



VOLUME OF MINUTES

Council Meeting: 10 September 2025

PAGES

Special Planning Applications Committee	17 June 2025	1189 – 1192
Cabinet	19 June 2025	1193 – 1196
Audit and Scrutiny Committee	19 June 2025	1197 – 1204
Council	25 June 2025	1205 – 1216
Appeals Committee	17 July 2025	1217 – 1218
Special Licensing Committee	22 July 2025	1219 – 1220
Licensing Committee	5 August 2025	1221 – 1222
Planning Applications Committee	6 August 2025	1223 – 1226
Cabinet	14 August 2025	1227 – 1230
Audit and Scrutiny Committee	14 August 2025	1231 – 1234
Education Committee	21 August 2025	1235 – 1238

BLANK PAGE

MINUTE
of
SPECIAL PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Minute of meeting held at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 17th June 2025.

Present:

Councillor Paul Edlin

Provost Mary Montague
Councillor Andrew Morrison

Attending:

Michaela Sullivan*, Head of Place; Michelle McGuckin, Chief Planner and Building Standards Manager; Nicola McEleny, Senior Solicitor; Derek Scott, Principal Planner (Development Management); Fiona Morrison, Planner; and Lesleyann Burns, Democratic Services Officer.

(*) denotes remote attendance

Apologies:

Apologies were received from Councillors Annette Ireland and Jim McLean (Vice Chair).

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

1234. In accordance with Standing Order No.16, the Committee was required to appoint a chair for this meeting from those Members present.

Accordingly, Provost Montague, seconded by Councillor Morrison, proposed that Councillor Edlin be appointed Chair. This proposal was accepted unanimously.

Councillor Edlin in the Chair

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1235. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

1236. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Environment on an application for planning permission requiring consideration by the Committee.

It was agreed that the applications be determined as indicated at Appendix 1 accompanying this Minute, particular reference being made to the following:-

- (i) 2024/0610/TP –Erection of residential development (comprising 26 flats in 2 blocks) with car parking, landscaping and other associated works. (amended plans received)

The Principal Planner was heard further on the report, in the course of which he summarised the 26 representations that had been received.

He provided further information on the relevant planning policies and assessments and stated that the proposal was considered to comply with the terms of the development plan, including NPF4 and LDP2.

Members expressed concerns around the entrance to the site, parking, whether the site was in keeping with a residential style of development, as well as privacy from the verandas and windows.

Following discussion of the application, Councillor Morrison, seconded by Councillor Edlin, moved that the recommendation of the report be rejected and planning permission refused.

The reason for refusal was the application was contrary to Policy D1 parts 1, 2, 4, 8, 10, 15 and 17 of the adopted East Renfrewshire Local Development Plan 2 as: (i) the development would result in a significant loss of character or amenity to the surrounding area; (ii) the proposal is not appropriate to its location and is not of a size, scale, height, massing, density and layout that is in keeping with the buildings in the locality; (iii) does not create a well-defined structure of streets, public spaces and buildings; (iv) does not promote permeable and legible places through a clear sustainable movement hierarchy; (v) does not demonstrate that safe and functional pedestrian, cycle and vehicular access, and parking facilities and infrastructure, including for disabled and visitor parking, is provided in accordance with the Council's Roads Development Guide; (vi) the amenity of the occupants of the adjacent buildings will be adversely affected by overlooking; and (vii) the amenity of residents would be adversely affected by noise, dust, pollution and poor air quality.

Provost Montague disagreed and wished to approve the application.

The Committee, therefore, refused planning permission.

CHAIR

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997
AS AMENDED BY THE PLANNING ETC (SCOTLAND) ACT 2006
PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997**

Draft index of applications under the above acts to be considered by Planning Applications Committee
on 17th June 2025.

Reference No: 2024/0610/TP

Ward: 2

Applicant:

Westpoint Homes Ltd
C/o Icen Projects Ltd
201 West George Street
Glasgow
G2 2LW

Agent:

Hannah Sally
201 West George Street
Glasgow
G2 2LW

Site: Site Of Former Mearns Primary School School Road Newton Mearns East Renfrewshire

Description: Erection of residential development (comprising 26 flats in 2 blocks) with car parking, landscaping and other associated works. (amended plans received)

Please click [here](#) for further information on this application

MINUTE
of
CABINET

Minute of meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 19 June 2025.

Present:

Councillor Owen O'Donnell (Leader)	Councillor Danny Devlin
Councillor Andrew Anderson (Vice Chair)	Councillor Katie Pragnell

Councillor O'Donnell, Leader, in the Chair

Attending:

Steven Quinn, Chief Executive; Caitriona McAuley, Director of Environment; Louise Pringle, Director of Business Operations and Partnerships; Mark Ratter, Director of Education; Siobhan McColgan, Head of Education Services (Equality and Equity); Ian Pye, Head of Sports and Physical Activity, East Renfrewshire Leisure and Culture Trust; Jamie Reid, Head of Communities and Transformation; Kenny Barr, Senior Programme Manager; John Buchanan, Operations Manager; Mary Docherty, Education Resources Senior Manager; and John Burke, Democratic Services Officer.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1237. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

UPDATE ON THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME

1238. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships on the achievements of the Digital Transformation Strategy 2021-2025, to formally close that phase of the Council's digital journey and to outline the next steps toward a new strategy.

The Council's Digital Transformation Strategy for 2021-2025 had played a pivotal role in transforming how the Council worked and served residents. Highlights of its achievements were given in the report, and case studies on key projects delivered, such as the Revenues and Benefits Services Re-design were attached in the annexes to the report.

The report also reflected upon lessons learned from the Strategy that would inform future iterations and help to enhance resilience and modernise service delivery.

It was explained that the next phase of the Digital Transformation Strategy would take account of national thinking and contribute to other key strategies within the Council, including "A Place to Grow". Work was underway and the new strategy was expected to be brought forward to a meeting later in 2025.

Members welcomed the report and discussed the implications of AI and the case studies provided in the annexes.

Following the discussion, the Cabinet:-

- (a) noted the wide range of achievements delivered across the three programmes of the 2021-2025 Digital Transformation Strategy;
- (b) acknowledged the formal closure of the 2021-2025 Strategy's period; and
- (c) noted the intention to bring forward a refreshed Digital Strategy later in 2025.

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL FOR DIRECT BID TO HERIOT-WATT SCHOLAR

1239. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Education seeking approval to continue the Council's subscription to the Heriot-Watt Scholar online learning platform for the benefit of schools across East Renfrewshire

It was noted that the purchase of this subscription had previously been dealt with directly by the Chief Officer – Legal and Procurement under delegated powers. However, taking account of cumulative value of previous subscriptions and planned spend going forward, it now had exceeded the threshold for Cabinet approval as per clause 23 of the Council's Contract Standing Orders.

The details of the subscription and online learning materials made available to schools were outlined in the report, with direct purchase from Heriot-Watt considered to be the most appropriate avenue given the proprietary nature of the services provided.

The Cabinet approved a direct purchase under Regulation 33(1) (b) (iii) of the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015 from Heriot-Watt Scholar for access to the online learning platform at an estimated cost of £65,000 across academic years 2025/26 to 2027/28

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY YEAR 2 PROGRESS REPORT

1240. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Education on the progress made in year 2 of the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy.

The Strategy aligned with the East Renfrewshire Outcome Delivery Plan, Community Plan and Fairer EastRen Plan, as well as supporting the Council's "A Place to Grow" outcomes.

The report set out a high level summary of the progress in year 2 of the strategy, and key achievements were highlighted within the report. Details were also provided of identified areas for improvement work, which were fleshed out further within the progress report.

Members scrutinised the detail of the report, discussing various topics, such as partnership working with Early Years facilities, encouraging staff engagement and training, the impact of COVID on the outcomes of the Strategy and the Club Accredited scheme and Aging Well programme.

Following the discussion, the Cabinet noted the Year 2 Progress Report on East Renfrewshire Council Sport and Physical Activity Strategy 2023-2028 attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

LOVE TO RIDE – NEGOTIATED CONTRACT AWARD (HOMOLOGATED)

1241. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment proposing homologation of the decision taken by two Cabinet members in April 2025 to approve the awarding of a negotiated contract to “Love to Ride Ltd” for the provision of the “Ride 365” programme.

Details of the programme were provided in the report, with Councillors O'Donnell and Devlin having provided approval to the proposals. A contract had been awarded for an initial 12 month period with the option to extend for a further 12 months to a total contract value of £80,000 over the 2 years. This was fully funded by external grant funding with no cost to the Council.

The Cabinet homologated the decision to award a negotiated contract to “Love to Ride Ltd” to provide the “Ride 365” programme.

THE EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL (B769 STEWARTON ROAD, B7087 CROOKFUR ROAD & C9 AURS ROAD, NEWTON MEARNs)(30MPH SPEED LIMIT) ORDER 2025

1242. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment seeking approval for an order changing speed limits on sections of the B769 Stewarton Road, B7087 Crookfur Road and C9 Aurs Road, Newton Mearns.

The Cabinet:-

- (a) noted the content of the report and approved “The East Renfrewshire Council (B769 Stewarton Road, B7087 Crookfur Road & C9 Aurs Road, Newton Mearns)(30mph Speed Limit) Order 2025; and
- (b) delegated to the Director of Environment the implementation of the Order in accordance with associated statutory procedures.

CHAIR

MINUTE
of
AUDIT & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minute of meeting held at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 19 June 2025.

Present:

Councillor Andrew Morrison (Chair)
Councillor Tony Buchanan (Vice Chair)
Councillor Paul Edlin

Councillor David Macdonald
Provost Mary Montague
Councillor Gordon Wallace

Councillor Morrison in the Chair

Attending:

Louise Pringle, Director of Business Operations and Partnerships; Kirsty Stanners, Head of Finance (Chief Financial Officer); Michelle Blair, Chief Auditor; Barbara Clark, Chief Accountant; Alison Ballingall, Senior Revenues Manager; Morag Brown, Strategic Services Senior Lead; Aidan Holligan, Strategic Services Assistant; Linda Hutchison, Senior Democratic Services Officer; and Bethany Mitchell, Assistant Democratic Services Officer.

Also Attending:

Grace Scanlin, Ernst and Young.

Apology:

Councillor Annette Ireland.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1243. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

CHAIR'S REPORT – VARIOUS ISSUES

1244. The following matters were raised during the Chair's report:-

(i) Meeting with External Auditor

Councillor Morrison reported that he had met with Grace Scanlin of the External Audit Team earlier in the week at which a range of issues had been discussed, including progress regarding the audit of the financial statements to 31 March 2025, and the impact of new International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) on these.

On a related issue, he highlighted that, arising from the Committee's self-assessment, it had been recommended that members of the Committee attend the private meeting

with the External Auditor in August or September prior to the Committee considering the final Annual Accounts and draft Annual Audit Report. Subject to formal approval of that recommendation by the Committee later in the meeting when the outcome of the self-assessment would be considered, discussions on this would be pursued.

(ii) **Chief Accountant**

Councillor Morrison highlighted the forthcoming retirement of the Chief Accountant who was attending her final meeting of the Committee. On behalf of the Committee, he thanked her for the support she had provided to it over many years, and wished her a long and very happy retirement.

The Committee noted the report.

UNAUDITED ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR 2024/25

1245. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 27 March 2025 (Page 1124, Item 1163 refers), when the 2024/25 Annual Audit Plan and timetable for publication of related documents had been noted, the Committee considered a report by the Head of Finance (Chief Financial Officer) on the unaudited Annual Accounts for 2024/25 which had been submitted for audit to Ernst & Young, and were attached to the report for consideration in line with the Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2014.

It was reported that the Council's financial affairs had again been managed within its operational budget, returning departmental budget surpluses totalling £2.5m, in line with what had been reported to Cabinet in March 2025, the main reasons for which were itemised. This had enabled the transfer of £1m to the Capital Reserve, as anticipated in the report on the Revenue Estimates submitted to the Council in February 2025. The balance of £1.5m had been retained in the Council's un-earmarked General Reserve, increasing this to 2.7% of the overall 2024/25 budgeted net revenue expenditure and 2.5% of the 2025/26 budgeted net revenue expenditure.

It was confirmed that the Council's overall General Fund reserve balances as at 31 March 2025 totalled £45.852m, which represented an increase of £4.086m from 2024/25, the reasons for which were summarised. This was comparable with the budgeted position of a reduction of £8.477m, representing an improved in-year position of £12.563m. £65.394m of Capital expenditure had been invested across both General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) projects. There had been an operating surplus of £0.831m on the HRA, which had increased the accumulated surplus balance to carry forward to £2.483m.

The Chief Accountant commented on key aspects of the report, including the proposed transfer of £1.0m to the Capital Reserve, the level of un-earmarked General Reserve which adhered to the Council's Reserve Policy, and the main reasons savings had been achieved. She also commented further on investment of Capital expenditure and the HRA surplus which was mainly attributable to a pension windfall, with further detail set out in the Management Commentary.

Councillor Morrison thanked all of those involved in the preparation of the draft Annual Accounts. In response to him, the Chief Accountant clarified why the number of teachers reported to have earned £50,000 and over had fallen quite substantially in 2024/25 compared to the previous year, which was due to a number having fallen under a higher tax bracket in 2023/24 on receipt of back pay for 2022/23.

In response to Councillor Edlin who raised an issue about debtors, the Head of Finance (Chief Financial Officer) explained that the increase in trade receivables reported between years was due to short term fluctuations and timing issues. The Chief Accountant undertook to provide

some further clarification on this for circulation. Also in response to him, the Chief Accountant undertook to seek and provide further clarification on investment returns between years in relation to the Strathclyde Pension Fund for circulation.

Responding to a query from Councillor Wallace, the Head of Finance (Chief Financial Officer) commented that achieving departmental budget surpluses totalling £2.5m was a good outcome, referring to related issues and highlighting that many local authorities had budget overspends. Ms Scanlin commented that the result reflected good financial discipline.

In response to Councillor Morrison, the Head of Finance (Chief Financial Officer) referred to CIPFA's view, which remained unchanged, on the level of unearmarked Reserves that should be maintained relative to the level of budgeted net revenue expenditure, indicating that it would be beneficial to increase the current level a little but not by too much when budgetary gaps existed.

The Committed agreed:-

- (a) that the Chief Accountant provide further clarification on issues raised regarding debtor movements between years; and movement in investment returns in relation to the Strathclyde Pension Fund for circulation to members of the Committee; and
- (b) otherwise, to note the content of the unaudited Annual Accounts for 2024/25 in respect of which a report on the final Accounts and related documents would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

1246. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting 20 June 2024 (Page 885, Item 880 refers), when the Code of Corporate Governance actions for 2024/25 had been approved, the Committee considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships providing an update on progress against improvement actions since then, and seeking approval of a new Code for 2024/25 and to recommend to the Council approval of the draft Annual Governance Statement (AGS).

The report reiterated the Council's responsibilities for the conduct of its business, defined what the Code of Corporate Governance was, and explained that the proposed updates took account of guidance from CIPFA and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE), *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government*. It also itemised requirements with which the Council should comply under the framework.

The report summarised progress on the 2024/25 actions, highlighting that seven improvement actions listed had been completed and those carried forward into the 2025/26 Plan. The updated Code for 2025/26, setting out arrangements which demonstrated how the Council fulfilled the seven governance principles outlined in national guidance, was appended to the report. Self-assessment against the nationally prescribed criteria had found the Council to be mostly fully compliant across the principles, other than in a small number of areas where there was partial compliance pending actions being taken over the forthcoming months. Several new actions had been identified to further improve compliance with the Code.

Having commented on the draft AGS to be published in the Annual Audit Report and Accounts later in the year, the report concluded that the Council was governed by sound and effective internal management controls, and continued to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the CIPFA/SOLACE framework. Progress on planned actions for 2024/25 had been posted on the Council's website, as would the 2025/26 Code, subject to it being approved by the Committee.

The Strategic Services Senior Lead highlighted key issues within the report, during which she confirmed that the CIPFA/SOLACE framework remained unchanged, and emphasised the importance of the Council's Corporate Governance arrangements. Having provided further clarification on the action taken, or to be taken, to deliver full compliance with the Code, she also commented on the draft AGS.

Provost Montague commended a range of good engagement work with citizens and groups, but suggested that further engagement at a grass roots level with neighbourhoods might be merited on what was being done and to gather views on issues. The Director of Business Operations and Partnerships emphasised that the importance of communication was recognised and a key aspect of A Place to Grow, citing examples of ways in which communication was taking place and being improved to demonstrate commitment to this. Examples provided included collaboration with Voluntary Action East Renfrewshire on digital notice boards, community learning and development work, participatory budgeting on grants, and officer training on communication.

In reply to Councillor Morrison, it was confirmed that a report would be submitted to the full Council on the outcome of the review of the Scheme of Delegated Functions and Scheme of Administration when the Working Group established to review these and some other governance documents had concluded its work. It was clarified that the Group's membership included one member of each political group and a representative of the Independent Elected Members.

The Committee agreed to:-

- (a) note progress on the 2024/25 Code of Corporate Governance improvement actions;
- (b) approve the Code of Corporate Governance updates and actions for 2025/26; and
- (c) to recommend to the Council the approval of the 2024/25 Annual Governance Statement.

NATIONAL EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT – A REVIEW OF HOUSING BENEFIT OVERPAYMENTS 2018/19 TO 2021/22: A THEMATIC STUDY

1247. The Committee considered a report by the Clerk on the publication in February 2025 of a report by Audit Scotland entitled *A Review of Housing Benefit Overpayments 2018/19 to 2021/22: A Thematic Study*. Under the Committee's specialisation arrangements, Councillor Macdonald was leading the review of the report. The Director of Business Operations and Partnerships had been asked to provide comments, and a copy of that feedback was appended to the report.

Having summarised issues commented on in the Audit Scotland report, the report provided an update on the local position, referring to the complexity and frequently changing issue of benefits, and highlighting that national delays regarding implementation of Universal Credit (UC) had resulted in Housing Benefit caseloads being maintained for far longer than predicted. It was concluded that the Council continued to focus on the collection of Housing Benefit debt, which it was recognised was one of the most challenging to collect due to customers on low incomes, with collection challenges exacerbated by the move to UC. Having itemised other circumstances which had impacted on such debt, it was reported that performance had improved with collection above average in Scotland. The Council already followed best

practice identified by Audit Scotland, but planned to review and implement Audit Scotland recommendations where feasible within resourcing constraints.

Whilst commenting on the report, Councillor Macdonald emphasised that the Council had responded comprehensively and positively to the recommendations made, with many of the arrangements proposed being in place already. He welcomed the Council's performance level compared to the national average, reflecting improvements made year on year in this complex area of work. Councillor Morrison supported the observations made.

The Committee noted the report.

INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25

1248. The Committee considered a report by the Chief Auditor regarding the annual report on the activities of Internal Audit during 2024/25, and providing an independent annual opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's governance, risk management and internal controls based on work undertaken in 2024/25.

The Chief Auditor commented that it had been a successful year for the section, with all audits in the 2024/25 Internal Audit Plan having been completed, except one which had been deferred. She confirmed that 24 reports had been issued relating to planned 2024/25 audit work, satisfactory responses having been received where the dates for these had passed and all recommendations having been accepted by management.

Having referred to updates provided quarterly to the Committee and various Internal Audit reports circulated in full to the Committee's membership, the Chief Auditor reported that 100 days had been used for contingency to deal with 7 issues, none having resulted in a financial loss to the Council. Recommendations had been made, where applicable, to improve existing processes.

Regarding the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS), she referred to the most recent external assessment completed which had been the subject of a report to the Committee in January 2024 on the resulting Quality Assurance Improvement Plan, a copy of which was appended to the report. She clarified that 1 of the 6 actions agreed remained to be implemented on which work would be progressed during the forthcoming months. She also commented on the 3 performance targets which had not been met, reasons for which were specified in the Annual Report.

Regarding the annual statement on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's governance, risk management and internal controls, it was confirmed that based on the information available and work carried out, the Chief Auditor's opinion was that reasonable assurance could be placed upon the adequacy and effectiveness of these controls in the year to 31 March 2025.

Councillor Morrison welcomed the content of the report, thanking the Chief Auditor and her team for their work and support to the Committee. In response to Councillor Wallace, the Chief Auditor confirmed that having a full team had been instrumental in implementing the Plan, and clarified issues that impacted on the performance indicator on the cost of Internal Audit per productive day. In response to Councillor Edlin, she clarified that the number of audit days spent on Integration Joint Board and Health and Social Care Partnership related work was similar to that of other local authorities. Reference was made to Councillor Macdonald's membership of the IJB Performance and Audit Committee as a co-optee.

The Committee agreed:-

1202

- (a) to approve the statement on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's governance, risk management and internal control systems and submit it to the Council; and
- (b) otherwise, to note the Internal Audit Annual Report 2024/25 and associated comments made.

AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – OUTCOME OF SELF-ASSESSMENT

1249. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 8 May 2025 (Page 1159, Item 1198 refers), when it had been noted that discussions on the Committee's self-assessment were ongoing, the Committee considered a report by the Clerk on the outcome of the self-assessment and seeking approval of the observations and recommendations made by the Committee arising from it.

It was explained that in June 2022 the Committee had agreed to undertake two self-assessments prior to the Local Government elections in 2027, one midway through the Administration and one towards the end of it. The report confirmed that the mid-Administration review had commenced in January 2025, and referred to the value of such exercises, the approach adopted and questionnaires used by the Committee. On the basis of the outcome, a list of observations and recommendations on matters where the Committee considered there to be scope to improve had been prepared as referred to in a related Action Plan, a copy of which was appended to the report for consideration. It was highlighted that progress on implementation of the Action Plan would be reviewed by the Committee in due course.

Having heard the Clerk comment on the self-assessment, Councillor Wallace sought observations of the Head of Finance (Chief Financial Officer) on the Committee's performance. She stated that the self-assessment had been very thorough, and commented on the contribution to it made by Elected Members which fulfilled the requirement to complete the review. Whilst welcoming the Action Plan, she expressed the opinion that it should not detract from the fact that, in the majority of areas, the Committee was already compliant with best practice. She suggested that members of the Committee should be proud of what they were doing, which included asking a range of good questions, adding that the Committee's meetings were well organised.

Referring to aspects of the report which covered requests for further information and feedback on issues, Councillor Morrison reiterated a point made by him and officers on a number of previous occasions and which was reflected in the Action Plan. This was that advance notice of questions or issues on which members of the Committee intended to seek clarification or feedback was helpful and appreciated, especially as some of the areas considered by the Committee were very complex in nature, such as the Annual Accounts. He stressed that this would increase the likelihood of a comprehensive response being able to be provided which met the needs of the Committee.

Councillor Wallace, supported by Councillor Morrison, thanked the Clerk for her work in support of the Committee.

The Committee agreed:-

- (a) to approve the summary of observations and recommendations made arising from its self-assessment, and that the recommendations for improvement be implemented in accordance with the Action Plan in Appendix 2 of the report;
- (b) to review progress with implementation of the recommendations in due course; and

- (c) to note that it was intended to complete a further self-assessment in late 2026/early 2027, prior to the Local Government elections in May 2027.

CHAIR

MINUTE
of
EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

Minute of meeting held at 5.00pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 25 June 2025.

Present:

Councillor Andrew Anderson
Councillor Caroline Bamforth
Councillor Tony Buchanan
Deputy Provost Kate Campbell
Councillor Angela Convery
Councillor Danny Devlin*
Councillor Paul Edlin
Councillor Annette Ireland*

Councillor Chris Lunday*
Councillor Colm Merrick
Provost Mary Montague
Councillor David Macdonald
Councillor Andrew Morrison
Councillor Owen O'Donnell (Leader)
Councillor Katie Pragnell
Councillor Gordon Wallace*

Provost Montague in the Chair

Attending:

Steven Quinn, Chief Executive; Alexis Chappell, Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP); Caitriona McAuley, Director of Environment; Louise Pringle, Director of Business Operations and Partnerships; Mark Ratter, Director of Education; Lesley Bairden, Head of Finance and Resources (Chief Financial Officer), HSCP; Kirsty Stanners, Head of Finance (Chief Financial Officer); Gerry Mahon, Chief Officer (Legal and Procurement); Kenny Markwick, Head of Environment (Operations); Mark Rodgers, Head of Environment (Housing and Property); Michaela Sullivan, Head of Place; Barry Tudhope, Democratic Services Manager; John Burke, Democratic Services Officer; and Bethany Mitchell, Assistant Democratic Services Officer.

(*) indicates remote attendance.

Apologies:

Councillors Jim McLean.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1250. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

MINUTE'S SILENCE – COUNCILLOR BETTY CUNNINGHAM OBE

1251. Provost Montague referred to the passing of Councillor Betty Cunningham OBE and called for those present to observe a minute's silence in her memory.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1252. The Provost indicated that, to facilitate the smooth running of the meeting, the items would be considered in the order shown below.

NOTICE OF MOTION – PLANNING MATTERS

1253. In accordance with Standing Order 27, the following notice of motion had been submitted by Councillor Edlin, seconded by Councillor Morrison:

Council hereby:

- 1. Acknowledges the decision of the Planning Applications Committee on 15 April 2025 to conditionally grant planning permission in respect of application 2025/0043/TP for the construction and operation of a 40 MW battery energy storage facility, including associated infrastructure, substation, security fencing, CCTV, security lighting, and landscaping.*
- 2. Notes that a previous application (2024/0168/TP) for an almost identical development was rejected by the Planning Applications Committee, a decision subsequently upheld by the Scottish Government Reporter following an unsuccessful appeal by the developer.*
- 3. Recognises the significant similarities between the two applications and the clear precedent set by the Reporter's ruling, which aligns with Local Development Plan Policy D3 regarding the development in the greenbelt.*
- 4. Therefore requests that officers prepare a report for the next appropriate Council meeting detailing:*
 - The legal and procedural steps required to issue a revocation order.*
 - An assessment of the applicant's compliance with all imposed planning conditions, including those still to be discharged before development can proceed.*
 - Clarification on potential compensation liabilities under the Planning Act, particularly where the applicant does not hold freehold title to the land in question.*
 - Consideration of the expediency of such a course of action.*
- 5. Further requests that the report includes any relevant legal and financial implications for the Council arising from a potential revocation, ensuring fully informed decision making.*
- 6. This motion seeks to uphold the integrity of the planning process, ensure policy consistency, and protect the Council's interests in the event of legal or financial consequences.*

Councillor Edlin summarised the motion and his reasons for proposing it

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

1254. The Council considered and approved the Minute of the meeting held on 23 April 2025.

MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES

The Council considered and approved the Minutes of the meetings of the undernoted:-

- (a) Audit and Scrutiny Committee – 20 February 2025;
- (b) Cabinet – 6 March 2025;
- (c) Licensing Committee – 11 March 2025;
- (d) Cabinet – 27 March 2025;
- (e) Audit and Scrutiny Committee – 27 March 2025;
- (f) Local Review Body – 2 April 2025;
- (g) Education Committee – 3 April 2025; and
- (h) Appeals Committee – 10 April 2025.

AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 27 MARCH 2025 – INTERIM TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT 2024/25 – QUARTER 4

1255. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee of 27 March 2025 (Page 1120, Item 1160 refers), when it had been agreed to recommend to the Council that proposed increases in the Prudential Indicators be approved arising from the introduction of International Financial Reporting Standard 16 (IFRS 16), and that organisations specified for the investment of surplus funds also be approved, the Council considered a report by the Head of Finance (Chief Financial Officer) reporting on Treasury Management activities for the quarter ending 30 April 2025.

Councillor Morrison clarified that no further borrowing had been taken during the quarter due to current high interest rates but, that as balances depleted, this position would be unsustainable. Having confirmed that treasury management performance was satisfactory relative to performance indicators measuring risk, prudence and debt, he referred to IFRS 16 and related issues, and the investment of surplus funds.

The Council agreed to approve the:-

- (a) proposed increases in the Prudential Indicators as a result of the introduction of the new financial reporting standard, IFRS16; and
- (b) organisations for the investment of surplus funds, in accordance with Appendix 8 to the report.

CABINET – 6 MARCH 2025 – GENEREAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME

1256. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Cabinet of 6 March 2025 (Page 1105, Item 1138 refers), when it had been agreed to recommend that the Council note and approve movements within the General Fund Capital Programme, and that a shortfall of £0.362m and income and expenditure be managed and reported on a regular basis, the Council considered a report by the Head of Finance (Chief Financial Officer) monitoring income and expenditure as at 31 December 2024 against the approved Programme, and recommending adjustments where possible.

In response to Councillor Ireland, the Director of Education, supported by the Head of Finance (Chief Financial Officer), clarified that following a joint assessment with the Scottish Government and Scottish Futures Trust, priority was being given to expanding the school meals service at Giffnock Primary School where the greatest challenges were faced, but that all of the capital funds secured would be used as intended, albeit with some expenditure being

1208

rephased. It was confirmed that parents were being contacted to help maximise take up of entitlement to free school meals, and that should additional funds become available, work on extending school meal facilities at other schools could be done.

The Council:-

- (a) approved and noted the movements within the 2024/25 Programme; and
- (b) noted the shortfall of £0.362m and that income and expenditure on the Programme would be managed and reported on a regular basis.

CABINET – 6 MARCH 2025 – HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME

1257. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Cabinet of 6 March 2025 (Page 1105, Item 1139 refers), when it had been agreed to recommend that the Council note and approve movements within the Housing Capital Programme, and note that a shortfall of £0.119m and income and expenditure would be managed and reported on a regular basis, the Council considered a report by the Head of Finance (Chief Financial Officer) and Director of Environment monitoring income and expenditure as at 31 December 2024 against the approved Programme, and recommending adjustments where required.

In response to Councillor Morrison who sought an update on progress regarding net zero standards for social housing given that the age of some boilers in these properties was detrimental to heating bills, the Head of Environment (Housing and Property) reported that guidance on this was still awaited, on receipt of which investment plans would be updated. Councillor Morrison expressed disappointment that the guidance had not yet been received.

Councillor Ireland sought clarification on both internal element renewals and aids and adaptations, work on both of which had been delayed due to increased contractor costs and contractor changes. The Head of Environment (Housing and Property) confirmed that work on these was being rephrased, and that a change of contractor had been necessary, regarding which there would be adherence to the approved procurement process.

The Council agreed to note:-

- (a) and approve the movements within the 2024/25 Programme; and
- (b) the shortfall of £0.119m and that income and expenditure on the Programme would be managed and reported on a regular basis.

STATEMENTS BY CONVENERS AND REPRESENTATIVES ON JOINT BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

1258. The following statements were made:-

- (a) **Councillor Anderson – Convener for Education, Culture and Leisure**

Councillor Anderson commented that investment of £250k in gym and fitness equipment in leisure centres had helped the Culture and Leisure Trust sustain high growth in gym membership, which had almost doubled since 2015 and stood at an all-time high of 4,340 members.

Referring to the refurbishment of Neilston Library, he reported that the facility had reopened in early February to acclaim from both staff and library users, a

much more welcoming and modern space having been created that the community could be proud of.

Councillor Anderson also referred to work completed on changing rooms and the Sauna and Health Suite in Barrhead Foundry. He highlighted that, despite the unavailability of the pool for lessons during the completion of the work, the Learn to Swim Programme had continued to grow to a record 3,326 participants, representing a 19% increase compared to the previous year.

Whilst reporting on the Annual East Renfrewshire Dance Championships in March, Councillor Anderson commented that he had had the pleasure of being part of the audience at Eastwood High School. He highlighted that dancers from Isobel Mair School, 16 primary schools and 7 secondary schools had performed over two nights, commending and congratulating the competitors for their performances, and the teachers and parents who helped choreograph the dances. Highlights had included the Isobel Mair Wheels in Motion team.

Finally, Councillor Anderson reported that March had witnessed the launch of the small-sided football season in East Renfrewshire, delivered by the Trust in partnership with East Renfrewshire Soccer Development Association. Over 3,000 players, from 285 teams, had played 1,500 fixtures across 10 venues in the area, illustrating the continued growth of the small-sided game locally.

(b) Councillor Pragnell – Convener for Social Work and Health

Councillor Pragnell reported that she and Councillor O'Donnell had written to the First Minister, asking if the Scottish Government planned to adhere to its commitment to abolish all non-residential social care charges by the end of the parliamentary term. Having confirmed that a copy of the letter and response had been circulated to all Elected Members, she commented that the response from the Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport had been deeply disappointing, confirming that, at present, there was little hope that the charges would be abolished. She reported that the Minister had attended only one meeting focused on ending the charges in the past two and a half years, and that the number of wider Scottish Government meetings on non-residential social care charging had drastically reduced. She considered this news to be a blow, both for those who campaigned for abolishment of the charges and relied on these services.

Councillor Pragnell reported that the 2025/26 budget had been approved at the most recent Integration Joint Board (IJB) meeting in March, the Board having sought assurance that statutory duties could be met and that the budget was achievable. The IJB remained concerned about prescribing pressures, recognised this was a national issue, and had taken assurance from development work the NHS Board was progressing on a whole systems approach to prescribing. The latest budget monitoring showed a projected underspend of £288,000, which was a significant improvement from the overspend previously reported. This was due mainly to an additional £1m from NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde to help address prescribing pressures.

The IJB had received an update on The Promise following the publication of the 5th Anniversary Report which was to be considered by the Council later in the meeting. The IJB had welcomed that The Promise was at the heart of the Council's Children's Services Plans, and commended Children's Services on their positive inspection results on fostering, adoption and adult placement services.

The IJB had received assurance on the closure of Greenlaw Medical Practice, which would continue to operate until every patient had been reallocated on a phased basis which was expected to be concluded by the end of June. An update had also been received on preparedness and current compliance levels with the Health and Care Staffing Scotland Act, regarding which some services remained to achieve substantial assurance. Further guidance was expected from the Care Inspectorate on registered social care services to be developed, which would be the subject of a future IJB seminar.

Councillor Pragnell reported that the IJB had thanked the Chief Officer, HSCP for her leadership, knowledge and experience, following which she thanked her for her service to East Renfrewshire residents over the past 24 years, wishing her a long, happy and well deserved retirement.

The Council noted the statements.

PROVOST ENGAGEMENTS

1259. The Council considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships, providing details of civic engagements attended and civic duties performed by Provost Montague since the meeting on 26 February 2025.

The Council noted the report.

EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS MAINSTREAMING REPORT

1260. The Council considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships seeking approval of the East Renfrewshire Equality and Human Rights Mainstreaming Report.

It was explained that the Council continued to strive towards eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering good relations between those from different protected characteristic groups. Having highlighted that East Renfrewshire had one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse communities in Scotland, the report itemised various requirements the Council had to adhere to under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012.

Structured in line with statutory requirements and mirroring Scottish Government reporting under six principles, the Equality and Human Rights Mainstreaming Report 2025 appended to the report demonstrated how the Council was meeting its duties under the Act. It detailed actions taken to ensure equalities and human rights were embedded throughout the organisation; provided an update on progress made towards achieving 2021 Equality Outcomes over the past 2 years; and focussed on how employees were supported. The 2025–2029 Equalities Outcomes Report, a copy of which was also appended to the report, set out new outcomes for the next four years.

The report concluded that it was aimed to ensure everyone was treated fairly, had equality of opportunity, and was empowered to contribute to their community, referring to the value of the diverse local population, and opportunities to learn from the experiences, perspectives and skills different individuals and communities brought to the area.

In response to Councillor Pragnell, the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships confirmed that the Corporate Management Team had recently approved a new policy on neonatal care which was now in place, information on which would be relayed to employees.

In response to Councillor Ireland, the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships clarified that membership of the Communities Equality Forum was open to groups and individuals with a connection to East Renfrewshire interested in its work, residency within the area not being a requirement under its Terms of Reference. She undertook to provide some examples of the types of people and groups represented on the Forum.

Having highlighted reference in the report to LGBT plus young people being at higher risk of mental health problems and to the LGBT plus community being at higher risk of isolation and loneliness, Councillor Ireland welcomed the report and progress made, or planned, on issues, thanking all officers involved.

In response to Councillor Ireland who sought clarification on when engagement data on Time for Inclusive Education (TIE) would be available, the Head of Education Services (Equality and Equity) clarified that schools engaged via the TIE website and access to on-line training. Although it was not possible to track access to these, engagement was discussed at the Equalities Forum where various resources were shared.

In response to Councillor Morrison who asked how a good sample size could be achieved to determine the extent to which young people felt connected to their communities, the Head of Communities and Transformation confirmed that this issue was continuing to be considered as part of the work on *A Place to Grow*, with there being a range of active engagement mechanisms across schools and communities. Although no data was available thus far, work on this was ongoing linked to *A Place to Grow*, with a view to reporting on this in future years.

Councillor Edlin referred to the importance of Councillors having the opportunity to engage in the Communities Equality Forum.

On the issue of equality, Councillor Wallace commented that support for underrepresented or disadvantage groups could only exist where that support did not discriminate against others, seeking clarification on monitoring done within the Council to minimise the risk of someone being treated more favourably solely because they had a protected characteristic. The Director of Business Operations and Partnerships did not hold any particular concerns regarding this, commenting on various issues including recruitment processes, improved workforce diversity and related issues, and the Equalities Staff Forum attended by employees from across the Council who were concerned with fairness generally. In response to a request from Councillor Wallace to put appropriate monitoring in place to ensure the Council was not at risk of acting unlawfully in terms of positive discrimination, the Chief Executive commented that he was not aware of any instances of such discrimination, but was happy to ensure that appropriate safeguards and mechanisms continued to be in place to allow any such allegations to be reported, which was encouraged, and dealt with appropriately, this being one mechanism through which monitoring was undertaken. He assured Elected Members that any such complaint, including through whistleblowing, would be considered appropriately.

The Council agreed:-

- (a) to acknowledge the duties of the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012;
- (b) to approve the content of the Equality and Human Rights Mainstreaming Report prior to publication (Annex 1);
- (c) to approve the new Equality Outcomes for 2025-2029 (Annex 2); and
- (d) that examples of the membership of the Communities Equality Forum be circulated to all Elected Member for information.

A PLACE TO GROW UPDATE AND YEAR 1 DELIVERY PLAN

1261. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 11 September 2024 (Page 931, Item 931 refers), when the Council had approved the strategic vision *A Place to Grow*, the Council considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships seeking approval of the first-year delivery plan (2025/26) for *A Place to Grow*, the Council's and Community Planning Partnership's vision for East Renfrewshire by 2040, and setting out how this would be progressed further over the coming months.

Having commented on the three pillars on which the vision was built, the report commented on work progressed, since the Plan had been approved, to share with and promote *A Place to Grow* with stakeholders, which had been well-received, and next steps which included a Community Conference in Barrhead on 26 April 2025.

The report referred to the rationalisation of Plans and streamlining of reporting, and the replacement of the previous Outcome Delivery Plan (ODP) with a new Organisational Health Check about the kind of organisation the Council needed to be to deliver *A Place to Grow* and track progress. In terms of Governance, the new Delivery Plan would shape the type of organisational culture, service objectives, employee skills and capabilities and activities needed to deliver successfully *A Place to Grow*. This linked strongly to the new People Strategy, the Council's three values (ambition, kindness and trust) and capabilities (prevention, empowering communities and digital change), and leadership and digital transformation plans, helping to ensure the Council meets its statutory Best Value requirements.

Whilst commenting in detail on the report, the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships referred to the three pillars, the public launch of *A Place to Grow* in December 2024, the forthcoming community conference aimed at continuing the conversation on how it could be brought to life, and how local people and organisations could be taken on that journey and play their part. Whilst an ambitious vision had been set out, collective thoughts and plans for delivering it would iterate, shape and develop over time in partnership with local people.

She clarified that the report considered the first-year Delivery Plan for *A Place to Grow*, attempted to streamline the planning and reporting framework, and set the foundation for the detailed annual reports the Council would consider each summer. She explained how the Delivery Plan made a commitment to partnership-level actions, outlined a new measurement framework, covered statutory requirements of the Community Empowerment Act, and enabled the Council to assess its part in delivering *A Place to Grow*. It was emphasised that strong cross-party partnership and community support was essential to developing the ambitions and priorities of the vision, it being crucial that delivery of *A Place to Grow* was not solely seen as a Council activity as continued engagement, commitment and resources of all stakeholders were required to fully realise its vision.

The Director of Business Operations and Partnerships also referred to a range of related issues, including on-going work on partnership, leadership and governance structures; what the Delivery Plan replaced; and attempts being made to gather information once and use it for multiple purposes whilst joining-up reporting to minimise information duplication. A final report on the ODP would be submitted to the Council in June, reviewing performance in 2024/25, with all future reporting following the framework of *A Place to Grow*.

In response to Councillor Morrison who referred to comparative data available in relation to the ODP, the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships confirmed that comparative data would be provided where possible.

Having welcomed the engagement that had taken place to reach this stage and thanked all those involved in taking these first steps, Councillor O'Donnell commented that he was looking forward to the forthcoming community conference, to which all Elected Members had been invited, and hearing the views of all those attending. Councillor Buchanan echoed those comments, during which he highlighted and welcomed the work done thus far from a firm foundation, referring to the importance of the Community Planning Partnership, and the benefits of rationalising data.

The Council agreed:-

- (a) to note the progress on sharing *A Place to Grow* with stakeholders and developing a Delivery Plan in line with its vision and ambition;
- (b) to approve the year-one delivery plan and measurement framework attached as Annexes 1 and 2 respectively, which replaced the previous Outcome Delivery Plan and introduced a new Organisational Healthcheck section, noting that these would continue to evolve over the coming year and beyond; and
- (c) to note that work was ongoing to develop Community Planning Partnership leadership and governance structures to oversee delivery of the Plan.

SCHEME FOR MEMBERS' REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES 2025/26

1262. The Council considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships on the updated Scheme for Members' Remuneration and Expenses for 2025/26 in accordance with the Local Governance (Scotland) Act 2004 (Remuneration) Amendment Regulations 2025. A copy of the Scheme was appended to the report.

Having referred to recommendations made to the Scottish Government in February 2024 by the Scottish Local Authorities Remuneration Committee (SLARC) following its independent review of Councillor Remuneration, the majority of which had been accepted and implemented, the report referred to changes that required to be made by the Council in light of the amendments to the Regulations.

Councillor Ireland commented on the allocation and recipients of special responsibility payments when the Council's Administration was established in 2022 and increases in Remuneration arising from the implementation of the new Regulations, following which Councillor Wallace and Councillor Buchanan expressed their views on the discussions that had taken place at the time. Councillor O'Donnell stressed that the new levels set recognised new and changing roles of Elected Members, encouraged individuals to stand for Elected Office, and overcame related barriers to that, highlighting that it was not in the Council's gift to apply an alternative scheme.

The Council agreed to note that the Scheme for Members' Remuneration and Expenses had been updated for 2025/26 in terms of Councillor remuneration.

REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS (SCOTLAND) ACT 2000

1263. The Council considered a report by the Chief Officer (Legal and Procurement) regarding the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act (RIPSA) 2000, referring to surveillance activity undertaken by the Council during 2024-25, and seeking approval to amend the Council's Procedure on Covert Surveillance to reflect changes to those designated as approved authorising officers, a copy of which was appended to the report.

1214

The report commented on the purpose of RIPSAs, oversight of the regulatory framework by the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office, changes made to the Council's procedure over time, and a general reduction in surveillance activity undertaken by the Council in favour of a more overt approach. Reference was made to training provided to applicant and authorising officers.

The Council agreed to:-

- (a) note the use of directed surveillance and Covert Human Intelligence Sources during the period of 2024/25; and
- (b) approve the revised Procedure on Covert Surveillance in accordance with Appendix 1 to the report.

EAST RENFREWSHIRE CHILDREN'S SERVICES PROMISE 5TH ANNIVERSARY PROGRESS REPORT

1264. The Council considered a report by the Chief Social Work Officer highlighting the work undertaken by East Renfrewshire Council, the Health and Social Care Partnership and the wider Children's Planning Partnership, the Improving Outcomes for Children and Young People Partnership, in promoting The Promise.

The report highlighted progress with local implementation from 2020 to 2025, since the conclusions of the Independent Care Review has been published and The Promise had been made and launched at a national level. It had acknowledged that the care system in Scotland wasn't working and proposed transformational change over a ten year period in the interests of care experienced children and young people.

Having referred to a national report published in February 2025 by The Promise Oversight Board and related Call to Action considered by the local multi-agency Improving Outcomes for Children and Young People Partnership, it was confirmed that, where necessary, steps would be taken to make further progress locally and ensure areas of improvement were included in East Renfrewshire's *A Place to Grow* strategic vision and the Children's Services Plan.

Determination existed to deliver The Promise in East Renfrewshire by 2030, it having been acknowledged, in agreement with the national Promise Oversight Board, that there was not a moment left to waste, and that there was a need for all agencies to play their part in making this happen. The five year report illustrated the strength of commitment locally to do this. It was concluded that, ultimately, progress would be judged by children, young people and their families and carers as to how well the change needed had taken place,

Having referred to aims of The Promise and welcomed the good work done and progress made locally and nationally, Councillor Ireland referred to an issue raised by a local resident, regarding a Motion brought before the Scottish Parliament by an MSP condemning reports of the overuse of restraint and forced injections at Skye House Psychiatric House and seeking mandatory reporting in any associated legislative framework. More specifically, she asked if there was anything the Council could do to support the Motion, given The Promise and importance of this. The Chief Executive suggested that this was a matter for Glasgow City Council and HSCP to take forward, rather than the Council getting directly involved.

He added that, despite a lot of strong work done locally, complacency needed to be avoided, with a focus placed on local children and making further progress. Councillor Buchanan thanked the Chief Social Work Officer for the report and progress made, commending the active local approach taken to addressing the needs of looked after children. He welcomed that the local oversight Board would have a role overseeing further progress locally.

The Council agreed to note the:-

- (a) publication of the national Promise Oversight Board 5th Anniversary Report (2025); and
- (b) 5th Anniversary progress update on implementation of The Promise in East Renfrewshire as referred to at Appendix 1 to the report.

OUTLINE OF PRESSURES FACING HOMELESSNESS

1265. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 11 September 2024 (Page 933, Item 942 refers), when the Council had declared a local housing emergency and agreed that an update of levels of homelessness within East Renfrewshire and measures being put in place to address the emergency be presented to the Council in six months' time, the Council considered a report by the Director of Environment on these issues.

The report reiterated the position in September at which time it had been highlighted that the biggest challenge facing the Council as a result of the emergency was the provision of suitable temporary and permanent accommodation. Having presented a range of statistical information on levels of homelessness and related issues, the report itemised a range of actions and ongoing work led by the housing team over the past 6 months, and summarised the position on the provision on new permanent housing and associated matters. The report stressed the need for a multi-agency approach, referred to the multi-agency partnership established by the Housing Service which was helping to mitigate the emergency in various ways examples of which were provided, and clarified that the Council worked closely with all social housing providers, such as to ensure all social housing stock was used for those in most need.

It was concluded that the Council continued to face a local housing emergency and that, whilst there had been a small reduction in homelessness and the use of temporary accommodation, the emergency had not yet been addressed. The sustained increase in homelessness since 2019 continued, which the local housing market was not equipped to deal with, with action continuing to be taken to mitigate the position on this. Further updates could be provided at regular intervals.

Councillor Morrison considered the increase in the numbers in temporary accommodation in East Renfrewshire relative to other local authorities concerning, commenting on the removal by the Scottish Government of the requirement to have a local connection to an area and the Council's proximity to Glasgow City. In response to a query from him on comments made by a politician about the asylum system placing an undue burden on the housing crisis in Glasgow, the Head of Environment (Housing and Property) clarified that responsibility for housing, temporarily or permanently, those classified as asylum seekers lay with the Home Office, rather than local authorities, until their asylum status was determined. Those granted leave to remain were then able to access homelessness pathways. Further in response to Councillor Morrison who commented on partnership working, the Head of Environment (Housing and Property) stated that he would be happy to have strategic discussions with Glasgow City Council on the homelessness crisis if they raised this, but that the problem was a challenging national one and the subject of regular conversations such as at COSLA.

Councillor Devlin, supported by Councillor O'Donnell, welcomed actions being taken to address the ongoing challenges associated with homelessness and, in particular, the reduction in the number entering bed and breakfast accommodation. He also referred to a contract being put in place with Barrhead Housing Association which would be helpful and, more generally, thanked the officers involved in work on addressing homelessness issues.

1216

The Council agreed to note the update provided.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 3 (DEVELOPMENT PLAN SCHEME AND PARTICIPATION STATEMENT 2025)

1266. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 11 September 2024 (Page 933, Item 943 refers), when the Council had agreed to submit the Evidence Report for the next Local Development Plan (LDP3) to Scottish Ministers, the Council considered a report by the Director of Environment seeking approval to publish and submit the LDP3 Proposed Development Plan Scheme (DPS) and Participation Statement 2025 to Scottish Ministers.

It was clarified that the DPS formed an important and statutory part of preparing LDP3, setting a timetable for the preparation of the new Plan, and detailing how communities and other stakeholders could get involved in the process.

Councillor Ireland commented on the value of engagement in the community and related community events and activities for consultation at which many were keen to share views, seeking clarification on how many there would be, when they would take place, and if this would include schools to reach as many people as possible and ingather a broad range of views. The Head of Place confirmed there would be various stages of engagement, including some in local schools, which would continue in the proposed plan stage. She confirmed that there would be a significant number of events allowing people to give feedback before the LDP was finalised.

The Council agreed to:-

- (a) approve the Proposed Development Plan Scheme 2025 for publication and submission to Scottish Ministers; and
- (b) delegate authority to the Director of Environment to approve any minor inconsequential changes to the document, in line with Council policy, prior to its submission to Scottish Ministers.

PROVOST

MINUTE
of
APPEALS COMMITTEE

Minute of meeting held at 10.00am in the Committee Room, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 17 July 2025.

Present:

Councillor Andrew Anderson
Councillor Annette Ireland

Councillor Katie Pragnell

Councillor Anderson in the Chair

Attending:

Kath McCormack, HR Manager; Rebecca Auld, Solicitor.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1267. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

Resolution to Exclude Press and Public

At this point in the meeting, on the motion of the Chair, the committee unanimously resolved that in accordance with the provisions of Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Act.

APPEAL AGAINST DISMISSAL – HSCP – 04/2025

1268. John Buchanan, Operations Manager and Lorna Cormack, HR Case Advisor appeared on behalf of management.

The appellant and a representative appeared in connection with the appeal.

Both parties made their submissions to the committee and were heard in answer to questions on their submissions.

Thereafter, both parties withdrew from the meeting.

Following consideration, both parties were recalled and advised by the Chair that the grounds of the appeal had not been substantiated and the appeal was not upheld.

CHAIR

MINUTE
of
SPECIAL LICENSING COMMITTEE

Minute of meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock, on 22 July 2025.

Present:

Councillor Paul Edlin
Councillor Andrew Morrison

Councillor Kate Campbell

(*) indicates remote attendance

Attending:

Nicola McEleny, Senior Solicitor; Lesleyann Burns, Democratic Services Officer and Bethany Mitchell, Assistant Democratic Services Officer

Also Attending:

Inspector Brian Eaglesham, Police Scotland, Sergeant Belinda Rafferty, Police Scotland and Police Constable Gary Taylor, Police Scotland.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were submitted by Provost Mary Montague and Councillor David Macdonald.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1269. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

Resolution to Exclude Press and Public

At this point in the meeting, on the motion of the Chair, the Committee unanimously resolved that in accordance with the provisions of Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 6 and 14 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Act.

PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER'S LICENCE – REQUEST FOR IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION

1270. The committee considered a report by the Chief Officer (Legal and Procurement) in relation to a request for immediate suspension of a Private Hire Car Driver's Licence under Paragraph 11(1) of Schedule 1 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 (Agenda Item 3 refers).

1220

The applicant was not present. A vote took place where Members unanimously agreed to progress in applicant's absence.

Sergeant Belinda Rafferty, Inspector Brian Eaglesham and Police Constable Gary Taylor, representing the Chief Constable, who had made an objection to the application, were also present.

Sergeant Rafferty was heard in respect of the representation submitted by the Chief Constable.

It was reported that the Chief Constable had complained that in terms of Paragraph 11(2)(a) of Schedule 1 of the Act, the licence holder was no longer a fit and proper person to hold the licence, and he requested immediate suspension of the licence in terms of Paragraph 12(1) of the Schedule, that carrying on of the activity to which the licence relates was likely to cause a serious threat to public order or public safety.

The report explained that in determining the application it would be for the committee to decide what weight it wished to attach to the request by the Chief Constable and its relevance to the types of licence held.

The Committee agreed to suspend the licence in terms of Paragraph 11(1) of Schedule 1 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982.

CHAIR

MINUTE
of
LICENSING COMMITTEE

Minute of meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock, on 5 August 2025.

Present:

Councillor Paul Edlin
Councillor Chris Lunday*
Councillor Andrew Morrison

Councillor Kate Campbell
Councillor David MacDonald*

(*) indicates remote attendance

Attending:

Nicola McEleny, Senior Solicitor; Lesleyann Burns, Democratic Services Officer and Bethany Mitchell, Assistant Democratic Services Officer

Also Attending:

Chief Inspector Gillian Faulds.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were submitted by Provost Mary Montague.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1271. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

Resolution to Exclude Press and Public

At this point in the meeting, on the motion of the Chair, the Committee unanimously resolved that in accordance with the provisions of Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 6 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Act.

BOOKING OFFICE LICENCE – APPLICATION FOR GRANT

1272. The committee considered a report by the Chief Officer (Legal and Procurement) in relation to an application for the grant of a Booking Office Licence (agenda item 3).

The objector was heard in respect of the application and in response to questions from members.

1222

The objector left the meeting voluntarily.

The applicant handed out a note with responses to the objections raised which was also emailed to members with online attendance.

The Committee agreed to a short adjournment to consider the additional information.

The applicant was heard in respect of the application and in response to questions from members.

The Committee, agreed to approve the application for the Booking Office Licence.

CHAIR

MINUTE
of
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Minute of meeting held at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 6th August 2025.

Present:

Councillor Paul Edlin
Councillor Annette Ireland

Councillor Chris Lunday
Councillor Andrew Morrison

Attending:

Michaela Sullivan, Head of Place; Michelle McGuckin, Chief Planner and Building Standards Manager; Nicola McEleny, Solicitor; Sean McDaid, Senior Planner; and John Burke, Democratic Services Officer.

(*) denotes remote attendance

Apologies:

Councillor Jim McLean (Vice Chair), Provost Mary Montague.

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

1273. In accordance with Standing Order No. 16, the Committee was required to appoint a chair for this meeting from those members present.

Accordingly, Councillor Morrison was unanimously agreed to be appointed as chair following discussion among members.

Councillor Morrison in the Chair

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1274. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

APPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

1275. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Environment on applications for planning permission requiring consideration by the Committee.

1224

It was agreed that the applications be determined as indicated at Appendix 1 accompanying this Minute, particular reference being made to the following:-

- (i) 2024/0594/TP – Change of use from dwellinghouse to short term holiday lets and conversion of existing attached garage to habitable accommodation at 6 Shuna Place, Newton Mearns, G77 6TN.

The Chief Planner and Building Standards Manager was heard further on the report, in the course of which she summarised the 19 representations that had been received.

She provided further information on the relevant planning policies and assessments and stated that the proposal was considered to be contrary to the terms of the development plan, including NPF4 and LDP2.

Following discussion of the application, Councillor Morrison moved that the recommendation of the report be approved and planning permission refused for the reasons set out in the report of handling. This was agreed unanimously.

The Committee, therefore, agreed to refuse planning permission for the reasons set out in the report of handling.

- (ii) 2025/0283/TP – Erection of residential development of 39 detached dwellings (to include retention of existing listed farmhouse) with associated access roads, landscaping, open space and other required infrastructure (amendment to condition 6 of planning permission 2022/0719/TP that requires the trees marked for retention on the approved tree constraints plan to be protected during the construction phase, to allow the 16 trees marked for retention to be removed and 10 trees marked for removal to be retained) (Section 42 application) at Lyoncross, Aurs Road, Barrhead, G78 2SQ.

The Chief Planner and Building Standards Manager was heard further on the report, in the course of which she summarised the 41 representations that had been received.

She provided further information on the relevant planning policies and assessments and stated that the proposal was considered to comply with the terms of the development plan, including NPF4 and LDP2.

Members expressed some concern around the proposed amendment to the previously granted consent. In particular the variation from the original tree constraints plan. It was explained that there were valid reasons for the alteration relating to discussions between the developer and Scottish Water and that this was a reasonable reason for requesting the alteration.

Following the discussion, Councillor Ireland, seconded by Councillor Lunday, moved that the application be refused.

Councillor Edlin, seconded by Councillor Morrison, moved as an amendment that the recommendation of the report be accepted and planning permission granted subject to the conditions set out in the report of handling.

On a vote being taken by a show of hands, there were 2 votes for the motion and 2 votes for the amendment.

As the vote was tied, Councillor Morrison exercised his casting vote as Chair for the amendment, which was declared carried.

The Committee, therefore, agreed to grant planning permission, subject to the conditions set out in the report of handling.

CHAIR

APPENDIX

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997
AS AMENDED BY THE PLANNING ETC (SCOTLAND) ACT 2006
PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997**

Draft index of applications under the above acts to be considered by Planning Applications Committee
on 6th August 2025.

Reference No: 2024/0594/TP

Ward: 2

Applicant:

Mr Tahir Munir
1 Glen Orchy Grove
Glasgow
Scotland
G53 7WW

Agent:

David Bell
1 John's Place
Edinburgh
Scotland
EH4 2WL

Site: 6 Shuna Place, Newton Mearns, East Renfrewshire, G77 6TN

Description: Change of use from dwellinghouse to short term holiday lets and conversion of existing attached garage to habitable accommodation.

Please click [here](#) for further information on this application

Reference No: 2025/0283/TP

Ward: 1

Applicant:

Mr Andy Geddes
205 St Vincent Street
Glasgow
Scotland
G2 5QD

Agent:

Site: Lyoncross, Aurs Road, Barrhead, East Renfrewshire, G78 2SQ

Description: Erection of residential development of 39 detached dwellings (to include retention of existing listed farmhouse) with associated access roads, landscaping, open space and other required infrastructure (amendment to condition 6 of planning permission 2022/0719/TP that requires the trees marked for retention on the approved tree constraints plan to be protected during the construction phase, to allow 16 no. trees marked for retention to be removed. 10 no. trees marked for removal to be retained). (Section 42 application).

Please click [here](#) for further information on this application

MINUTE
of
CABINET

Minute of meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 14 August 2025.

Present:

Councillor Owen O'Donnell (Leader)	Councillor Danny Devlin
Councillor Andrew Anderson (Vice Chair)	Councillor Katie Pragnell

Councillor O'Donnell, Leader, in the Chair

Attending:

Steven Quinn, Chief Executive; Caitriona McAuley, Director of Environment; Michaela Sullivan, Head of Place; Michael McKernan, Economic Development and Inclusive Growth Manager; Graeme Hay, Education Senior Manager, Leading Change; and John Burke, Democratic Services Officer.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1276. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

PRIVILEGE TRANSPORT – PROPOSAL TO CEASE CHARGING FOR SERVICE

1277. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Education with a proposal to remove charges for privilege transport due to compliance requirements under the Public Services Vehicle Accessibility Regulations (PSVAR) 2000.

The report detailed the current position of the privilege transport service, where surplus seats on school transport, once all eligible children had been allocated a place, would be offered to non-eligible families.

The PSVAR had been introduced in 2000 to require a baseline level of accessibility on buss and coaches designed for over 22 passengers. Services used exclusively for home-to-school transport were exempt from PSVAR. However, they would apply to any services where even a single passenger has paid a fare, which would affect services using the privilege transport scheme. It was noted that, while many vehicles used by the Council were fully compliant with PSVAR, not all were fully compliant.

Internal discussions had taken place and a decision had been taken that to only offer privilege transport where PSVAR was met would result in an inconsistent service across the area, with some parents being charged and others receiving the same service for free. Therefore, it was proposed that charges for privilege transport would not apply from the beginning of the 2025/2026 school session, with the scheme continuing to operate as a free service.

1228

It was further proposed that the “ballot” system for assigning places would be removed and a new system implemented based on a distance-based ranking.

The proposed new Home to School Transport Policy on privilege transport was attached as Appendix 2 to the report, with the current Policy being attached as Appendix 1 for members’ information.

There followed a discussion where members received assurances that all children requiring accessible transport would be looked at on a case-by-case basis, where the safety of the child was paramount. It was further clarified that there were no safety concerns around any of the transport services currently used by the Council.

Following the discussion, the Cabinet:-

- (a) approved the cessation of charging for privilege transport from the beginning of the 2025/26 school session; and
- (b) approved the amended privilege transport scheme and agreed that it be incorporated into the updated Home to School Transport Policy, applicable from the start of the 2025/2026 school session.

PLACE BASED INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2025/26

1278. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment on the Place Based Investment Programme (PBIP) award from the Scottish Government and seeking approval for the projects to receive grant award during 2025/26.

The report provided an overview of the PBIP, with £23m being expected to be awarded across Scotland in 2025/26. Approval had been given for the partial release of the majority of the budget, enabling project planning and outcome delivery, with the remainder planned for release during 2025. East Renfrewshire would receive an allocation of £385,000 in 2025/26, split into 2 tranches of £301,455 and £84,545 respectively.

The projects recommended for approval were attached as Appendix 1 to the report, including those projects that could be accommodated in the tranche 1 allocation and those that would be supported by tranche 2. Details were also given of reserve projects that could be allocated funding should it become available or other sources were identified.

Appendix 2 provided details of those projects that were funded during 2023/24, with no funding having being allocated to the Council during 2024/25.

Members welcomed the report and the projects detailed, they also discussed the specifics of the funding allocation and the potential to fund as many of the reserve projects as possible.

Following the discussion, the Cabinet:-

- (a) noted the financial allocation and new payment instalments to East Renfrewshire Council for the programme period 2025/26;
- (b) approved the projects outlined in Appendix 1 for 2025/26’
- (c) delegated to the Director of Environment to make adjustments to the proposals depending upon the detailed costs of projects becoming available; and

- (d) delegated to the Director of Environment to approve those projects from the reserve list that could be accommodated if any underspends or adjustments arose during the 2025/26 financial year.

REGENERATION CAPITAL GRANT BID 2026/27

1279. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment seeking approval for a funding bid to the Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF) 2026/27, for the proposed Rouken Glen Park Community Wellbeing and Enterprise Hub, Thornliebank.

The report provided background information on the RCGF and the streamlining of this to incorporate the Vacant and Derelict Investment Programme. The 2 stage application process was then detailed.

The project proposed was to renew and re-purpose the former Youth Enterprise Scotland Training Centre premises in Rouken Glen Park and convert it into a Community Wellbeing and Enterprise Hub. If successful, future occupancy of the proposed site would then be subject to further research and feasibility work, with community and social enterprise organisations encouraged to utilise the space.

A map of the site was provided as Appendix 1 to the report, and estimated project costs were outlined, with an investment of £100,000 from the Council's regeneration capital programme being provided should the funding bid succeed.

Cabinet welcomed the proposal and received clarity on the timeline of the bid.

The Cabinet approved the bid to the Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund 2026/27.

MINUTE OF JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (FIRST TIER) HELD ON 15 MAY 2025

1280. The minute of the Joint Consultative Committee (First Tier) held on 15 May 2025 was submitted for noting.

The Cabinet noted the minute

CHAIR

MINUTE
of
AUDIT & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minute of meeting held at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 14 August 2025.

Present:

Councillor Andrew Morrison (Chair)
Councillor Tony Buchanan (Vice Chair)
Councillor Paul Edlin

Councillor David Macdonald *
Provost Mary Montague *
Councillor Gordon Wallace

Councillor Morrison in the Chair

Attending:

Steven Quinn, Chief Executive; Kirsty Stanners, Head of Finance (Chief Financial Officer); Michelle Blair, Chief Auditor; Paul Parsons, Corporate Finance Manager; Linda Hutchison, Senior Democratic Services Officer; and Bethany Mitchell, Assistant Democratic Services Officer.

Also Attending:

Rob Jones, Ernst and Young.

Apology:

Councillor Annette Ireland.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1281. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

CHAIR'S REPORT – VARIOUS ISSUES

1282. The following matters were raised during the Chair's report:-

(i) Meeting with External Auditor

Councillor Morrison confirmed that, further to the outcome of the Committee's self-assessment, all members of the Committee had been invited to attend the forthcoming meeting with representatives of the External Audit Team on 8 September, prior to the Committee considering the final Annual Accounts and draft Annual Audit Report.

(ii) Treasury Management Training

Councillor Morrison reminded the Committee that all Elected Members had been invited to a Treasury Management training session, to be provided by the Council's Treasury Manager Advisors, later on 8 September in Eastwood House. He clarified that the session would cover basics of local government treasury management, but that if there were any specific areas on which Elected Members would like a particular focus to be placed, they should advise the Head of Finance (Chief Financial Officer) as soon as possible.

(iii) Meeting of Audit and Scrutiny Committee on 25 September

Councillor Morrison confirmed that, in accordance with the meeting schedule approved by the Council, the Committee's meeting on 25 September would start at 1.00pm rather than 2.00pm. This was to provide sufficient time to consider the Committee's Agenda, taking account that a meeting of the Council was being convened at 4.00pm on the same day to consider the Annual Accounts and draft Annual Audit Report, after both had been discussed by the Committee.

The Committee noted the report.

RISK MANAGEMENT – CLARIFICATION

1283. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 27 March 2025 (Page 1120, Item 1161 refers), when it had been agreed that further clarification be provided on the risks regarding major works capital programmes facing unanticipated challenges; the timescale for completing school condition surveys; and how often the risk score for Braidbar Quarry was revisited and related issues, the Committee considered a report by the Clerk summarising the clarification received and already circulated on the issues concerned.

The Committee, having heard Councillor Wallace, Councillor Morrison and the Clerk comment on the provision of clarification to members of the Committee on issues raised and the new arrangements for this approved by the Committee following its self-evaluation, noted the report.

ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT 2024/25

1284. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 20 February 2025 (Page 1087, Item 1118 refers), when it had been agreed to recommend to the Council that the Treasury Management Strategy for 2025/26 and policy on the repayment of loans fund advances be approved, the Committee considered a report by the Head of Finance (Chief Financial Officer) providing details of the Council's treasury management activities for the year ending 31 March 2025, and seeking approval to recommend to the Council that a list of organisations for the investment of surplus funds be approved.

The report referred to a well-managed treasury function within the Council and related issues, commenting that the authority continued to adopt a prudent approach to treasury management, and that stability in borrowing assisted the Council to respond to current, national economic pressures. The submission of the report to the Committee, prior to its submission to the Council, was in line with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management.

Whilst highlighting key issues, the Corporate Finance Manager clarified that this high-level report reflected that the long-term borrowing position had increased by £51m compared to 2023/24, as a result of which the average interest on borrowing had increased marginally by 0.1%. This was attributable to new borrowing of £25m from the Public Works Loan Board to

support the Council's Capital Programmes, and an increase in financial obligations of almost £26m due to the introduction of the new accounting standard for lease and hire type arrangements, including Public Private Partnership (PPP) and Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contracts. The new accounting standard applied to all UK local authorities. The Council had not entered into any new PPP/PFI contracts, and payments to suppliers would not increase as a result of the change. Having confirmed that the figures reported were subject to audit, the Corporate Finance Manager commented on Risk Indicators referred to within the report, and the investment of surplus funds.

In reply to questions, the Corporate Finance Manager confirmed that the organisations specified for investment of surplus funds remained unchanged from those listed in the most recent previous report, and clarified why the average interest on borrowing had increased marginally despite interest rates falling slightly. He explained that this was because the total borrowing related to borrowing undertaken over many years, when there had been varying interest rates, with only a small proportion having been taken out in 2024/25. Having commented further on the requirements of the new accounting standard, he explained that the accounting adjustment required had resulted in a significant increase in liability in the Council's Balance Sheet, but that suppliers were not being paid any more than before.

In response to a question regarding Capital projects which were delayed, the Head of Finance (Chief Financial Officer) confirmed that, taking account of the cost of borrowing, like other local authorities, the Council used cash balances to fund projects whenever possible although borrowing was required at times. She also referred to the impact of inflation on the cost of delayed projects. More generally, she highlighted that advice was provided very frequently by the Council's Treasury Management Advisors on the best approach to take on borrowing. This advice took into account issues such as projected interest rates, which were expected to fall in the medium term, when determining the best way forward on long-term borrowing.

The Committee, agreed to:-

- (a) note the Treasury Management Annual Report for 2024/25 and associated comments; and
- (b) **recommend to the Council** that the organisations specified in the report for investment of surplus funds be approved.

INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2025/26 – IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS – APRIL TO JUNE 2025 (QUARTER 1)

1285. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 27 March 2025 (Page 1124, Item 1163 refers), when the Internal Audit Strategic Plan for 2025/26 to 2029/30 had been approved, the Committee considered a report by the Chief Auditor regarding progress made on the implementation of the Plan from 1 April to 30 June 2025.

It was confirmed that four reports relating to planned 2025/26 audit work had been issued details of which were provided, and explained that, as recommended through the most recent external Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) exercise, for all reports issued from 2025/26 onwards an overall assurance rating would be provided the definitions of which were provided. Reference was also made to the quarterly performance indicators (PIs) for the section, all of which were currently being met. One new request for assistance had been dealt with using contingency time, which related to anomalies within payments made to some council tax accounts.

The Chief Auditor highlighted various issues, during which she confirmed that no issues of major concern had been identified, referred to the overall assurance ratings introduced for

1234

reports, and commented on the use of contingency time. She also referred to some work undertaken on risk management, and clarified that one report on 2024/25 audit work remained to be issued on which management had been invited to comment on its factual accuracy.

In response to a question regarding the fuel audit, the Chief Auditor confirmed that it was not known why fuel gauge and Fueltran stock reconciliations had not been done before, but that the recommendation made regarding this had been accepted. She also commented on action that required to be taken by managers on access to systems when employees left the Council. Whilst commenting further on this issue, the Head of Finance (Chief Financial Officer) reported that a project was underway to identify ways to automate these actions when employees left or moved to a different section for example, and referred to regular system user reviews done. The Chief Executive also provided assurances on this issue, highlighting that access to systems was also protected in other ways, such as through the use of passwords and multifactor authentication, and that access to systems by an employee could be suspended if deemed necessary. Mr Jones referred to the option to comment on system access issues in the Annual Audit Report regarding the Council.

The Committee agreed to note the report and related comments made.

CHAIR

MINUTE
of
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Minute of meeting, held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on Thursday 21 August 2025.

Present:

Councillor Andrew Anderson (Chair)
Councillor Tony Buchanan
Councillor Kate Campbell
Councillor Katie Pragnell (Vice Chair)
Councillor Gordon Wallace

Ms Fiona Gilchrist
Mr Des Morris

Councillor Anderson in the Chair

(*) indicates remote attendance

Attending:

Mark Ratter, Director of Education; Janice Collins, Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement and Performance); Joe McCaig, Head Of Education Services (Provision); Siobhan McColgan, Head of Education Services (Equality and Equity) and Lesleyann Burns, Democratic Services Officer.

Also Attending:

Ben Harrison, Depute Head Teacher, Mearns Castle High School and Julie Neil, Depute Head Teacher, St Mark's Primary School.

Apologies:

Councillor Owen O'Donnell, Colm Merrick and Dorothy Graham.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1286. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

SPOTLIGHT ON LEADERSHIP

1287. The Director of Education invited the Depute Head Teachers to give a presentation on the Aspiring Leadership course that they had both undertaken.

Both Depute Head Teachers expressed the view that the course was of great value to their learning and development and felt supported throughout by their Head Teachers and mentors.

1236

They both embraced the 360 feedback that they received from colleagues and felt that this course strengthened their leadership skills, it allowed them to be more self-aware and confident and felt that this was a great investment in their leadership development. One of the benefits of the course is that it has expanded their peer network. It was felt that this had benefited the schools as well as the communities.

Members questioned the challenges that leadership brought and whether the Depute Head Teachers would feel supported once they became Head Teachers. Both agreed that it could be challenging to give difficult messages but noted the importance of relationships and strong values, they both confirmed that they thought they would feel supported by the Education Leadership Team as they already see this in place with current Head Teachers.

SQA VERBAL UPDATE

1288. The Head of Education Service (Quality Improvement and Performance) gave an update on the SQA results that had been achieved in 2025 and reflected that there had been record breaking achievements at S4 along with very strong Higher and Advanced Higher results.

She reflected that the results were down to the dedication and resilience of all the pupils, supported exceptionally well by staff and parents, as national research had shown the Covid-19 pandemic had impacted significantly on children and young people's learning. It was confirmed that more detailed outcomes of the results would be presented at the next Education Committee.

Members commended the work of teaching staff, parents as well as the children and young people and expressed the view that the results were a credit to all involved.

PROGRESS REPORT ON PRIORITIES ASSOCIATED WITH NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK

1289. The Committee considered a report updating them on the Education Department's progress implementing priorities associated with the National Improvement Framework (NIF) for Scottish Education.

The report explained that the department evaluated its progress annually to identify strengths in current provision and areas where further improvement was required. Evidence gathered from the self-evaluation and evaluations of services and schools by the department's Quality Improvement team, Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate were used to identify steps which were required to be taken to secure continuous improvement.

A range of activities designed to provide support and challenge to schools and centres generate self-evaluation evidence, some of which was used for the NIF ERC Summary 2024-25 and included evidence in Appendix 1 to the report.

In discussion, members were informed that the Education Department worked with a range of partners to drive Excellence and Equity and fulfil the requirements as set out in the National Improvement Framework. These partners were detailed in the ERC Summary 2024-2025 and include Education Scotland, Association of Directors of Education, Skills Development Scotland and East Renfrewshire's Work EastRen, Community Learning and Development and Health and Social Care Partnership.

Having heard members commend the report, the Committee noted the progress in implementing priorities associated with the National Improvement Framework.

PROGRESS AND IMPACT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC EQUITY FUND PLAN 2022 – 2026

1290. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Education on the progress and impact on implementation of the strategic equity fund plan 2022 - 2026.

The department's Strategic Equity Fund Plan "Raising the Bar for All: delivering Excellence through Equity" identifies 3 key themes as part of the theory of change to tackle the poverty related attainment gap:

- Children and Young People's Wellbeing – Readiness to Learn.
- Literacy and Numeracy.
- Learning and Teaching – Pedagogy for Equity.

The report included in Appendix 1, highlights the very good progress achieved by the department, its schools and services. Key strengths include:

- A professional learning programme for middle leaders leading on equity and social justice in primary and secondary schools. '
 - Improved attendance across primary and secondary schools.
 - The impact of the Learn Well service on young people's wellbeing, attendance and attainment.
 - Primary 1 attainment is the strongest in the last 5 years, with the poverty related attainment gap reduced.
 - The second highest result ever in primary attainment for reading, writing, talking and listening.
 - The highest every numeracy result in primary and S3.
 - Range and success of 'cost of the school day' supports.

Education Committee noted the content of the SEF Progress Report and approved the updated action plan.

CHAIR

