

Minute

Special General Meeting of the Council

Wednesday, 25 November 2020, 09:30.

Microsoft Teams.



Present

Councillors J Harvey Johnston, Alexander G Cowie, Norman R Craigie, Robin W Crichton, David Dawson, Andrew Drever, Barbara Foulkes, Steven B Heddle, Rachael A King, W Leslie Manson, John T Richards, Stephen Sankey, John A R Scott, Gwenda M Shearer, Graham L Sinclair, James W Stockan, Magnus O Thomson, Owen Tierney, Duncan A Tullock and Heather N Woodbridge.

Clerk

- Gavin Mitchell, Head of Legal Services.

In Attendance

- John W Mundell, Interim Chief Executive.
- Gavin Barr, Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure.
- Gillian Morrison, Interim Chief Officer/Executive Director, Orkney Health and Care (for Items 1 and 2).
- James Wylie, Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing.
- Gareth Waterson, Head of Finance.
- Karen Greaves, Head of Executive Support.
- Hazel Flett, Senior Committees Officer.

Observing

- Hayley Green, Head of IT and Facilities.
- Andrew Groundwater, Head of HR and Performance.
- Roddy Mackay, Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services (for Items 1 and 2).
- Jackie Thomson, Development and Regeneration Manager (for Items 1 and 2).
- Stuart Allison, Economic Development Manager (for Items 1 and 2).
- Claire Kemp, Business Gateway Manager (for Items 1 and 2).
- David Hartley, Communications Team Leader.
- Lorraine Stout, Press Officer.

Apology

- Councillor Stephen G Clackson.

Declaration of Interest

- Councillor Stephen Sankey – Item 2.

Chair

- Councillor J Harvey Johnston, Convener.

1. Disclosure of Exempt Information

The Council noted the proposal that the public be excluded from the meeting for consideration of Item 3, as the business to be discussed involved the potential disclosure of exempt information of the classes described in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended.

2. Economic Recovery Steering Group – Proposed Resource Allocation

Councillor Stephen Sankey declared a financial interest in this item, in that his company could potentially benefit from proposals to assist local businesses, and was not present during discussion thereof.

After consideration of a joint report by the Chief Executive and the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure, copies of which had been circulated, the Council:

Noted:

2.1. That, on 11 June 2020, when considering proposed governance and spending priorities in relation to the business and economy response and recovery phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council resolved inter alia:

- That the Governance Structure [attached as Appendix 4 to the Minute], including establishment of a short life working group which would be associated with the Vibrant Economic Delivery Group of the Orkney Community Planning Partnership, be endorsed.
- That Council representation on the Steering Group should comprise the Chief Executive, the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure and five elected members.
- That the Chief Executive should submit a report to the Council, in due course, presenting the Steering Group Cross Sector/Cross Agency Recovery Plan, together with any financial implications for the Council arising from the Plan.

2.2. That, in June 2020, the Orkney Partnership Board established the short life working group, entitled the Economic Recovery Steering Group, with a remit to develop a strategy for Orkney's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.3. That membership of the Economic Recovery Steering Group comprised the following:

- Five Elected Members of the Council, namely:
 - Councillor Barbara Foulkes.
 - Councillor Rachael A King.
 - Councillor John T Richards.
 - Councillor Graham L Sinclair.
 - Councillor James W Stockan.
- Nine representatives from Orkney's business sector.
- Senior officers from the Council and Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

2.4. That the Economic Recovery Steering Group, which had met seven times between 18 August and 14 November 2020, had developed a vision for Orkney's economic recovery, ASPIRE, together with an initial action plan, attached as Appendix 1 to the joint report by the Chief Executive and the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure, which had been endorsed by the Orkney Partnership Board.

2.5. That the Economic Recovery Steering Group had requested financial support from the Council to establish the dedicated resource required to deliver the ASPIRE programme.

On the motion of Councillor Barbara Foulkes, seconded by Councillor John T Richards, the Council resolved:

2.6. That the vision and initial action plan relating to ASPIRE Orkney, developed by the Economic Recovery Steering Group, attached as Appendix 1 to this Minute, be supported in principle.

2.7. That the detail of the ASPIRE Orkney programme be subject to further consideration, in the context of the Council's corporate plan, by the Policy and Resources Committee, with effect from January 2021, and thereafter as a standing item for the Policy and Resources Committee.

2.8. To commit an allocation of up to £250,000, to be sourced from the Council's Coronavirus Business Hardship Fund, to enable the Economic Recovery Steering Group to establish the necessary programme management resource to instigate delivery of the ASPIRE programme.

2.9. That powers be delegated to the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure, in consultation with the Leader, the Chair of the Development and Infrastructure Committee, the Head of Finance and the Solicitor to the Council, to establish an appropriate mechanism to distribute the funding, referred to at paragraph 2.8 above, to be made available to the Economic Recovery Steering Group.

Councillor Magnus O Thomson joined the meeting at this point.

3. Air Services – Strategic Opportunity

On the motion of Councillor J Harvey Johnston, seconded by Councillor James W Stockan, the Council resolved that the public be excluded from the meeting for this item on the grounds that it involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 6 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended.

After consideration of a joint report by the Chief Executive and the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure, copies of which had been circulated, the Council:

Resolved what action should be taken with regard to a strategic opportunity relating to air services.

The above constitutes the summary of the Minute in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 section 50C(2) as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985.

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4. Conclusion of Meeting

At 12:45 the Convener declared the meeting concluded.

Signed: Harvey Johnston.