

## 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, 19 December 2017 at 2.00pm.

### Present:

Mr B Lobban (Chair)	Mr R Bremner (VC)
Ms M Smith	Mr D Louden
Mr G MacKenzie	Mrs C Caddick
Mr A Christie	Mr C Smith
Dr I Cockburn	Mr A Jarvie
Mr K Gowans	Mr A Sinclair (VC)
Mr J Gibson, UNISON	Mr P MacPherson, GMB

### Also Present:

Mr R Laird	Mr G Adam
Mr A Baxter	

### Officials in attendance:

Mr S Barron, Chief Executive  
 Mr D Yule, Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources  
 Mr A Gunn, Head of Revenues and Customer Services  
 Mrs C McDiarmid, Head of Policy and Reform  
 Ms A Clark, Acting Head of Policy  
 Mr M Bailey, Project Manager  
 Mr M MacDonald, Technical Business Analyst  
 Ms L Lallah, Technical Business Analyst  
 Ms R Cleland, Communication & Resilience Manager  
 Miss J MacLennan, Democratic Services Manager

### Also in attendance:

Mr D Wilby, Head of Performance, High Life Highland

## Business

### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mrs M Davidson, Mr A MacKinnon, Mr M Reiss and Mrs C Wilson.

### 2. Declarations of Interest

Item 3 – Mr K Gowans (Financial)

### 3. Music Tuition

**Declaration of Interest – Mr K Gowans declared a financial interest in this item on the grounds that a family member was employed by High Life Highland but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of**

**the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that his interest did not preclude him from taking part in the discussion.**

There had been circulated Report No. RDB/5/17 dated 15 December 2017 by the Head of Revenues and Customer Services which detailed the approach which had been taken to the review of Music Tuition, including staff and customer engagement and the objectives which had been followed –

Objective 1 – review current strategic aims and objectives of the Music Tuition service;

Objectives 2 & 3 – in depth appraisal of current financial management and business planning and in depth appraisal of current business and administrative processes;

Objective 4 – benefits of Music Tuition;

Objective 5 – review relationships and partnership working with Council and other services;

Objective 6 – consider the service delivery options; and

Objectives 7 to 9 – options appraisal, strategic vision and recommendations.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- thanks should be conveyed to the Officers concerned for what was a very comprehensive and detailed report;
- there was a need for clarification on the level of general music tuition (both primary and secondary) which would be provided in future if the service was to transfer to High Life Highland (HLH);
- there was also a need for clarification as to whether any discussion had been undertaken with Feis on these proposals as it was imperative that the focus at all times was on the provision of music tuition;
- it was noted that if the transfer to HLH went ahead, the same group of staff as at present would continue to deliver the music tuition service;
- HLH had an excellent track record of growing services and this proposal therefore presented an opportunity to build on the current service and introduce improvements in future years, including dealing with current waiting lists;
- it should be highlighted that HLH already provided music tuition in Community Centres;
- it was noted that contact had been made with Feis and that this would be continued and maintained in order to develop partnership working and avoid duplication of services;
- if this transfer went ahead, it was vital that identification of pupils/opportunities was initiated at primary level and that parents were also supported in regard to the provision of instruments;
- HLH had a good track record of advertising and promoting services and this would enable the future planning of staffing and resources;
- there was concern as to why the Council was not taking forward improvements to the current service within existing resources and keeping music tuition as an 'in-house' service;
- there was also disappointment that no representatives from the Care & Learning Service were in attendance at the meeting to speak to the report and answer questions/queries from Members of the Board;
- the dedication of the staff currently delivering music tuition needed to be recognised and acknowledged;

- consideration should be given to an audit of current instruments prior to any transfer being undertaken;
- it was hoped that there could be greater utilisation of online learning in future and wherever possible;
- there was a need for a focus on the management team within HLH to ensure that there was sufficient capacity and expertise in place to take on responsibility for additional services;
- further information was required in relation to the current level of debt which had been incurred to date and the anticipated level of future uptake if responsibility for music tuition was to be transferred;
- there was also concern that there did not appear to be a business plan within the circulated papers, particularly in light of the proposals to transfer a key core curriculum element;
- it had to be highlighted that other services had been successfully transferred to HLH in the past and this represented an opportunity for more choice and flexibility in relation to music tuition than was currently the case;
- a major problem at present was the lack of instruments and this had to be considered closely as part of the transfer, particularly in terms of the potential additional revenue which could be received if this situation was improved; and
- retention of music tuition services 'in-house' was one option but, following a vote by a show of hands, it was considered by a majority of the Board Members present that transfer to HLH offered the best prospect for future success.

Thereafter, the Board **AGREED TO RECOMMEND** that music tuition services should transfer to High Life Highland with effect from 1 April 2018 in line with the recommendations to be progressed operationally as detailed in the report.

#### 4. **Opportunity to generate income by installing solar PV on the Council Estate**

There had been circulated Report No. RDB/4/17 dated 14 December 2017 by the Director of Development & Infrastructure which detailed an opportunity to install solar PV on the Council estate to generate a net profit.

During discussion, and with specific reference to Annex 1 within the report – List of Sites identified by the Energy and Sustainability Team as being suitable for accommodating solar arrays (of which 10 would be progressed in the initial phase of work) - it was suggested that this list required to be further refined and that consultation in this regard should be undertaken with Local Members in the first instance and prior to any report being submitted to the Environment, Development & Infrastructure Committee.

Thereafter, the Board **AGREED TO RECOMMEND** the principle of support for the use of £2.3m self-financing capital to install 2.5MW of solar PV across the Council estate – subject to specific locations being agreed at the next Environment, Development & Infrastructure Committee meeting (following consultation with Local Members).

The meeting ended at 3.20pm.