

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Redesign Board of the Highland Council** held in Committee Room 2, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Tuesday, 28 February 2017 at 3.00pm.

Present:

Mrs I McCallum (Chair)	Mr B Fernie
Mr B Lobban (Vice Chair)	Mr A Christie
Mrs M Davidson	Mr T Prag
Ms M Smith	Dr J Davis
Mr G MacKenzie	Mr D Millar
Mr T Maclennan	Dr I Cockburn
Mr A MacKinnon	Mr M Reiss
Mr J Gibson, UNISON	Mr M Haymer, GMB

Also Present:

Mr R Laird

Officials in attendance:

Mr S Barron, Chief Executive
Mr D Yule, Director of Finance
Mrs C McDiarmid, Head of Policy and Reform
Mr T Maclennan, Commercial Manager
Ms R Cleland, Corporate Communications Manager
Mrs A MacNeill, Senior Corporate Communications Officer
Miss J MacLennan, Democratic Services Manager

Business

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr J Gray and Mrs D MacKay.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. Draft Recommendations to the Council

There had been circulated Report No. RDB/1/17 dated 24 February 2017 by the Chief Executive which set out the final draft recommendations from the Board for the redesign of the Council.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

Phase 3 – Appraising the Options for Change – Paragraph 5.4 – all Members should be advised in advance of the Council meeting on 9 March that staff involved in the review teams would be available in the Chamber Foyer over lunchtime on that day in order to provide further information about the reviews as necessary.

Phase 3 – Paragraph 5.5 – amendment to Appendix 3 – agreed to change the wording in recommendation 4 to the following – ‘The Board seeks Council approval to conduct an early review of collections in one particular area within the Inner Moray Firth area with the objective of implementing a trial of new collection methods in consultation with Local Members affected.

Phase 3 – Addition to Appendix 3 – agreed the following addition to Appendix 3 – Administration in Schools Review – ‘A dedicated Project Manager is appointed (from outwith the Care and Learning Service to ensure corporate linkages) for a minimum 6 month period to take forward the Administration in Schools project, with the project team to include the current schools support working group and a representative from ICT Services. The project manager and project team need to have a detailed grasp of school requirements. A full project plan and progress report is to be provided in August. It is anticipated that this can be done within existing resources’.

Phase 3 – Paragraph 5.10 – clarification was required in terms of what was meant by ‘lean’ reviews in order that this could be fully understood by all.

Phase 4 – Localism and Public Participation Objectives – important for the Council to become not just ‘commercially minded’ but also ‘community minded’ in order that communities could be involved on a day to day basis.

Phase 5 – Paragraph 6.3 – Organisation Change and Support Programme – essential that an in-house ‘can do’ attitude was promoted.

Phase 5 – Paragraph 7.2 (8) – need to ensure that where possible current processes were simplified and streamlined in future.

Phase 6 – Paragraph 8.1 – Recommendations on the Structure and Management of Council Operations and a Review of Committee Structure and Membership – need to rephrase this paragraph to reflect the staff input during the Workshops.

Phase 6 – Paragraph 8.2 (1) – need to combine this Paragraph with Paragraph 8.3 to read as follows – ‘Far more needs to be decided locally with more decisions, scrutiny and resource allocation through Local Committees. This change should be evolutionary so while it identifies functions for deeper community engagement at this time, the range of functions for community participation will increase over time’.

Phase 6 – Paragraph 8.5 (2)(c) – need to describe what is meant by ‘things’ i.e. corporate business.

Phase 6 – Paragraph 8.5 (3) – need to reword to read as follows ‘These Committees would be supported and informed by Policy Development Groups comprising Members, Officers and Trade Union representatives.

In regard to the future development of policy by the Administration, with support from Officers, consideration needed to be given to a review of current delegated powers to Officers in due course.

Phase 6 – Paragraph 8.5 (6) – Local Committee assurance statements would be reviewed by the Scrutiny Committee with the proviso that arrangements would be put in place for an escalation route to the full Council if and when necessary.

Phase 6 – Paragraph 8.7 – need to include reference to the involvement of Trade Union representatives within the development of proposals for the future structure and management of the Council.

Also, need to remove reference to ‘cost neutral’ in the development of affordable proposals and instead make reference to proposals being ‘affordable within existing resources’.

Phase 6 – Additional Recommendation – that a successor body to this Redesign Board should be set up by the new Council.

Paragraph 9.1 – second bullet point – need to look at further engagement with other agencies and partners in ongoing redesign.

Paragraph 9.2 – need to correct wording to make reference to ‘June 2017’ and not ‘June 2016’ as detailed.

Paragraph 10.1 – Resource Implications – need to also remove reference to ‘cost neutral’ in regard to proposals for a redesigned structure to support the new model of decision making.

(In summary, all of the above to be reflected in the report recommendations and appendices for submission to the full Council).

At this point, the Chair, on behalf of the Board, expressed thanks to all those who had been involved in the work undertaken over recent months, including the Trade Union representatives.

Thereafter, the Board **AGREED TO RECOMMEND** to the full Council as follows:-

1. The redesign statement at Appendix 1 already agreed by the Council be presented to the new Council for approval and implementation;
2. The statement of purpose, values and outcomes already agreed by the Council be amended as highlighted at Appendix 2 and presented to the new Council for approval.
3. That it be noted that the booklets listing all Council functions and their prioritisation agreed at the Council meeting in September 2016 would be used for the induction of new Members after the May election, for identifying future areas for review and for informing the redesign of governance and service structures to be considered by the new Council.
4. That the review recommendations listed in Appendix 3 be agreed by the Council to enable function redesign. Also, that as further review work was undertaken, further recommendations to come to the new Council to consider.
5. That the Council endorse the approach to being more commercially minded as described in Paragraphs 5.6 to 5.11 as a way of sustaining services and jobs across the region and to recommend to the new Council the creation of a Commercial Board as part of its governance arrangements.
6. That stopping or withdrawing services could not be ruled out if they were discretionary and no longer affordable; however before considering this as an option and where the service was valued, the Council should first do checks for efficiency, alternative ways of delivering the service, income

- potential to sustain it, reducing service levels and using the Audit Scotland framework for stopping services.
7. That the Council endorse the development of the Community Gateway idea through the Community Planning Partnership which would provide a support or brokerage service to encourage further community action.
 8. That the current elements of the redesign change programme for staff and Members detailed in Paragraph 7.2 be endorsed and that the programme continue to develop with early attention to the support required for localism and public participation objectives and any structure changes. It would be one way to support the attitudinal change sought and demonstrate the Council being more community-minded.
 9. That the Council endorse the proposals for governance as set out in Paragraph 8.5 and recommends it to the new Council with the detail to be developed.
 10. That the new Council set up a successor body to replicate this Redesign Board.
 11. That the Chief Executive be tasked by the Council to develop proposals for the structure and management of Council operations, based on the criteria set out in Paragraph 8.7, including the process and timescale for implementing the redesigned structure, and this to be recommended to the new Council.
 12. That Officer time to support redesign be continued through to the end of June 2016 at a cost of £7,000 and to support the Commission on Highland Democracy of up to £5,000 which was within the budget set for 2016/17 and would enable the activities in Paragraph 9.1 to be taken forward.

4. Redesign Board – Commercial Proposal

There had been circulated to Members only Report No. RDB/2/17 dated 24 February 2017 by the Commercial Manager.

Following discussion, the Board **AGREED** that a Confidential Executive Summary Report on this issue should be submitted to the full Council on 9 March for consideration.

At this point, the Chair, on behalf of the Board, recorded thanks to the Chief Executive and the Head of Policy & Reform for the work which had been undertaken over recent months.

The meeting ended at 4.30pm.