

Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee

10.00 am, Tuesday, 1 October 2013

Present

Councillors Burns (Convener), Cardownie (Vice-Convener), Barrie (substituting for Councillor Ross), Bridgman (substituting for Councillor Rankin), Burgess, Chapman, Nick Cook, Edie, Gardner (substituting for Councillor Child), Godzik, Ricky Henderson, Hinds, Lewis, Mowat and Rose.

1. Tron Kirk – Short Term Leasing Option – referral from the Finance and Budget Committee

a) Deputations

i) Encounter Church

The deputation indicated that they had held several services in the Tron Kirk since May 2013 but had been unable to gain access to the Church during or since the Festival period. They expressed an interest in the short term 2 year lease of the Church which they hoped to use as a multi-purpose building and not just for services on a Sunday. They felt that the building should be used for the purpose it was intended.

ii) Edinburgh 2013 Ltd

The deputation indicated that they had had the current floor put in to the Church at no cost to the Council. They had worked with the Council to bring visitors in and stressed that the Church had been a very successful Festival venue being a base for the many acts performing in the Jazz Festival. They asked the Council to consider extending their current lease for a further 2 year period to enable them to work further with the local community to make good use of the Church.

b) Report by the Head of Legal, Risk and Compliance

The Finance and Budget Committee had referred a report on the options for letting the Tron Kirk for the next two years prior to Edinburgh World Heritage Trust taking a long term lease of the building. The Economy Committee had earlier approved the lease extension to the existing tenant subject to terms and conditions. As this decision had not subsequently been ratified by the Finance and Budget Committee, the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee was required to determine the Council's position.

Motion

To agree:

- 1) Only on the application of the following explicit terms, to now approve the lease extension of the Tron Kirk, for a maximum of 2 years, to 30 September 2015, to the existing tenant:
 - a) All required 'change of use' permissions must be secured in advance of any property usage of Tron Kirk.
 - b) All required 'listed building consents' must be secured in advance of any property usage of Tron Kirk.
 - c) The lease will further be subject to the tenant securing an additional agreement/s to utilise the toilets, licensing and all other required consents in advance of any property usage of Tron Kirk.
 - d) In addition, the tenant will install a disabled ramp access and disabled toilet at their own cost, subject to all the required consents, as above.
 - e) The lease extension to the existing tenant is only approved for the period of the Summer festivals (Jazz, Old Town and Fringe) in 2014 and 2015 plus the Christmas and New Year Festival in 2013 and 2014.
 - f) The required rent for these periods will be £20,000 per annum.
 - g) The tenant will additionally be responsible for the Council's legal and property costs in concluding this lease.
- 2) That beyond the periods specified in paragraph e) above:
 - a) The property will be available for use by the Council, or any other parties that they may choose to nominate, during all other dates prior to 30 September 2015.
 - b) Finalisation of other uses will be on terms and conditions, as agreed by the Director of Services for Communities and Head of Legal, Risk and Compliance; in consultation with Ward 11 Councillors.
 - c) This overall lease extension is for 2-years maximum, to 30 September 2015, and no further extensions are presumed necessary given the existing (June 2013) grant of a long lease to the Edinburgh World Heritage Trust to open the venue as a Heritage Centre.
 - d) at the end of the lease period the tenant will leave all capital works in-situ if required.

- moved by Councillor Burns, seconded by Councillor Bridgman

Amendment

To place the Tron Kirk on the open market as being available to let until 30 September 2015.

- moved by Councillor Mowat, seconded by Councillor Burgess.

Voting

The voting was as follows:

For the motion - 9 votes
For the amendment - 5 votes

Decision

- 1) To approve the motion by Councillor Burns.
- 2) In terms of Standing Order 28, the requisite number of members required that the decision be referred to the Council as a recommendation.

(References – Economy Committee 17 September 2013 (item 2), Finance and Budget Committee 19 September 2013 (item 3); report by the Head of Legal, Risk and Compliance, submitted)

Declaration of Interests

Councillors Cardownie and Lewis declared a non-financial interest in the above item as Directors of the Edinburgh International Jazz and Blues Festival.

2. Welfare Reform – Further Update

a) Deputations

- (i) Lothian Federation of Anti-Bedroom Tax Groups

The deputation indicated that they were pleased that the Council had made its decision regarding the anti- eviction policy on rent arrears accrued as a result of Welfare Reform. They felt however that additional policies were now required and in particular relating to the Disability Living Allowance. They asked that officers be instructed to assist tenants to maximise the value of Discretionary Housing Payments. They were of the opinion that exemptions were not being assessed on an individual basis and that the Council had discretion which it should use.

- (ii) Unite

The deputation welcomed the news that the Scottish Government was providing £20m to Scottish Local Authorities to enable them to top up their Discretionary Housing Payments. The deputation asked the Council to publish, as soon as possible, the likely arrangements for 2014/15 and that tenants be informed to enable the appropriate take up to be in place by 1 April 2014.

b) Report by the Director of Corporate Governance

An update was provided on the progress being made by the Council and partners to develop arrangements to mitigate, where possible, the negative impact of the UK Government's welfare reforms.

Decision

- 1) To note the continuing progress on assessing the impact of welfare reforms and actions for developing partial mitigation strategies.

- 2) To agree to refer reports on continuing financial pressures and associated risks arising out of implementation of Welfare Reform to the Finance and Budget Committee.
- 3) To agree to the spending proposals of the £109,594 DWP additional transitional funding as described in Appendix 1 to the report by the Director of Corporate Governance.
- 4) To note the additional DHP funding being provided by the Scottish Government and the need to adjust the Council's DHP policy in light of this additional funding.
- 5) To note the next progress update report would be 3 December 2013 (with a separate briefing to Committee in early November).
- 6) To agree to receive the updated DHP Policy at the 5 November 2013 Committee but delegated authority be granted to the Director of Corporate Governance to begin expending the additional Scottish Government monies with immediate effect and that the report include responses to the specific issues raised by the deputations.

(References — Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee 4 December 2012 (item 4); report by the Director of Corporate Governance, submitted)

Declaration of Interests

Councillor Cardownie declared a non-financial interest in the above item as a member of Unite.

3. Under-Occupation – Re-designation of Bedrooms – Referral from Health, Wellbeing and Housing Committee and Exploration of Re-designation of Bedrooms in Council Homes

The Health, Wellbeing and Housing Committee had referred a report on decisions made by other Councils in England and Scotland on the re-designation of bedrooms, which included information on the rationale and impact of these decisions.

Further information was provided outlining the consideration given to the re-designation of rooms within Council homes with the objective of removing tenants from the provision of the under-occupation regulations.

Motion

- 1) To agree that the report discharges the remit from this Committee to provide an update on the landlords' approaches to re-designation of bedrooms to reduce the impact of under-occupancy regulations.
- 2) To agree that rooms below a size of 50sq feet that had no ventilation or no natural light would not be regarded as bedrooms for the purpose of letting.
- 3) To note that a review of 257 pre 1919 tenement properties would be undertaken to identify which, if any, had rooms which did not meet this standard.

- 4) To note that in addition tenants could apply for a review of their property size and that property inspections would be carried out to assess whether all rooms met the standard.
- 5) To agree that the report referred from the Health, Wellbeing and Housing Committee discharged the remit from that Committee's Policy, Development and Review Sub Committee to submit a report based on the feedback received from members and shareholders.
- 6) To note the further report by the Director of Services for Communities and the consideration given to the re-designation of bedrooms as public rooms to take tenants out of under-occupation regulations. Work would continue to support tenants subject to these restrictions.

- moved by Councillor Ricky Henderson, seconded by Councillor Bridgman

Amendment

- 1) To note the report and the consideration given to the redesignation of bedrooms as public rooms to take tenants out of under-occupation (bedroom tax) regulations.
- 2) To note that none of the reasons given at para 2.2 of the report by the Director of Services for Communities ruled out the redesignation of bedrooms.
- 3) To recognise that:
 - a) Around 3,500 council tenants were expected to move into smaller accommodation or pay bedroom tax, yet only around 500 single bedroom properties were available each year.
 - b) Over 2,500 Council tenants were in arrears due mainly to the bedroom tax and were at risk of homelessness.
 - c) The projected loss to the Housing Revenue Account due to falling rental income this year was around £4m.
 - d) The acute shortage in Edinburgh, compared to other areas, of one-bedroom homes available to those deemed to be over-occupying.
- 4) Therefore agree to write to Lord Freud to seek an urgent meeting to clarify the precise nature of the regulations governing re-designation of bedrooms as other public rooms and request a further report to Committee within two cycles on the implementation of re-designation,

- moved by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Chapman

Voting

The voting was as follows:

For the motion	-	12 votes
For the amendment	-	2 votes

Decision

To approve the motion by Councillor Ricky Henderson.

(References –Health, Wellbeing and Housing Committee 10 September 2013 (item 10), Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee 16 April 2013 (item 1); reports (2) by the Head of Legal, Risk and Compliance and the Director of Services for Communities, submitted.)

4. Minute

Decision

To approve the minute of the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee of 3 September 2013 as a correct record.

5. Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee Key Decisions Forward Plan November 2013 to January 2014

The Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee Key Decisions Forward Plan for November 2013 to January 2014 was presented.

Decision

To note the Key Decisions Forward Plan for November 2013 to January 2014.

(Reference – Key Decisions Forward Plan November 2013 to January 2014, submitted.)

6. Council Grants to Third Parties 2014/15

Edinburgh Third Sector Interface partners had requested that the Council's grants to third parties process be subject to 'roll-over' arrangements for 2014/15, to enable fuller participation in the grants to third parties review. Details were provided on a proposed basis for a response, and any consequent action required by the Council.

Decision

- 1) To not approve the request for roll-over of grants to third parties into 2014/15.
- 2) To suspend the grants to third parties application process for current grant recipients for 2014/15, to enable fuller participation in the grants to third parties review.
- 3) To instruct service area grant monitoring officers to undertake robust financial and performance assessments with all currently grant funded third parties, and to set challenging targets for 2014/15.
- 4) To agree to a further report seeking approval for all grants to third parties settlements on 25 February 2014, including any new applications.

(Reference – report by the Director of Corporate Governance, submitted)

Declaration of Interests

Councillor Lewis declared a non-financial interest in the above item as a Board Member of Edinburgh Leisure.

7. A Framework to Advance a Cooperative Capital 2012/17 – Joining the Cooperative Councils Innovation Network

The Council had agreed the establishment of a Cooperative Development Unit to support the delivery of the Framework to Advance a Cooperative Capital 2012/17. Approval was sought for the Council to become a member of the Cooperative Councils Innovation Network (CCIN) for 2013/14 on a pilot basis.

Decision

- 1) To agree to the Council becoming a member of the CCIN for the remainder of 2013/14 on a pilot basis, and to explore the feasibility of establishing a Scottish network of Cooperative Councils.
- 2) To agree to receive a further report by 31 March 2014 assessing the success of the pilot membership and an update on the feasibility study of establishing a Scottish Network of Cooperative Councils.

(References –Act of Council No 10(c) of 25 October 2012; report by the Director of Corporate Governance, submitted.)

8. Progress Report on the Commissioning Strategy for Care and Support Services 2011-2016

Details were provided on the progress made in implementing the Commissioning Strategy for Care and Support Services and proposals for future monitoring to take place through the reporting of progress on individual commissioning plans to the relevant Committee of the Council.

Decision

- 1) To approve the proposal that future monitoring of the implementation of the Commissioning Strategy for Care and Support Services take place through the reporting of progress on individual commissioning plans to the relevant Committee of the Council.
- 2) To note the progress made to date in implementing the Commissioning Strategy for Care and Support Services.
- 3) To note the future developments likely to impact upon the Commissioning Strategy for Care and Support Services.
- 4) To note that further reports would be submitted to the Committee when the full implications of the integration of health and social care in respect of the Commissioning Strategy for Care and Support Services became clear.

(References –Policy and Strategy Committee 7 August 2012 (item 12); report by the Director of Health and Social Care, submitted.)

Declaration of Interests

Councillor Edie declared a financial interest in the above item as Chair of the Care Commission and left the meeting during the Committee's consideration.

9. Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report 2012/13

Decision

To note the Chief Social Work Officer's annual report for 2012/13.

(Reference – report by the Chief Social Worker, submitted.)

Declaration of Interests

Councillor Edie declared a financial interest in the above item as Chair of the Care Commission and left the meeting during the Committee's consideration.

10. Eurocities Annual Meeting and Conference 2013

Approval was sought for the Council's representation at the Eurocities annual meeting and Conference in Ghent, Belgium on 27-29 November 2013.

Motion

To approve the attendance of one member, being the Convener of the Economy Committee, supported by an officer from the External Relations Team, at the Eurocities annual meeting and conference in Ghent, Belgium on 27-29 November 2013, using the travel arrangements proposed in the report by the Director of Corporate Governance.

- moved by Councillor Burns, seconded by Councillor Cardownie

Amendment

To approve the attendance of one member, being the Convener of the Economy Committee, supported by an officer from the External Relations Team at the Eurocities annual meeting and conference in Ghent, Belgium on 27-29 November 2013, travelling by rail.

- moved by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Chapman

Voting

The voting was as follows;

For the motion	-	12 votes
For the amendment	-	2 votes

Decision

To approve the motion by Councillor Burns.

(Reference – report by the Head of Economic Development, submitted.)

11. Investment Engagement Plans – Visit to China

Decision

To note the action taken by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Council Leader in approving the visit by the Lord Provost to Guangzhou and Shenzhen, Southern China at the end of June 2013.

(Reference – report by the Head of Economic Development, submitted.)

12. Representation at the UNESCO Creative Cities Summit in Beijing

Decision

To approve the attendance of the Lord Provost, supported by the appropriate staff to the UNESCO Creative Cities Summit in Beijing from 21-23 October 2013.

(Reference – report by the Head of Economic Development, submitted.)

13. Former Royston Primary School – 123 Boswall Parkway – Proposed Development of New Care Home - referral from the Finance and Budget Committee

The Finance and Budget Committee had referred a report which proposed the transfer of half of the former Royston Primary School site to the Health and Social Care account for the development of a new care home. The Economy Committee had earlier authorised the transfer. As this decision had not subsequently been ratified by the Finance and Budget Committee, the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee was required to determine the Council's position.

Decision

To authorise the Director of Services for Communities to agree to the transfer of half of the former Royston Primary School site to the Health and Social Care account for the development of a new care home.

(References – Economy Committee 17 September 2013 (item 15); Finance and Budget Committee 19 September 2013 (item 14); report by the Head of Legal, Risk and Compliance, submitted)

14. Communities and Neighbourhoods Policy Development and Review Sub-Committee: Work Programme – referral from Communities and Neighbourhoods Committee

The work programme for the Policy Development and Review Sub-Committee of the Communities and Neighbourhoods Committee was presented.

Decision

To approve the Communities and Neighbourhood Policy Development and Review Sub-Committee Work Programme 2013-14.

(References – Communities and Neighbourhoods Committee 24 September 2013 (item 4); report by the Head of Legal, Risk and Compliance, submitted)

15. Edinburgh Fire Control Centre - Motion by Councillor Burns

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 following motion by the Councillor Burns was submitted in terms of Standing Order 16.2:

“The Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee notes the decision of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Board of 26 September 2013 to consult on the reduction of the number of Fire Control Centres in Scotland from eight to three, with one being located in Johnstone and the locations for the remaining two yet to be identified.

Acknowledging the implications if a decision was made to close the Control Centre in Edinburgh, Committee instructs the Chief Executive to put forward the case for its retention in Edinburgh.”

Decision

To approve the motion by Councillor Burns.