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services inviting the Council to make appointments to the Licensing Board.

Decision

The Council agreed to appoint Councillors Gary Holt and Lea McLelland to the Licensing Board.

36. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

The Council considered a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services which required the Council to consider motions submitted in terms of Standing Order No. 8.1.

In terms of Standing Order No. 8.1(2), the Provost agreed to accept an urgent motion in relation to the remit for Area Committees to allow the Council to conduct its business effectively until such time as a review of the List of Committee Powers has been undertaken.

Motion

Councillor Wilson, seconded by Councillor Suttie, moved as follows:-

“Fracking - Following the Conservative Leadership Husting events where the candidates made several references to interfering in Scotland’s powers, Fife Council re-iterates its opposition to all forms of fracking and any unconventional gas extraction (UGE) in the region.

Fracking/

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Fracking is inconsistent with environmental policies and contrary to the wishes of the people of Scotland.”

Amendment 1

Councillor Calder, seconded by Councillor Tepp, moved as follows:-

“Fife Council notes that onshore oil and gas licensing is a devolved power of the Scottish Government, and that the Scottish Government’s policy position is not to issue licenses for “fracking” .

Fife Council re-iterates its opposition to all forms of unconventional gas extraction (UGE) in the region, including fracking, because fossil-fuel extraction is inconsistent with any environmental policy designed to promote decarbonisation.”

Amendment 2

Councillor Kathleen Leslie, seconded by Councillor Lawson, moved as follows:-

“Fife Council recognises that recent events prove that every possibility of improving the energy security of the UK should be investigated.

Council therefore believes that, providing the safety of communities in potential fracking areas can be secured and local community support is sought, the potential of unconventional gas extraction should not be excluded.”

With the agreement of the Provost the mover of the motion and the mover of amendment 1 agreed to conjoin. The amended conjoined motion read as follows:-

“Fife Council having previously declared a climate emergency and opposed Fracking in 2017, and UGE in 2016. Today we re-iterate that position. Fife opposes Fracking.

Following the recent policy changes by the new Prime Minister and her Government at Westminster, Fife Council re-iterates its opposition to all forms of fracking and any unconventional gas extraction (UGE) in the region, in particular as fossil-fuel extraction is inconsistent with any environmental policy designed to promote decarbonisation.

Fife Council notes that onshore oil and gas licensing is a devolved power of the Scottish Government, and that the Scottish Government’s policy position is not to issue licenses for “fracking” .

Fracking is inconsistent with environmental policies and contrary to the wishes of the people of Fife.

Fife Council re-iterates its opposition to all forms of unconventional gas extraction (UGE) in the region.”

Roll/

Roll Call

For the Amended Conjoined Motion – 60 votes

Councillors David Alexander, Blair Allan, Naz Anis-Miah, Lesley Backhouse, Alistair Bain, Lynn Ballantyne-Wardlaw, David Barratt, Auxi Barrera, John Beare, Aude Boubaker-Calder, Patrick Browne, John Caffrey, James Calder, Ken Caldwell, Alistair Cameron, Alex Campbell, Rod Cavanagh, Al Clark, Eugene Clarke, Fiona Corps, Altany Craik, Colin Davidson, Sean Dillon, Graeme Downie, Linda Erskine, Derek Glen, Brian Goodall, David Graham, Jean Hall Muir, Judy Hamilton, Alycia Hayes, Cara Hilton, Stefan Hoggan-Radu, Gary Holt, Andy Jackson, Louise Kennedy-Dalby, Jim Leishman, Rosemary Liewald, Carol Lindsay, Jane Ann Liston, Donald Lothian, David MacDiarmid, Julie MacDougall, Lea McLelland, Lynn Mowatt, Sarah Neal, Derek Noble, John O'Brien, Nicola Patrick, Gordon Pryde, David Ross, Sam Steele, Alistair Suttie, Jonny Tepp, Ann Verner, Andrew Verrecchia, Ross Vettraino, Craig Walker, Daniel Wilson and Jan Wincott.

For Amendment 2 – 7 votes

Councillors Dave Dempsey, Gavin Ellis, Peter Gulline, Robin Lawson, James Leslie, Kathleen Leslie and Darren Watt.

Decision

The Council agreed in terms of the amended conjoined motion.

Councillor Kennedy left the meeting during consideration of the above item.

Councillor Caffrey left the meeting following consideration of the above item.

Urgent Motion

Councillor Ross, seconded by Councillor Graham, moved as follows:-

“Council notes that recent meetings of several Area Committees have agreed motions inviting Council to consider the remit of Area Committees in relation to the recent Stagecoach consultation.

Council notes that the Administration had already indicated that it intends to take forward a revision of the remit of Area Committees as part of a further review of the Council's Governance Framework.

Council notes that a full review of the Governance Framework is anticipated in the next few months.

Council agrees, in the interim, that the remit of Area Committees in Committee Powers should be amended by adding the following:-

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The Area Committees will have the following powers

7.2.4 to consider motions brought forward by members of the Area Committee inviting the Area Committee to discuss and express a view on matters of concern in their local communities.”

Amendment

Councillor Beare, seconded by Councillor Walker, moved as follows:-

Amend paragraph 3 to:-

“Council notes that a full review of the Governance Framework will be presented to the Council for consideration at its meeting on December 8th.”

With the agreement of the Provost, the mover of the motion agreed to accept the amendment and the amended motion read as follows:-

“Council notes that recent meetings of several Area Committees have agreed motions inviting Council to consider the remit of Area Committees in relation to the recent Stagecoach consultation.

Council notes that the Administration had already indicated that it intends to take forward a revision of the remit of Area Committees as part of a further review of the Council’s Governance Framework.

Council notes that a full review of the Governance Framework will be presented to the Council for consideration at its meeting on December 8th.

Council agrees, in the interim, that the remit of Area Committees in Committee Powers should be amended by adding the following:-

The Area Committees will have the following powers

7.2.4 to consider motions brought forward by members of the Area Committee inviting the Area Committee to discuss and express a view on matters of concern in their local communities.”

Decision

The Council agreed the amended motion unanimously.

37. BUSINESS BROUGHT FORWARD BY THE PROVOST AS A MATTER OF URGENCY

It was noted that there was no business to be brought forward under this item.