

Committee Minutes

Policy and Strategy Committee

Edinburgh, 24 February 2009

Present:- Councillors Dawe (Convener), Cardownie (Vice-Convener), Blacklock, Brock, Buchanan, Burns, Edie, Hinds, Jackson, Johnstone, Gordon Mackenzie, MacLaren, McInnes, Munn, Murray, Wheeler and Whyte.

1 Edinburgh Tram Project: Status Report

The Committee, in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, excluded the public from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business for the reason that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7(A) of the Act.

The Convener ruled that the following item, notice of which had been given at the start of the meeting, be considered as a matter of urgency in order that it be considered timeously.

The current position of Edinburgh's tram project and the status of the contract between **tie** and BSC, the tram infrastructure consortium, were detailed.

David Mackay, interim Chair of **tie**, gave a further update on the situation and answered questions from the Committee.

Decision

- 1) To note the update on Edinburgh's tram project and the contractual issues which had arisen between **tie** and BSC.
- 2) To strongly support the position taken by the **tie** Board.
- 3) To note that the Chief Executive would ensure that the Council was kept fully informed on the contractual issues referred to in his report.

(References – Act of Council No 12 of 1 May 2008; report no PS/98/08-09/CE by the Chief Executive, submitted.)

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Declaration of Interests

Councillors Jackson, Gordon Mackenzie and Wheeler declared a non-financial interest in the above item as non-Executive Directors of **tie**.

2 Minute

Decision

To approve the minute of the Policy and Strategy Committee of 20 January 2009 as a correct record.

3 “See Me” Pledge

Suzie Vestri, Director of See Me Scotland, thanked the Council for agreeing to sign the pledge and explained that “See Me” was Scotland’s national campaign to end the stigma and discrimination associated with mental ill-health. It was an alliance of five mental health organisations and was fully funded by the Scottish Government. By signing the pledge the Council, as a major employer, stakeholder and service provider in the city, agreed to work with its partners to make the campaign’s aspirations a reality.

The Convener was delighted that the Council would be part of the campaign and signed the pledge on behalf of the Council.

4 Forth Neighbourhood Partnership Fairer Scotland Fund Transitional Arrangements – Update

An update was provided on the transition to the Fairer Scotland Fund (FSF) in the Forth Neighbourhood Partnership area, including the possible use of further Strategic Partnership funding.

a) Deputation

The Committee agreed to hear a deputation from the Forth Voluntary Sector Forum.

Dave Pickering expressed slight disappointment at the content of the report by the Director of Services for Communities after what he viewed as a positive and constructive outcome from the Committee’s last meeting. He considered that the latest report offered nothing new to the debate on the new FSF funding arrangements and projects in the Forth area felt let down. In addition, projects were still waiting for the opportunity to bid into Strategic Partnership funding.

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Dave Pickering questioned the validity of Neighbourhood Partnerships if local people were not listened to and how community planning could be meaningful without having local communities at its heart.

(Reference – e-mail dated 23 February 2009, submitted.)

b) Report by the Director of Services for Communities

The current position on FSF allocations by Strategic and Neighbourhood Partnerships and allocations to projects in the Forth Neighbourhood Partnership for 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 was detailed.

Decision

- 1) To note the position regarding the Fairer Scotland Fund in Forth Ward.
- 2) To ask the Director of Services for Communities to report back within two cycles on the use of Strategic Partnership funding.

(References – Policy and Strategy Committee 20 January 2009 (item 2); report no PS/96/08-09/SfC by the Director of Services for Communities, submitted.)

5 Play Park Strategy – Motion by Councillor Buchan

The following motion by Councillor Buchan had been remitted to the Committee from the Council in terms of Standing Order 28(3):

“That Council:

- 1) notes that Edinburgh has a very poor per capita allocation of play park facilities;
- 2) notes the positive response given by the Leader of the Council on 18 December to a suggestion to create a “Play Park Strategy” for the city along similar lines to the Sports Pitch Strategy;
- 3) calls for the development of a Play Park Strategy to improve existing facilities and to identify new opportunities for future facilities across the city.”

Motion

- 1) To agree that play was vital to a healthy and happy childhood.

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- 2) To note that this Administration had inherited public play space provision in Edinburgh lower than the national average.
- 3) To agree with the Early Years Framework, issued jointly by the Scottish Government and COSLA, that improving outcomes and children's quality of life through play with the entitlement of each child to participate in challenging outdoor play should be a priority for action.
- 4) To note the decision of the Education, Children and Families Committee on 13 January 2009 that an updated city-wide play strategy be adopted to develop play outdoors in line with Scottish Government recommendations.
- 5) To note Councillor Buchan's motion and to request that it be addressed as part of the wider Review of Play Strategy in Edinburgh.

- moved by Councillor Dawe, seconded by Councillor MacLaren.

Amendment

To approve the motion subject to the deletion of paragraph 2.

- moved by Councillor Burns, seconded by Councillor Hinds.

Voting

The voting was as follows:

For the motion - 9 votes
For the amendment - 4 votes

Decision

To approve the motion by Councillor Dawe.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 13 January 2009 (item 10); Act of Council No 9 of 5 February 2009.)

6 Edinburgh Resident and Annual Neighbourhood Survey – Autumn 2008

The key findings and, where available, trend information from two recent resident perception surveys undertaken during autumn 2008, were presented.

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Decision

- 1) To note the findings of the Edinburgh Resident Survey and Annual Neighbourhood Survey
- 2) To instruct all Departments to take account of the views of residents and the service implications in future service and resource activity.
- 3) To note that further research would be undertaken to explore key findings.
- 4) To refer these findings to the Edinburgh Partnership and partner agencies for information.
- 5) To ask the Director of Services for Communities to report back to the Committee following research and analysis of the key findings.

(References – Policy and Strategy Committee 30 September 2008 (item 16); report no PS/97/08-09/CS&SfC by the Directors of Corporate Services and Services for Communities, submitted.)

7 Festival Theatre Extension Update

Progress on the proposals to provide an extension to the Festival Theatre for rehearsal and performance space was detailed.

Approval was sought for the Council to act as guarantor for the proposed loan of £250,000 to be raised by the Festival Theatre Trust to finance a shortfall in funding for the extension and the revised structure of the delivery mechanism.

Decision

- 1) To endorse the approval of the Culture and Leisure Committee to the proposed transactions with the Festival Theatre Trust on the main terms and conditions as set out in the joint report, including the loan guarantee, subject to the business plan and development agreement from the Trust being to the satisfaction of the Directors of Corporate Services, Finance and City Development.
- 2) To note the intention to form an Investment Steering Group between the Council and the Trust.

(References – Culture and Leisure Committee 3 February 2009 (item 5); joint report no PS/90/08-09/CS&CD by the Directors of Corporate Services and City Development, submitted.)

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Declaration of Interests

Councillor Brock declared a non-financial interest in the above item as a Board member of the Festival City Theatres Trust.

8 Fit for Future – Provision of a New Craigmillar Neighbourhood Office

The Council's office accommodation requirements in the Niddrie and Craigmillar areas arising from the imminent termination of leases for existing accommodation were set out.

Authority was sought to contract with PARC Craigmillar to develop a new Council Neighbourhood Office as part of the Craigmillar Town Centre redevelopment. The new office would deliver a range of services provided by Services for Communities, Health and Social Care, Children and Families and Finance.

Decision

- 1) To commit to providing a new Craigmillar Neighbourhood Office.
- 2) To instruct the Director of City Development to enter into detailed negotiations with PARC Craigmillar in order to acquire the office accommodation.
- 3) To procure a new office on the terms and conditions contained in the report and on other terms and conditions to be agreed by the Directors of Finance, Corporate Services and City Development.
- 4) To note the interest from NHS Lothian in securing accommodation to support community based services in this area and to receive a further report on this.
- 5) To note that the Fit for Future project team would include the Craigmillar Neighbourhood Office in the development schemes to be considered within the *hub* Initiative, if the circumstances were appropriate to the Council in terms of financial benefit and timescales.

(Reference – report no PS/91/08-09/CD by the Director of City Development, submitted.)

Declaration of Interests

Councillors Edie and Gordon Mackenzie declared a non-financial interest in the above item as Board members of PARC.

9 Risk Assessment and Management Policy for Social Care Staff

Approval was sought for a policy statement in respect of the assessment and management of risk for individuals requiring social care services.

Decision

To approve the policy on the assessment and management of risk for social care staff attached at Appendix 1 to the Chief Social Work Officer's report.

(References – Executive of the Council 14 March 2006 (item 20); report no PS/92/08-09/CWSO by the Chief Social Work Officer, submitted.)

10 Edinburgh City Archives – Final Business Recovery Plan

The outcome of consultation on the Draft Business Recovery Plan for Edinburgh City Archives was presented and approval was sought for its final version.

Decision

To approve the final version of the Edinburgh City Archives Business Recovery Plan attached at Appendix 2 to the report by the Director of Corporate Services.

(References – Policy and Strategy Committee 30 September 2008 (item 15); report no PS/93/08-09/CS by the Director of Corporate Services, submitted.)

11 Earth Hour 2009

Decision

To note progress being made to ensure the Council's successful participation in Earth Hour 2009.

(References – Act of Council No 29 of 1 May 2008; report no PS/94/08-09/CS by the Director of Corporate Services, submitted.)

12 Climate Change (Scotland) Bill

A response was proposed to the Call for Views recently issued by the Scottish Parliament's Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee on the Climate Change (Scotland) Bill. The deadline for responses was 27 February 2009.

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Decision

To approve the response to the Call for Views on the Climate Change (Scotland) Bill, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report by the Director of Corporate Services, for submission to the Scottish Parliament's Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee.

(Reference – report no PS/95/08-09/CS by the Director of Corporate Services, submitted.)