

## **The Highland Council Resources Committee**

Minutes of Meeting of the Resources Committee held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Wednesday, 8 February 2017 at 10.30 am.

### **Present:**

Mr B Fernie	Mr B Lobban
Mr A Mackinnon	Mrs D Mackay
Dr D Alston	Mr D Mackay
Miss J Campbell	Mr T Maclennan
Mrs H Carmichael	Mr F Parr
Dr I Cockburn	Mr T Prag
Mrs M Davidson	Mr G Rimell (substitute)
Ms J Douglas	Ms M Smith
Mr C Fraser	Mr J Stone
Mr R Laird	Mr B Thompson

### **Officials in attendance:**

Ms M Morris, Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Development  
Mr D Yule, Director of Finance  
Mr A Gunn, Head of Revenues and Business Support, Finance Service  
Mrs S McKandie, Benefits & Welfare Manager, Finance Service  
Mr J Gladman, Interim Head of Digital Transformation, Corporate Development Service  
Mr S Walsh, Head of People and Transformation, Corporate Development Service  
Mr D Goldie, Head of Housing & Building Maintenance, Community Services  
Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager, Chief Executive's Office  
Mr M Bailey, Project Manager, Corporate Development Service  
Mr J Shepherd, ICT Operations Manager, Corporate Development Service  
Mr K Forbes, Property Manager (Estates), Development & Infrastructure  
Ms L Cowie, Ward Manager, Chief Executive's Office  
Ms N Wallace, Environment Manager, Development & Infrastructure  
Ms F Cameron, LEADER Programme Manager, Development & Infrastructure  
Ms C Stachan, Accountant, Finance Service  
Mrs L Dunn, Principal Administrator, Corporate Development Service  
Ms A Macrae, Committee Administrator, Corporate Development Service  
Mr A MacInnes, Administrative Assistant, Corporate Development Service

**An asterisk in the margin denotes a recommendation to the Council. All decisions with no marking in the margin are delegated to the Committee.**

### **Mr B Fernie in the Chair**

### **Business**

#### **1. Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan**

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr A Christie, Mrs I McCallum and Mr J McGillivray.

## 2. **Declarations of Interest** **Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt**

Item 11: Dr D Alston and Ms J Douglas (financial)

### **Good News**

The following areas of good news were reported:-

#### Digital – New Council App

The Council would be launching a mobile application for citizens to transact online using their mobile devices on 17 March 2017, which would allow citizens the ability to apply, pay and report issues while out and about on their phone or tablet and would be available for downloading from the Apple, Android and Windows app stores as well as the Highland Council website. Officers from Digital Services were demonstrating the App in the Members' reception area over lunch time and Members were invited to view the application.

#### Health and Safety Qualifications

Mr Martin Murphy (Community Services) and Ms Mary Cook (Corporate Development) were both recently presented with their Trade Union Health and Safety Diplomas by Ms Michelle Morris (Deputy Chief Executive) and Mr Gus Grubb (TUC Education Officer). Congratulations were expressed for their achievements and recognition was given for their hard work involved in this.

At the same ceremony, the Council was awarded a Quaich in recognition of twenty years of the Safety Reps' Charter and Partnership Agreement. This was the longest such agreement in Scotland and the "Highland Model" had been promoted by the TUC and replicated by other organisations. The work of officers and trade union representatives in developing and maintaining this successful partnership was recognised by the Committee.

The Committee **NOTED** the Good News items.

### **FINANCIAL MONITORING** **SGRÙDADH IONMHASAIL**

## 3. **Corporate Revenue Monitoring to 31 December 2016** **Sgrùdadh Teachd-a-steach Corporra gu 30 Dùbhlachd 2016**

There had been circulated Report No RES/01/17 dated 30 January 2017 by the Director of Finance which presented the financial position of the revenue budgets of the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the period from 1 April 2016 to 31 December 2016 and the estimated position for the 2016/17 financial year. It also presented an update on the status of savings removed from the budget in the year.

During discussion, Members sought clarification regarding the saving for 'Information Management' and an explanation of the work being undertaken to achieve the saving on 'Support for Council Renewable Projects' both of which, it was confirmed, would be responded to under the agenda item on Transformational Savings Programme (TSP) Status Report (Item 14).

The Committee is invited to:-

- i. **AGREED** the financial position of the General Fund and HRA revenue budgets as at 31 December 2016 and **APPROVED** the estimated year end position;
- ii. **APPROVED** the use of the General Fund non-earmarked balance to fund the costs as described in paragraphs 7.3 and 7.4 of the report; and
- iii. **NOTED** the status of budgeted savings in the year.

#### 4. **Corporate Capital Monitoring to 31 December 2016** **Sgrùdadh Calpa Chorporra gu 31 Dùbhlachd 2016**

There had been circulated Report No RES/02/17 dated 30 January 2017 by the Director of Finance which provided an overview of expenditure on the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital programmes for the period from 1 April 2016 to 31 December 2016 and the estimated position for the 2016/17 financial year. The report also provided an overview of the status of all major capital projects with a value over £4m.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- it was important to be very clear what was meant by slippage, particularly for new Members, when reviewing the Capital Programme;
- if there was to be a reduction in the Capital Programme then the focus should be placed on projects that made the Council more efficient to operate with fewer resources available;
- loan rates were currently low so, even if not currently required, it was a worthwhile time to consider borrowing;
- disappointment was expressed in relation to the underspend in the HRA Capital Programme which related to Badenoch and Strathspey but reassurance was sought, and received, that the money would not be lost from the projects that were referred to. A request was made for these projects to be accelerated in future; and
- clarification was sought, and received, that the overspend reported on school building projects was over and above the contingency included in the estimated costing.

The Committee **AGREED** the financial position of the General Fund and HRA Capital Programmes as at 31 December 2016.

#### 5. **Finance Service Revenue Monitoring to 31 December 2016** **Sgrùdadh Teachd-a-steach Seirbheis an Ionmhais gu 31 Dùbhlachd 2016**

There had been circulated Report No RES/03/17 dated 27 January 2017 by the Director of Finance which commented on the Revenue Monitoring position for the period to 31 December 2016.

In response to a question in regard to the impact of vacancy management on staff pressures in future, further clarification was provided in relation to the use of vacancy management as a key part of a strategy to move towards a more risk based approach to financial management.

The Committee **AGREED** the monitoring report to 31 December 2016.

**6. Corporate Development Service Revenue Monitoring to 31 December 2016**  
**Sgrùdadh Teachd-a-steach Seirbheis an Leasachaidh Chorporra gu 31 Dùbhlachd 2016**

There had been circulated Report No RES/04/17 dated 29 January 2017 by the Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Development which provided information on the revenue monitoring position for the Corporate Development Service revenue budget for the period 1 April 2016 to 31 December 2016.

In discussion, the successful income generation in Democratic Services achieved through the provision of services to NHS Highland was welcomed.

The Committee **AGREED** the revenue monitoring report for the period 1 April 2016 to 31 December 2016.

**7. Corporate Development Service Capital Budget Monitoring to 31 December 2016**  
**Sgrùdadh Buidseit Calpa Seirbheis an Leasachaidh Chorporra gu 31 Dùbhlachd 2016**

There had been circulated Report No RES/05/17 dated 26 January 2017 by the Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Development which set out the monitoring position for the Corporate Development Service's 2016/17 capital budget for the period to 31 December 2016.

The Committee **AGREED** the monitoring position for the Corporate Development Service's capital budget for the period 1 April 2016 to 31 December 2016.

**8. Chief Executive's Service and Members Revenue Expenditure Monitoring 2016/17**  
**Sgrùdadh Caiteachas Teachd-a-steach Oifis an Àrd-Oifigeir agus nam Ball 2016/17**

There had been circulated Report No RES/06/17 dated 29 January 2017 by the Chief Executive which provided information on the revenue monitoring position for the Chief Executive's Office and Members' budget for the period 1 April 2016 to 31 December 2016.

The Committee **AGREED** the revenue monitoring report for the period 1 April 2016 to 31 December 2016.

**9. Chief Executive's Office Capital Budget Monitoring to 31 December 2016  
Sgrùdadh Buidseat Calpa Oifis an Àrd-Oifigeir agus nam Ball gu 31 Dùbhlachd 2016**

There had been circulated Report No RES/07/17 dated 29 January 2017 by the Chief Executive which set out the monitoring position for the Chief Executive's 2016/17 capital budget for the period from 1 April 2016 to 31 December 2016.

In response to a question an explanation was provided on the reason the Inverness City Gateways budget sat within the Chief Executive's budget, noting this was for monitoring purposes only.

The Committee **AGREED** the capital monitoring position for the period 1 April 2016 to 31 December 2016.

**FINANCE SERVICE  
SEIRBHEIS AN IONMHAIS**

**10. Treasury Management  
Rianachd Ionmhais**

**(a) Summary of Transactions  
Geàrr-chunntas Ghnothaichean**

There had been circulated Report No RES/08/17 dated 27 January 2017 by the Director of Finance which provided details on the treasury management transactions undertaken within the period which was submitted to the Committee for Members' scrutiny and in compliance with CIPFA's Code of Practice on Treasury Management.

In discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- the relevant staff be commended on their work in relation to treasury management particularly in view of the additional work generated through the move towards more short term borrowing; and
- on terms of shared services the opportunities for the Service to offer its treasury management services and expertise to other bodies and organisations.

The Committee **NOTED** the Treasury Management Summary of Transactions report.

**(b) Strategy Statement and Investment Statement 2017/18  
Aithris Ro-innleachd agus Aithris Tasgaidh 2017/18**

There had been circulated Report No RES/09/17 dated 30 January 2017 by the Director of Finance which explained that the Council had adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management in Local Authorities. A requirement of the Code was for an annual Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Statement to be approved by Council for the forthcoming financial year.

In compliance with the Code, the attached Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Statement for 2017/18 was submitted to Committee for scrutiny. This Statement would then be submitted to the Council for approval in March 2017. In presenting the report, it was explained that there had been a change to section 4.2, 2<sup>nd</sup> bullet point in that, in order to comply with the 2016 legislation, the Council would use a fixed annuity interest rate 4.52% (which was the loans fund rate for 2016/17) rather than using the previous year's interest rate.

In discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- it was important to recognise the fundamental importance of this work to the Council's expenditure plans going forward;
- a point in regard to the potential for digital currencies to be considered in the future; and
- clarification was sought and received in regard to how upper limit in respect of short term borrowing was assessed.

The Committee **NOTED**:-

- i. the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Statement for 2017/18 and the Prudential Indicators as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report; and
- \* ii. that, in compliance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management in Local Authorities, the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Statement for 2017/18 would subsequently be submitted to the Council for approval in March 2017.

## **11. Welfare Reform Report Fios às Ùr mu Ath-leasachadh Shochairèan**

**Declaration of Interest – Dr D Alston, as Chair of NHS Highland, declared a financial interest in this item and left the Chamber for the consideration of this item.**

**Ms J Douglas declared a financial interest in this item as a NHS Highland Board Member but, in terms of the dispensation granted by the Standards Commission for Scotland, remained to participate in the discussion.**

There had been circulated Joint Report No RES/10/17 dated 27 January 2017 by the Director of Finance and the Director of Community Services which provided comprehensive information on the current status of Universal Credit and other welfare initiatives including the constructive actions being taken forward following the success of the Council's event to examine poverty in Highland. It also made available financial monitoring information, covering the Council's considerable involvement in this area of work.

In discussion, reference was made to the decision of the Resources Committee on 24 February 2016 in relation to the transitional project funding for mental health and midwifery projects. It was explained that the Committee had agreed to combine the projects and provide 50% funding to 31 March 2017, and to enter into discussions with NHS Highland about sustaining the project jointly funded from 1 April 2017. It had also been agreed that update reports on progress be provided to the Committee in August and November 2016.

In regard to the above, it was suggested that the update reports had not been provided and therefore the Committee had not had an opportunity to consider how this pilot project could be sustained after 31 March 2017. In addition concern was expressed that this matter was now time critical particularly given the value of the project to vulnerable people and the fact a number of jobs were involved.

The Director of Finance advised that it was intended to bring a report back on the evaluation of the project at the end of the pilot period which was 31 March 2017. He also explained that there was currently no provision for funding this project next year within the Council's budget for 2017/18, with reference to the significant savings proposals to be considered by the Council on 16 February 2017 and concern over the current level of reserves.

The Benefits and Welfare Manager explained that during discussions NHS Highland had confirmed it would not be in a position to fund this project. She also advised that an update report had been brought to the Committee in August 2016 in relation to performance monitoring of the project.

Thereafter, Members raised a number of issues on this matter as follows:-

- concern that an update report had not been brought to the Committee in November 2016 and that funding to sustain the project was being raised at this late stage of the financial year in the absence of a report and just ahead of the Council's budget meeting on 16 February 2017;
- clarification was sought on whether project summaries had been received from the CABx to help inform how to take the project forward and particularly whether the pilot should be mainstreamed in terms of good practice; in response it was confirmed that mainstreaming of the project would be considered at the end of the pilot period;
- in regard to the above it was noted that an overarching review of how the Council and other providers in Highland provided debt and money advice was being progressed and that CABx were involved in this review;
- it was suggested the Council should continue to support this project on the basis of the return this form of early intervention generated and the benefits it delivered to the most vulnerable in society;
- the opportunities for funding for the project to be identified from the additional funding allocated by the Scottish Government to the Council;

- it was suggested that further information in relation to the project was required from the CABx before consideration should be given to funding the project in 2017/18 particularly in terms of how any shortfall in the funding required would be met and around the staffing implications; and
- reference to the fact that to date the CABx had not approached Council Leaders to discuss this matter.

During further discussion on this item, it was suggested that the Citizens Advice Bureaux be asked to submit an interim report on the project for consideration at the full Council on 8 March 2017, and in the meantime arrangements be made for discussions to be held between Council Leaders and the CABx.

Thereafter, Members commented on the report as follows:-

- it was important that the Council continued to improve on supporting Looked After Children into positive destinations, and it was requested that a report on the interventions and work ongoing in this regard be submitted to the Education, Children and Adult Services Committee;
- clarification was sought and received in relation to the DWPs criteria for split payments to households in cases where there was domestic violence or abuse;
- issues around increasing income inequalities and the detrimental impact on those on low wages as flexible, part-time and minimum wage work became more common;
- concern at the proposal to remove automatic entitlement to housing benefit/universal credit housing costs for 18 to 21 year olds and the potential for further lobbying of the UK Government to be undertaken on this matter;
- a point in regard to whether looked after children and those going through care or after care were included in those exempted from the above proposal;
- it was important that the Committee be informed of the specific outcomes identified at the 'Examining Poverty In Highland' workshop and the work being taken forward to achieve these outcomes;
- in regard to the above there was a need for a proactive list of actions to be developed in addition to the proposed lobbying activities;
- the potential to mitigate the percentage of cases in arrears in respect of temporary accommodation;
- concern that while the Highland economy had low unemployment, it had a low wage economy, and the need for the next Council and partner agencies to take a more proactive approach on this issue;
- the devolvement of powers to the Scottish Government around social welfare was welcomed and reference was made to the need for the Council to continue to press for further devolvement as early as possible;
- the need to focus lobbying activity on reducing the considerable delays being experienced in claimants receiving their payments from the DWP;
- reference to proposals to meet with and brief the Highland MPs/MSPs on welfare reform including the key changes which would make a significant difference in terms of mitigating impacts; and
- the need for a more joined up and holistic approach between Council services and agencies in relation to people affected by poverty.

In conclusion of this item, the Leader advised that following the last meeting of the Welfare Reform Working Group it was proposed to hold a workshop on welfare reform to agree key recommendations for the next Council going forward and that further details on the arrangements would be provided to Members in due course.

Following discussion, the Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the recommendations outlined in the report;
- ii. **AGREED** that the Citizens Advice Bureaux be asked to submit an interim report on the project being funded through the Transitional Project Funding agreed by the Committee on 24 February 2016, for consideration at the full Council on 8 March 2017, and in the meantime arrangements be made for discussions to be held between Council Leaders and the CABx;
- iii. **AGREED** to request that a report on the interventions and work ongoing to support Looked After Children into positive destinations be submitted to the Education, Children and Adult Services Committee; and
- iv. **AGREED** to support the:-
  - a. proactive work being undertaken by the Welfare Support Team to engage with those impacted by the benefit cap and to identify appropriate mitigating measures on an individual basis;
  - b. decisions by the Service Delivery Team within the Revenues & Business Support Section to award £24,400 Discretionary Housing Payments to mitigate the impact of the benefit cap and noted that full mitigation might not be available from this Fund during 2017/18;
  - c. review work being undertaken within Community Services with a view to identifying changes to policies and procedures to mitigate the impacts of Universal Credit;
  - d. proposals set out in paragraph 3.5.11 of the report to strengthen the regulations for Scottish Flexibilities with regard to the frequency and payment of Universal Credit;
  - e. work being taken forward to effectively communicate changes to bereavement payments; and
- v. ongoing work to progress the lobbying actions and working with partners to improve the lives of Highland residents arising from the successful examining poverty event held in December 2016. **NOTED** the recommendations outlined in the report.

## 12. Finance Service Quarterly Performance Report Aithisg Dèanadais Ràitheil Seirbheis an Ionmhais

There had been circulated Report No RES/11/17 dated 26 January 2017 by the Director of Finance which provided a summary of key and statutory performance indicators for the Finance Service as at 31 December 2016.

The Committee **NOTED** the statutory and key performance indicators.

### 13. Capital Discretionary Fund – Applications for Financial Support Maoin Calpa fo Ùghdarras – Iarrtasan airson Taic Ionmhasail

There had been circulated Report No RES/12/17 dated 30 January 2017 by the Director of Finance which asked Members to consider a number of applications for financial support from the Capital Discretionary Fund. The report highlighted that there was insufficient funds to agree to all applications, drew reference to the financial pressures on the overall Capital Plan, and recommended (with one exception) that no final decision was taken to award funding at this stage.

In discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- concern was expressed that approval of the six applications would fully commit the Fund before the start of the financial year 2017/18; it was therefore suggested that with the exception of the application for Muir of Ord Hall, agreement on the remaining applications should be deferred to allow them to be considered by the next Council after the elections in May 2017;
- there was an increasing awareness of the existence of the Fund amongst organisations and therefore the Committee should also be mindful it was likely the number of applications would increase going forward;
- issues around the difficulties experienced by organisations around securing funding approvals from funders pending confirmation that all other funding was in place and the assistance the Council and the Highland Leader Programme could provide in this regard;
- it was suggested that the recommendations in the report be strengthened to reflect that the Committee was minded to support the applications, subject to the caveats set out in the report; and
- a contrary view that the Committee should be cautious about indicating it was minded to approve the applications as effectively this would commit the next Council to supporting these projects.

Thereafter, a number of Members spoke in support of the application from Linnhe Leisure during which they referred to the cultural and economic importance of the Nevis Centre to Fort William and Lochaber as a focus for tourists, major events, and a wide range of organisations. It was reported that the roof of the facility was leaking and required to be repaired as a matter of urgency, and that investment was also required to ensure the sustainability of the building and to reduce running costs. It was also explained that other potential funders would not commit funding until such time as the roof was repaired and watertight.

Following an adjournment, Mr B Fernie seconded by Mr A Mackinnon **MOVED** that recommendations 3, 4 and 5 in the report be deleted and replaced with the following:-

- i. agree the funding applications for Dornoch and District Community Association, Lovat Shinty Club, Isle of Canna Community Development Trust and Linnhe Leisure, subject to confirmation of other funding being in place; and

- ii. defer any decision on The Ledge pending submission of further financial details and confirmation of a viable business case.

Mr R Laird seconded by Ms M Smith moved as an **AMENDMENT** that recommendations 3, 4 and 5 in the report be deleted and replaced with the following -

- i. the funding application for Linnhe Leisure be supported subject to confirmation of other funding being in place; and
- ii. that agreement on the other remaining projects be deferred to allow them to be considered by the next Council.

On a vote being taken, the **MOTION** received 7 votes and the **AMENDMENT** received 13 votes with no abstentions and the **AMENDMENT** was therefore **CARRIED**, the votes having been cast as follows:-

**For the Motion:**

Mrs M Davidson, Mr B Lobban, Ms J Douglas; Mrs H Carmichael; Mr B Thomson; Mr A Mackinnon; Mr B Fernie.

**For the Amendment:**

Miss J Campbell, Mr T Maclennan, Mr R Laird, Mr C Fraser, Dr I Cockburn, Mr F Parr, Mr D Mackay, Ms M Smith, Dr D Alston, Mr G Rimell, Mr T Prag, Mr J Stone, Mrs D Mackay.

**Decision**

The Committee **NOTED** the six funding applications, but in particular in the context of the financial implications set out in Section 2 of the report, and the potential to refuse or defer applications at this stage, and **AGREED**:-

- i. the application for the Muir of Ord Hall be supported on the basis that the full funding package was in place to allow the project to proceed;
- ii. the funding application for Linnhe Leisure be supported subject to confirmation of other funding being in place; and
- iii. that agreement on the other remaining projects be deferred to allow them to be considered by the next Council.

**CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT SERVICE  
SEIRBHEIS AN LEASACHAIDH CHORPORRA**

**14. Transformational Savings Programme (TSP) Status Report  
Aithisg Inbhe a' Phrògraim Shàbhalaidean Cruth-atharrach**

There had been circulated Report No RES/13/17 dated 25 January 2017 by the Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Development which provided an update on the current status of the TSP with an overview of business improvement work which was changing how the Council operated, along with a summary of the TSP financial position.

In discussion, the following points were raised:-

- in relation to the managing information project, it was confirmed that all the work that had been planned for this project had been delivered and all Services had contributed towards the saving target. Further, the RAG status of Red against this project, contained in the Corporate Revenue Monitoring Report, recognised the challenges in allocating money from Service budgets towards the saving, even although the project had been completed. A breakdown of Services' allocations towards this saving would be provided to Councillor R Laird;
- in relation to the 'Support for Council Renewable Projects' and 'Offshore Wind Farms Community Benefit', it was confirmed that both projects were being led by the Director of Development and Infrastructure and significant work was being undertaken with the Corporate Improvement Team, Commercial Manager and Energy team to translate some of the good ideas into an action plan. The plan would be submitted to the appropriate Committee(s) for Members consideration;
- in regard to the Employability Project, it was advised that the savings target for this project in 2016/17 would be allocated to the Development and Infrastructure Service. That Service would also consider how savings could be achieved on this project in future years; and
- the Digital First Scheme was successful and was continually improving as was progress with the Council's commercial and income generation. The importance of training for employees in building their capability to market the Council's goods and services was stressed.

Thereafter, the Committee **NOTED** the progress with the delivery of the TSP and the actions being taken to ensure savings were delivered.

## **15. ICT Transition and Network Programmes Eadar-ghluasad ICT agus Prògraim Lìonraidh**

There had been circulated Report No RES/14/17 dated 31 January 2017 by the Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Development which provided an update on the status and governance arrangements of the major ICT modernisation programmes now underway. These programmes covered the transition from the Fujitsu contract to the Wipro contract, subsequent transformation activities to be carried out by Wipro, transition to the SWAN network and an overall ICT network refresh.

It was advised that since the report was written, significant progress had been made with the ICT transition, with good productive working between the Council, Fujitsu and Wipro. The migration of servers to the new data centre had now commenced. While there were still risks in meeting the end of March, 2017 transition deadline, progress made so far was encouraging and Officials were optimistic that the deadline would be met.

In relation to the Chromebook pilot project in schools, it was queried if there were any contingency plans in the project for wireless Local Area Network (LAN) not being provided as, for example, some schools had thick stone walls where network coverage might be difficult. Also, a reassurance was sought that LAN would be in place ahead of the rollout of Chromebooks to schools.

Concern was expressed regarding the timescales and readiness of schools for Chromebooks. It was advised that the expectation had been that the rollout would have commenced on a phased basis long before now to some schools and this had not happened. It was now understood that only three secondary schools would now receive Chromebooks between August 2017 and January 2018. It was understood that no contractor had been appointed to complete the rollout and if there was further slippage in the programme this could mean an academic term without Chromebooks for some schools. It was requested that Members be provided with a detailed programme for the Chromebook project, and an assurance that the first phase of the rollout would take place in August 2017.

It was explained that the full rollout of Chromebooks was to be undertaken alongside the refresh of managed devices in schools. This was a two year project which was always planned to commence in August 2017 and the timescale for the project remained the same and had not changed, i.e. there had been no slippage/delay and the rollout would be to all schools within the Associated School Group, not just the secondary school. The Network refresh was also to be a two year project to be aligned with the Chromebook rollout. There had been a delay with the Network refresh but there was still flexibility within the overall plan to make up time and have the Network refresh completed in time for Chromebooks going to schools.

In terms of the bandwidth requirements for internet access, the bandwidth would be increased significantly with the move to the Scottish Wide Area Network (SWAN) and this was due to complete no later than the end of July and in advance of the refresh of equipment in schools. Furthermore bandwidth would continue to be monitored to check if it required to be increased further in future.

Continuing, there was a need to manage expectations of the ICT Transition and Network Programmes, as it was a large and complex project which would take time to be implemented. It was re-emphasised that the rollout of Chromebook and Network refresh were two year projects and timescales had not changed in the overall plan. Members support was requested in managing expectations in their communities as the rollout of Chromebook involved thousands of devices and this would take time and would be done on a phased basis over the two year project timescale. Significant efforts would be made to ensure that the project would be delivered as planned.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- i. **AGREED** that a verbal report on the status of the Chromebook project and Network Refresh would be provided at the Education, Children and Adult Services Committee on 1 March 2017;
- ii. **NOTED** the report and the risks being managed;
- iii. **NOTED** the pressure created by the delay of the SWAN migration of £645,000 and that action would be taken to recover costs from Capita; and
- iv. **NOTED** the funding required to meet the cost of transition to the new ICT contract.

**16. ICT Projects Update**  
**Cunntas as Ùr mu Phròiseactan ICT**

There had been circulated Report No RES/15/17 dated 20 January 2017 by the Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Development which provided Members with an update of the status of current ICT projects as required by the Council's Project Management Governance Policy.

The Committee **NOTED** the report.

**DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE**  
**LEASACHADH AGUS BUN-STRUCTAR**

**17. Highland LEADER Programme – Cashflow Finance**  
**LEADER na Gàidhealtachd – Sgeama Sruth Airgid**

There had been circulated Report No RES/16/17 dated 30 January 2017 by the Director of Development and Infrastructure which requested support from the Council to deliver the Highland LEADER Programme through the provision of funds to be used for project cashflow.

In particular, Members were advised that the financial support would be in the form of a loan provided through the Council's cash balances and not Council cash reserves.

Following consideration, the Committee **AGREED**:-

- i. to make £250,000 available in cashflow finance to support delivery of projects through the programme; and
- ii. the criteria outlined in the report.

**MINUTES OF MEETINGS**  
**GEÀRR-CHUNNTAS CHOINNEAMHAN**

**18. Minutes of Meetings**  
**Geàrr-chunntasan Choinneamhan**

The Committee **APPROVED** the following Minutes of Meetings:-

- i. Welfare Reform Working Group held on 21 November 2016 and 18 January 2017;
- ii. Employment Release Sub-Committee held on 23 November and 20 December 2016;
- iii. Appeals Committee held on 24 November 2016;
- iv. Staff Partnership Forum – Elected Members/Staff Side Group held on 20 January 2017; and
- v. Central Safety Committee held on 20 January 2017.

**19. Exclusion of The Public**  
**Às-dùnadh a' Phobail**

The Committee **RESOLVED** that, under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of the following items on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 6 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

**CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT SERVICE**  
**SEIRBHEIS AN LEASACHAIDH CHORPORRA**

**20. ICT Executive Board: Minutes of Meeting**  
**Bòrd-gnìomha ICT: Geàrr-chunntas Coinneimh**

There had been circulated to Members only, Minutes of Meeting of the ICT Executive Board (Members) held on 9 January 2017, the terms of which were **APPROVED**.

**DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE**  
**LEASACHADH AGUS BUN-STRUCTAR**

**21. Land and Property Report**  
**Aithisg Fearainn agus Cuid-seilbh**

There had been circulated to Members only Report No RES/17/17 dated 19 January 2017 by the Director of Development and Infrastructure in respect of a number of land and property transactions.

The Committee **AGREED** the recommendations as set out in the report.

The meeting ended at 2.20 pm.