

THE FIFE COUNCIL - CABINET COMMITTEE - BLENDED MEETING

Council Chamber, Fife House, North Street, Glenrothes

8 January 2026

9.30 am - 5.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors David Ross (Convener), David Alexander, David Barratt, John Beare, Sarah Bruce Neal, James Calder, Rod Cavanagh, Altany Craik, Linda Erskine, Derek Glen, Brian Goodall, Peter Gulline, Judy Hamilton, Cara Hilton, Gary Holt, Allan Knox, Kathleen Leslie, Rosemary Liewald, Carol Lindsay, Mary Lockhart, Donald Lothian (substituting for Councillor Fiona Corps), Craig Walker and Jan Wincott; and Mary Caldwell, Roman Catholic Church, Alastair Crockett, Cupar Baptist Church and Ian Macaulay, Church of Scotland, Religious Interest Representatives.

ATTENDING: Ken Gourlay, Chief Executive; Shelagh McLean, Head of Education, Sarah Else, Education Manager, Pam Colburn and Zoe Thomson, Quality Improvement Officers, Education Directorate; Eileen Rowand, Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services), Elaine Muir, Head of Finance, Les Robertson, Head of Revenue and Commercial Services, Tracy Hirst, Business Manager, Finance Service, Lindsay Thomson, Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Michelle McDermott, Committee Officer, Legal and Democratic Services, Finance and Corporate Services Directorate; Paul Vaughan, Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods Service and Zahida Ramzan, Policy Officer, Communities and Neighbourhoods Service, Diarmuid Cotter, Head of Customer and Online Services, John Mills, Head of Housing Services, Mhairi Mullen and Joan Lamie, Service Managers, Housing Services, Communities Directorate; and Alastair Hamilton and Ross Spalding, Service Manager, Planning Service, Place Directorate.

APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE: Councillor Fiona Corps.

The Convener intimated that the meeting would adjourn at 12.00 noon and reconvene at 2.00 pm to allow members to attend the funeral of Avril Graham, a longstanding education employee of Fife Council.

452. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

As a matter of transparency and with reference to paragraph 457 – Revenue Monitoring 2025-26 - Councillor Ross declared he was the Convener on the Heath and Social Care Integrated Joint Board.

453. MINUTES

- (i) Minute of the Cabinet Committee of 4 December 2025.

Decision

The committee approved the minute.

- (ii) Minute of Appointments Sub-Committee of 8 December 2025.

Decision

The minute was noted.

454. PROMOTING POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS IN SCHOOLS GUIDANCE AND ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director (Education) presenting the revised Promoting Positive Relationships in Schools Guidance and the revised Anti-Bullying Policy for the Education Directorate seeking approval of the content which had been developed via the Relationships and Behaviour Strategy Group and the Elected Member Working Group.

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) noted the work carried out in relation to the further development of guidance and policy;
- (2) noted the content of the Promoting Positive Relationships in Schools Guidance;
- (3) approved the content of the Anti-Bullying Policy subject to inclusion of explicit reference to The Promise and support for care experienced children and young people;
- (4) agreed to the implementation of both across all educational establishments; and
- (5) agreed that a report on implementation and impact be submitted to the Education Scrutiny Committee, including: staff training completion, school-level policy alignment, SEEMiS recording quality and key outcome measures (e.g. incident trends, repeat incidents and time to resolution), with a focus on equity.

Councillor Judy Hamilton joined the meeting during consideration of the above item.

455. REVIEW OF THE MOTHBALLING OF KIRKTON OF LARGO PRIMARY SCHOOL

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director (Education) which responded to a decision of the Cabinet Committee of 9 January 2025 to mothball Kirkton of Largo Primary School to provide the outcome of the required annual review of this decision. As a result of the review and the feedback from the engagement session, a statutory consultation proposal paper was presented with a proposal to close Kirkton of Largo Primary School and approval was sought to authorise officers to proceed to statutory consultation in respect of the proposal.

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) noted the information contained within the report in respect of the current position regarding pupil numbers within the catchment area of Kirkton of Largo Primary School and the current position with planning applications in the Kirkton of Largo and Lundin Mill Primary School catchment areas;

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- (2) approved the content of the statutory Consultation Proposal paper, in terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, relating to the proposed closure of Kirkton of Largo Primary School and the rezoning of the catchment area of Lundin Mill Primary School;
- (3) authorised officers to proceed to statutory consultation in terms of the Consultation Proposal;
- (4) authorised officers to make such amendments to the Consultation Proposal paper (including the timeline) as may be necessary for clarification, correction or to ensure compliance with relevant legislation;
- (5) authorised the continued temporary closure (mothballing) of Kirkton of Largo Primary School until the outcome of the statutory consultation process was determined and, during the continued temporary closure (mothballing) period, approved the arrangement whereby any child or children wishing to enrol at Kirkton of Largo Primary School would be offered a place at Lundin Mill Primary School and provided with free transport if they met the distance criteria; and
- (6) noted that the Consultation Report would be brought forward to a future meeting of the Cabinet Committee.

456. EDUCATION SUPPORT FOR YOUNG CARERS

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director (Education) in response to a request at the Council meeting on 8 May 2025 to provide a report considering the options of a pilot to formalise a Young Carer Lead role in schools. The report also provided an overview of current support for young carers in Fife Schools, training provided for staff supporting young carers and how the council could continue to strengthen approaches across schools.

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) noted the current level of support provided to young carers in Fife schools;
- (2) considered the evidence of impact presented in the best practice case studies;
- (3) noted the potential downside of formalising a lead role; and
- (4) agreed that arrangements currently in place were adequate without the need for a pilot being required and that any proposals for enhancement would come forward through the normal budget process.

457. REVENUE MONITORING 2025-26

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) providing members with a strategic overview of Fife Council's finances and reporting the current forecast position for financial year 2025-26.

The Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) highlighted that the figures in the report were correct, however, an expenditure figure on Chief Executive's spend had been deleted in error from Appendix 1 and this had increased the level of underspend reported by £373,000 and also inflated the projected balances by the same amount.

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) instructed Services to continue to mitigate overspends in order to manage within overall service budgets in the current year and ensure strong financial management;
- (2) noted that detailed monitoring reports would be submitted to the relevant Scrutiny Committees;
- (3) requested that Scrutiny committees ensure appropriate level of support and challenge in relation to financial reports; and
- (4) approved service budget transfers detailed in Appendix 5 of the report.

458. CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN - PROJECTED OUTTURN 2025-26

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) providing a strategic financial overview of the Capital Investment Plan and advised on the projected outturn for the 2025-26 financial year.

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) noted the projected outturn position and that the level of financial risk continued to be heightened due to the impact of inflation and supply chain challenges;
- (2) instructed Services to plan projects within the approved resource within the Capital Investment Plan;
- (3) noted that more detailed capital outturn reports for 2025-26 would be submitted to relevant Scrutiny Committees of the council;
- (4) noted that budget variances would be managed by the appropriate Directorate in conjunction with the Investment Strategy Group; and
- (5) noted the updated prudential indicators provided.

The meeting adjourned at 11.10 am and reconvened at 11.25 am.

459. FUTURE OF LEISURE

The committee considered a report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods Service outlining activity aiming to strategically realign leisure, culture and community services to be more resilient, inclusive and community led. The report sought to build on recent recovery efforts while addressing challenges such as ageing infrastructure and changing usage patterns. The overarching goal was to embed leisure within broader wellbeing and placemaking strategies tackling inequalities.

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The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods Service highlighted that within Table 2 of the report - Summary of Savings Profile - the figure within the Total column relating to Community Use should read £1,288,785 and not £988,785.

The meeting adjourned at 12.00 pm and reconvened at 2.00 pm.

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) noted that workshops/briefings were held with each Area Committee to consider facilities in their area but that some members were unable to attend these workshops and the outcome of some workshops was inconclusive;
- (2) agreed to endorse the strategic direction for leisure, culture and community services to be more resilient, inclusive and community led but believed that insufficient detailed information on usage and condition of each individual facility had been provided on which to take decisions on the future of these facilities and that further work was required, in consultation with local members and local community groups;
- (3) did not agree to the proposals for facilities listed in Table 1 of the report and agreed that the future of each facility should be considered individually based on full information on usage, potential and condition, in consultation with local members and local community groups;
- (4) agreed to establish a Short Life Cross Party Member/Officer Working Group to consider detailed information on each individual property, in consultation with local members and local community organisations, and to report back to the Cabinet Committee with recommendations for the sustainable future use of these facilities. The Short Life Working Group would comprise one member from each of the political groups currently represented on the Cabinet Committee (with substitutes as appropriate) and would be chaired by the Spokesperson for Communities and Leisure;
- (5) noted that, in some cases, work to transfer facilities to community organisations was well advanced and believed that this work should continue and noted the ongoing work to explore options for financial support to interested groups, including consideration of repurposing repairs and maintenance budgets associated with relevant assets, where appropriate and feasible;
- (6) agreed that, while Community Asset Transfers and leases should continue to be considered in line with established council procedures, decisions on potential closures of community facilities should be rejected as an option at this stage in advance of the Working Group consideration and agreed that such decisions should not be made without the relevant Area Committee being formally consulted;
- (7) noted the proposed changes to operational delivery within Community Use in Table 2, including a reconfigured offer in some Community Use Schools and standardised opening hours and agreed that these proposals should be considered in more detail by the Short Life Working Group;

(8) agreed that:-

- a. an outline timetable for any agreed changes would be considered by the Short Life Working Group;
- b. the Short Life Working Group should also give consideration to the proposals outlined in the subsequent reports on the Review of Subsidised Lease Policy and Community Assets and Services: Prices and Concessions before their implementation;
- c. any additional staffing resources should be focussed on supporting communities and community groups to take over management or ownership of facilities and to promote greater usage of community facilities and associated activity; and

(9) agreed that the Short Life Working Group would produce a final report to the Cabinet Committee with recommendations before the summer recess 2026, with interim reports and recommendations as its work progresses, as appropriate.

Councillor Donald Lothian left the meeting during consideration of the above item.

460. REVIEW OF SUBSIDISED LEASE POLICY

The committee considered a joint report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods Service and the Head of Property Services setting out a number of recommendations and a revised Policy Statement of the Council's Subsidised Lease Policy which was due for review in 2025.

Decision

As agreed at para. 459 above, the proposals contained within this report would be considered at the Short Life Cross Party Member/Officer Working Group and recommendations reported back to the Cabinet Committee before the summer recess 2026.

461. COMMUNITY ASSETS AND SERVICES: PRICES AND CONCESSIONS

The committee considered a report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods Service proposing a simplified pricing and concession framework for community facilities and services. The revised approach supported the Plan for Fife and Community Use objectives by improving affordability, simplifying charges and ensuring fairness in access to facilities and activities.

Decision

As agreed at para. 459 above, the proposals contained within this report would be considered at the Short Life Cross Party Member/Officer Working Group and recommendations reported back to the Cabinet Committee before the summer recess 2026.

Following consideration of para. 459 - Future of Leisure - the Convener intimated his intention to vary the sequence of items from that on the agenda by taking items in the following order - Item 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 12, 15, 20 and 21.

462. COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER APPLICATION BY AHMADIYYA MUSLIM JAMA'AT (SCOTLAND) LTD

The committee considered a joint report by the Head of Property Services and the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods Service seeking approval for a Community Asset Transfer request received from Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at (Scotland) Ltd under Part 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 to purchase James Allan Centre, Dunfermline.

Decision

The committee approved the Community Asset Transfer application received from Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at (Scotland) Ltd at less than market value at the price of £5,000 and all otherwise on the terms and conditions to the satisfaction of the Head of Property Services and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

463. STRATEGIC HOUSING INVESTMENT PLAN 2026-2031

The committee considered a report by the Head of Housing Services seeking authority for the submission of Fife's Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2026/27 - 2030/31 to the Scottish Government. The Plan was revised and updated annually for a rolling five year period.

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) agreed the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2026/27 - 2030/31 based on the priorities and principles outlined in the report; and
- (2) authorised the Head of Housing Services, in consultation with the Spokesperson for Housing and Building Services, to amend or substitute projects within the SHIP as and when required.

464. SHORT TERM LET CONTROL AREAS UPDATE

The committee considered a report by the Head of Planning Services setting out an analysis of the additional research and information and the responses to the public consultation process undertaken between June to September, 2025 following the decision of the Cabinet Committee of 3 April 2025. Having analysed the information, the report set out the findings on the benefits and risks of designating Short Term Let Control Area(s) (STLCA) in Fife.

The meeting adjourned at 3.40 pm and reconvened at 3.50 pm.

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) considered and reviewed the analysis of the research and information presented in the report including the responses from the public consultation;
- (2) agreed that it be remitted to officers to bring a further report back to committee outlining a strategy on how a Short Term Let Control Area for the East Neuk and St. Andrews wards could be achieved; and

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- (3) agreed to recommend to full Council to amend the List of Committee Powers to allow Area Committees to designate a Short Term Let Control Area within their area.

Councillors Judy Hamilton and Allan Knox left the meeting during consideration of the above item.

465. PLANNING ENFORCEMENT CHARTER 2026-2028

The committee considered a report by the Head of Planning Services seeking approval of the updated Planning Enforcement Charter confirming the approach to enforcement to be adopted by Fife Council Planning Service for the next two years.

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) approved the proposed Enforcement Charter 2026; and
- (2) delegated to the Head of Planning Services to finalise and publish the Charter.

466. CONSULTATION RESPONSE - SCOTLAND'S DRAFT CLIMATE CHANGE PLAN

The committee considered a report by the Head of Planning Services outlining Fife Council's proposed response to the Scottish Government's consultation on Scotland's Draft Climate Change Plan.

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) noted and agreed the response to the consultation as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report; and
- (2) authorised the Head of Planning Services to submit the response before the deadline of 29 January 2026.

467. THE FUTURE OF COUNCIL TAX IN SCOTLAND - CONSULTATION RESPONSE

The committee considered a report by the Head of Revenue and Commercial Services seeking members' views on Fife Council's response to the Scottish Government's consultation on the future of council tax in Scotland.

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) reviewed and considered the proposed consultation responses contained in the report; and
- (2) authorised officers to submit the consultation to the Scottish Government.

468. CUSTOMER MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The committee considered a report by the Head of Customer and Online Services which profiled the iteration of Fife Council's approach to customer management.

Decision

The committee approved the Customer Management Strategy.

469. REVIEW OF ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY

The committee considered a report by the Head of Housing Services seeking approval for a formal review to be undertaken of Fife Council's policy on antisocial behaviour in housing.

Decision

The committee agreed:-

- (1) that a Member/Officer Task and Finish Group be established, comprising one member from each of the political groups currently represented on the Cabinet Committee (with substitutes as appropriate), to review the existing policy and report their findings back to committee by the Autumn of 2026; and
- (2) the proposed timeline and approach for the review exercise as detailed below:-

	2026
Establish ASB Working Group with key partners	January
Research incl. performance stats, surveys & national reports	Jan / Feb
Event: Professionals workshop	March
Event: Consultation with FFOTRA	April
Event: Elected Members' Workshop	May
Consider feedback/findings	June
Devise recommendations	July
Report back to committee	August

470. TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2025-26 AND UPDATE 2026-27

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) presenting an annual report and update prepared in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) publication, Treasury Management in the Public Services - Code of Practice and Cross Sectorial Guidance Notes. The report provided an update against the Annual Treasury Policy and Investment Strategy for both the previous year and the current year to date.

Decision

The committee noted the contents of the report.

471. CABINET COMMITTEE - OUTSTANDING REMITS FROM COMMITTEES

The committee noted the list of outstanding remits from committees.