

THE FIFE COUNCIL - FIFE COUNCIL – BLENDED MEETING

Council Chamber, 6th Floor, Fife House, North Street, Glenrothes

19 June 2025

10.30 am – 4.40 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Jim Leishman (Provost), Tom Adams, David Alexander, Blair Allan, Naz Anis-Miah, Lesley Backhouse, Alistair Bain, David Barratt, Auxi Barrera, John Beare, Karen Beaton, Aude Boubaker-Calder, Patrick Browne, James Calder, Ken Caldwell, Alistair Cameron, Ian Cameron, Alex Campbell, Rod Cavanagh, Al Clark, Eugene Clarke, Fiona Corps, Altany Craik, Colin Davidson, Dave Dempsey, Sean Dillon, Gavin Ellis, Linda Erskine, Derek Glen, Brian Goodall, Peter Gulline, Jean Hall-Muir, Judy Hamilton, Alycia Hayes, Cara Hilton, Stefan Hoggan, Gary Holt, Lynda Holton, Andy Jackson, Margaret Kennedy, Louise Kennedy-Dalby, Allan Knox, Robin Lawson, James Leslie, Kathleen Leslie, Rosemary Liewald, Carol Lindsay, Jane Ann Liston, Mary Lockhart, Donald Lothian, David MacDiarmid, Julie MacDougall, Lynn Mowatt, Sarah Neal, Derek Noble, John O'Brien, Nicola Patrick, Gordon Pryde, Bailey-Lee Robb, David Ross, Sam Steele, Alistair Suttie, Jonny Tepp, Ann Verner, Craig Walker, Darren Watt, Daniel Wilson, Jan Wincott and Conner Young

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors John Caffrey, David Graham and Andrew Verrecchia.

182. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were submitted in terms of Standing Order No.22.

183. CIVIC BUSINESS BULLETIN

Decision

The council noted the Civic Business Bulletin.

184. MINUTE

The council considered the minute of the meeting of Fife Council on 8 May 2025.

Decision

The council noted that Councillor Beare was in attendance at the meeting of Fife Council on 8 May 2025 and agreed to approve the minute.

185. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

Minutes of the undernoted committees and sub-committees, as contained in the volume of minutes, were submitted for accuracy:-

- (1) West & Central Planning Committee of 23 April 2025
- (2) North East Planning Committee of 9 April 2025
- (3) Cabinet Committee of 3 April and 1 May 2025
- (4) Fife Health & Social Care Integration Joint Board of 26 March 2025

Decision

The council noted the minutes.

186. LEADER'S REPORT

The council considered a report by the Leader of the Council on a number of strategic issues. The Leader responded to questions from members on the content of the report.

Decision

The council noted the report.

187. QUESTION TIME

In terms of Standing Order 9.3, the following questions were submitted:-

Question 1 from Councillor Watt

On the Disabled Parking link on Fife Council's website, it states: "We are processing applications but there is a significant backlog". How significant is the backlog for processing blue badge applications and renewals, and on-street disabled parking bay applications?

Answer (Spokesperson for Finance, Economy and Transportation)

There is currently no backlog in processing applications for Blue Badges, the statement relates solely to disabled parking bays. Currently, there are 64 requests which are pending assessment and 2 awaiting on-site installations. The two bays are programmed to be completed by the end of this week and the outstanding assessments completed by the end of July.

Question 2 from Councillor Dempsey

What measures does the Council have in place to cope with a repeat of the Carrington Event of 1859?

Answer (Leader of the Council)

The Council would implement its Council Incident Management Plan and form an incident management team to manage community and service impacts caused by an incident similar to the Carrington event. Should there be power failures, these arrangements can also be activated in the absence of power. A Power Outage Plan is also under development to supplement the arrangements in the Incident Management Plan. Business continuity plans maintained across Services ensure that the most critical services can be continued during the period of the incident.

Supplementary

Will this be enough?

Answer

Officers do take these events such as this or the impact of any anything like that seriously and we hope the provisions we have in place will be sufficient to cope.

Question 3 from Councillor Dempsey

Exactly what has been devolved to Areas in the last three years?

Answer (Leader of the Council)

The following powers have been added to the remit of the area committees since the start of the new administration in 2022.

- to consider motions brought forward by members of the area committee inviting the area committee to discuss and express a view on matters of concern in their local communities;
- to determine the council's voting intention in any ballot relating to a Business Improvement District (BID).
- to designate an area as a Firework Control Zone following the appropriate consultation process;
- determining road and footpath orders under section 207 and 208 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended);
- recommend to the Cabinet Committee the designation of an area as a Short Term Let Control Zone; and
- agree approval of a street name, where ward members do not reach a unanimous decision.

A number of reports on Decentralisation have also been submitted to Cabinet Committee which are available on the council website.

If not decision making, area committees should be influencing things on green space, estates management, streetscape including street cleansing, property and facilities management, housing and town centre development. It's up to the area committees to actually use these powers and try and develop these powers. We also delegated £10 million community recovery to area committees, which I think is being usefully used in local circumstances.

Supplementary

What proposals are there for significant devolution to area that isn't just that sort of minor or do it quickly stuff?

Answer

There are significant funds going in and being used by the areas both in terms of community planning, local community planning funds and anti poverty funding and I think they are greatly welcomed and have a huge impact in our local communities. I certainly think there have been developments on the five things that I mentioned and I think the reinvigorated local housing plans, certainly in our area ward meetings, on housing performance are having a huge impact in terms of pushing forward.

Question 4 from Councillor Tepp

Do we pursue insurance claims against owners of vehicles that crash into bus shelters?

Answer (Spokesperson for Finance, Economy and Transportation)

Roads & Transportation Services pursues recovery from third parties for all claimable incidents.

Question 5 from Councillor Tepp

How many bus shelters have been damaged by collisions in the last year?

Answer (Spokesperson for Finance, Economy and Transportation)

Roads & Transportation Services is aware of damage to three bus shelters due to vehicular collisions in the last year. (Located in Kincardine, Glenrothes and Cowdenbeath.)

Question 6 from Councillor Tepp

How many claims have we pursued – and if we have not pursued any why not?

Answer (Spokesperson for Finance, Economy and Transportation)

In the last year, we were unable to pursue any claim because the offending vehicles did not stop and there was no reported witness or details of the vehicles involved. If the make/model, registration number of the vehicle is known Roads & Transportation can pursue a claim.

Supplementary

Have we ever have pursued any claims successfully over recent years?

Answer

I don't have the answer to this question.

Question 7 from Councillor Watt

Regardless if they are in situ because of essential upgrades, regular maintenance or emergency repairs, temporary traffic lights cause undue distress, disruption and delay to road users. What can Fife Council do to ensure utility companies and their subcontractors complete the works quickly and efficiently with minimal inconvenience, and excavated surfaces are properly restored?

Answer (Spokesperson for Finance, Economy and Transportation)

Fife Council, as the Roads Authority, has powers under Sections 115 (Timing Directions) and 125 (Undue Delay) of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991. However, these powers should not be used as a first response. Instead, Roads Authorities aim to resolve issues through dialogue and cooperation.

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In terms of excavated surfaces, Statutory Undertakers are required to complete repairs in line with the 'Specification for the Reinstatement of Openings in Roads.'

Given the recent change in legislation, utility companies are now responsible for the maintenance of all reinstatements for 6 years (previously 2 years) so there is a greater liability and financial burden placed on them should there be any substandard work.

Inspectors from Roads & Transportation Services undertake inspections of a random sample of 30% of all utility works, including reinstatements and follow up any issues with the utility companies.

Supplementary

Can we at least get assurances that when Fife Council are carrying out works that these are carried out quickly and efficiently, efficiently with minimal delay?

Answer

Yes and we hope to make sure that we get them done as expeditiously.

Question 8 from Councillor Calder

Fife Health and Social Care Partnership has the largest projected overspend in Scotland for 24/25 at £35.4 million. How are the Administration working with the IJB in tackling this consistent issue?

Answer (Spokesperson for Health and Social Care)

Fife Health and Social Care Partnership have one of the largest budgets of all IJBs in Scotland. Only Edinburgh, Glasgow and North Lanarkshire have budgets larger than Fife.

In percentage terms Fife did not have the largest overspend in 24/25. Fife Council continue to work with the IJB alongside Health. Tripartite meetings are carried out on a regular basis between Directors of Finance in Fife Council and Health along with the Chief Finance Officer of the IJB.

For 25/26 there will be a focus on volatile budgets at those meetings. Work is ongoing in terms of grip and control and ensuring scrutiny around packages continues.

Supplementary

What engagement has been done with the Scottish Government on this issue?

Answer

There is regular engagement with the Scottish Government, both from the health and Social Care Partnership and from NHS Fife, and from indeed the Council on these matters.

Question 9 from Councillor Dempsey

Where a privately-owned tree poses a danger to the public and the owner is disinclined to act, can the Council take the necessary action and recharge the owner?

Answer (Spokesperson for Environment and Climate Change)

Yes, It is possible that Fife Council would act in the interest of public safety and intervene to take necessary action on privately owned trees.

Question 10 from Councillor Dempsey

What criteria would the Council apply when determining whether to take action to safeguard the public from a tree in a dangerous state?

Answer (Spokesperson for Environment and Climate Change)

There are no set criteria, an assessment of the tree would be carried out by qualified staff, this would consider a range of issues such as potential risk to life or property, ability of the tree owner to act, potential reputational consequences to the organisation amongst others.

Supplementary

Does this extend to sort of situation where a tree is so close to a house that it blocks out the light?

Answer

I'm not sure that the blockage of light is actually a dangerous action on the trees behalf so I would doubt that that would actually fulfil the criteria under which it's assessed.

Question 11 from Councillor Dempsey

How many times in the last five years has the Council taken action in respect of a privately-owned tree and in how many of those was the owner recharged for the cost of that action?

Answer (Spokesperson for Environment and Climate Change)

This information is not held within the Service. This action is very rare. Where it has happened, it tends to be the result of extreme weather events which has required a dynamic response to the developing situation.

Supplementary

Is this a satisfactory situation as far as the service to the public is concerned, or should we be doing more?

Answer

That the service responds when these situations arise speaks for itself. So as weather events become more extreme, it's likely that the service will be under more stress to actually respond to these conditions, but it's a developing situation and I think the service do a great job.

Question 12 from Councillor Boubaker-Calder

What is the current assessment of the road surfaces of the A907 around the Glen Bridge and A994 around the Urquhart Cut, Dunfermline?

Answer (Spokesperson for Finance, Economy and Transportation)

The road surfaces at both locations have been assessed and several localised patches have been identified, and these will be added to the safety defect patching programme.

Supplementary

5 area road programme schemes have been deferred in Dunfermline without prior consultation in less than four months. What lesson has been learnt from this fiasco to prevent it from happening again?

Answer

These local projects that are in your area works programme need better consultation if they're going to change and that has to come through the convener, the vice convener and the area committee. The fact is that the consultation element of that wasn't good enough on this occasion and it needs to be better. The convener and I had a discussion with the head of service and have made that point very clearly to him that it needs to be better and is endeavouring to do so.

Question 13 from Councillor Neal

How many of Fife's Looked After children and young people are living in placements out with Fife?

Answer (Spokesperson for Communities and Leisure Services)

We have 28 young people looked after and accommodated away from home by external providers. There are 14 children and young people cared for in foster care with the other 14 cared for in a residential setting.

Supplementary

Are you confident that all of these young people who are capable of accessing education at the moment are actually receiving education?

Answer

Councillors have responsibility to ensure that every child receives an adequate education and I am confident that our staff will be undertaking that as a prime duty.

Question 14 from Councillor Neal

How many applications for assisted school transport for children and young people with additional support needs have been received for the coming academic year, and how many of those have been rejected?

Answer (Spokesperson for Education)

As at 11/06/2025, for the session 2025/26, the Education Service has received the following requests from schools:

Academic session	Approved	Rejected
2025/26	811	22

N.B. These figures will continue to change before and after the start of the new academic session in August, therefore the full year figure is likely to be significantly higher. Additionally, transport request forms have still to be submitted for the newly formed Strathallan & Dalgety Bay ASCs.

Question 15 from Councillor Neal

Can you confirm that Fife Council's policy on assisted travel to school covers children with 'severe mental impairment' and 'developmental disabilities' and not just those who 'cannot physically walk the distance that they'd be required to'?

Answer (Spokesperson for Education)

Section 2.3 of the Scottish Government School Transport Guidance 2021 highlights what is expected of Local Authorities where pupils have a Medical Condition or Additional Support Need: -

2.3 - Medical Conditions and Additional Support Needs

- Local authorities are expected to consider medical conditions and both visible and hidden disabilities affecting a child's ability to walk or travel by bus or, exceptionally, affecting a parent's ability to accompany a younger child on the walk to school.
- If a child or young person cannot attend their local school because of a short-term or long-term medical condition, the local authority may decide to provide free transport to where education is being provided. It will normally consult the relevant health board when making its decision.
- Local authorities and other agencies have duties under the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 (as amended) to identify, provide for and review the additional support needs of their pupils. An additional support need can arise for any reason and be of short- or long-term duration. Additional support may be required to overcome needs arising from the learning environment; health or disability; family circumstances or social and emotional factors. Local authorities should consider if a pupil has been assessed as having additional support needs which would require consideration of the provision of transport.
- Vehicles used for school transport also need to be accessible to all and thought should be given to how public transport, including school transport, fits with wider national aims. Some children and young people will require supported transport arrangements because of their additional support needs. Many children and young people with additional support needs will be able to make use of mainstream transport where it is provided, which ensures their inclusion and encourages independence.
- In determining individual transport needs, recommendations from school staff, the Educational Psychology Service, community and allied health professionals should be considered, along with information from parents or carers.

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- Getting school transport right and making it accessible to all can be an enabler for many young people to reach their full potential and live fulfilling and independent lives. We should not underestimate the role that the school journey can play. In building confidence in young people to travel independently, which may help them access higher and further education and, ultimately, sustainable employment.

The Fife transport request form, submitted by schools, asks schools to select the primary reason for transportation. The categories available to select from are.

- Hearing Impairment
- Learning disability
- Mental health
- Neurodivergent condition
- Physical or motor impairment
- Social, emotional and behavioural
- Visual Impairment

Supplementary

Are you confident that Fife Council is making appropriate reasonable adjustments for our children and young people with additional support needs to access the right to education under the UNCHR and the Equalities Act?

Answer

I'm absolutely committed to making sure that we get it right for every child and that we do what we can to make sure that we are and complying with the international human rights every child does in hazard in Scotland, so obviously happy to follow up and have a conversation about that out with the meeting as well.

The meeting adjourned at 11.40 am and reconvened at 12.15 pm.

Question 16 from Councillor Neal

Does Fife Council know how many of our children and young people have been hospitalized in the past year with respiratory illnesses relating to living in accommodation affected by damp or mould?

Answer (Spokesperson for Housing and Building Services)

Fife Council does not hold the information sought. Officers will make an enquiry of NHS Fife and Health & Social care partnership but there is no guarantee that this information is specifically held by them and may be covered by patient confidentiality.

Supplementary

Has there been any research by Fife Council into how respiratory illnesses amongst our children and young people living in damp primordia accommodation has affected their school attendance?

Answer

I don't have the information on that either but I will ask officers to make these enquiries.

Question 17 from Councillor Neal

How many families requested assisted transport to school for children with Additional Support Needs in 2021/22, 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25?

Answer (Spokesperson for Education)

Families do not submit requests for transport. The transport request forms come from our schools. There was a change to the way transport request forms were submitted for the 2023/24 session. Therefore the information for the 2021/22 & 2022/23 sessions is not readily available. The number of requests, across the full academic sessions 2023/24 & 2024/25 were as follows:

Academic session	Requested
2023/24	1,346
2024/25	1,295

Supplementary

Can this information be made available?

Answer

I can ask Officers if this can be made available.

Question 18 from Councillor Neal

How many families who requested assisted transport to school for children with ASN in 2021/22, 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25 had their requests approved and how many had their requests refused?

Answer (Spokesperson for Education)

Families do not submit requests for transport. The transport request forms come from our schools. There was a change to the way transport request forms were submitted for the 2023/24 session. Therefore the information for the 2021/22 & 2022/23 sessions is not readily available. The number of requests approved and rejected across the full academic sessions for 2023/24 & 2024/25 were as follows:

Academic session	Approved	Rejected
2023/24	1281	65
2024/25	1221	74

Question 19 from Councillor Neal

What is the process for withdrawing assisted school transport from children and young people with Additional Support Needs?

Answer (Spokesperson for Education)

As outlined in our Home to School Transport Policy, and the Elected Member Briefing note issued, wherever possible and appropriate, pupils with additional support needs should have the same opportunities as their peers to travel to and from school independently, with their peers, or with their families.

The team around the child is responsible for exploring all means of a pupil travelling to and from school, for example walking to school, travel on public transport, or being taken by parents/carers/friends, etc. Pupils and their families are encouraged to develop independent travel skills, and any transport arrangements should be kept under continual review.

Therefore, it is expected that the school will discuss any transport arrangements put in place with the family again, when the next team around the child review takes place.

All agreed transport assistance arrangements should be reviewed at least annually to assess changes of needs, and it should not be assumed that transport will be provided indefinitely, as a pupil's needs and eligibility are anticipated to change over time.

Supplementary

Are you confident that full assessments and child planning meetings are taking place when transport has been removed from a child?

Answer

I hope that that is the case. As I said before, we really do need to get it right for every child, and if you have particular examples where you feel that that isn't the case, then more than happy to pick those up directly with the education team.

Question 20 from Councillor Goodall

How many Fife Council Houses currently have reported issues with dampness and/or mould?

Answer (Spokesperson for Housing and Building Services)

We have 271 cases of damp and condensation reported currently.

Supplementary

Does the housing spokesperson feel that that is an unacceptable number to still have in terms of homes in that condition and Fife, or if she agrees with me that it's not acceptable and to ask what more the administration intend to do about it?

Answer

I can confirm that it's a higher number than at this time last year. However, it's a lower case load because we've implemented a dynamic resource scheduling system for housing technical officers, which means that they're getting out to the cases and following them up quicker. I think it's a higher number because we're now being reported and being responded to more quickly.

Question 21 from Councillor Goodall

How many Fife Council Houses, where dampness and/or mould have been reported, have been successfully treated in the last 3 years?

Answer (Spokesperson for Housing and Building Services)

In the last 3 years the reported and resolved cases of Damp & condensation we have had;

2022 - 1038

2023 - 614

2024 - 673

Supplementary

Was that in line with your expectations when the new approach was agreed or do you still think more needs to be done?

Answer

Again it is a lower case load since implemented.

Question 22 from Councillor Goodall

What information does Fife Council hold on the number of domestic private lets where dampness and/or mould has been reported by tenants?

Answer (Spokesperson for Housing and Building Services)

Data collected from 1st March 2024 to end of February 2025 indicates that the protective Services Private Housing Standards Team received approximately 106 complaints which mention dampness or mould.

The vast majority of cases relate to tenants having concerns regarding their individual privately let property with a few cases relating to common repair issues or water leaking from an adjacent property.

Question 23 from Councillor Goodall

How often has Fife Council used its powers to regulate Private Landlords to intervene where landlords have not addressed issues with dampness and/or mould within their tenants homes?

Answer

There have been no notices served where landlords have not addressed issues.

Supplementary

Do you feel that we do use the powers we have to register and administer private landlords to the full extent or would it be useful to review the processes we use to address this?

Answer

The role of the council is as a strategic housing authority and is to provide advice and support to tenants and landlords. Currently we don't have the budget to provide to grants to tenants or landlords in there situations as the inspection and enforcement role is a role that has been imposed upon us without any resources. At this moment in time we don't have the financial support to be able to do more but we do carry out our role which is to provide support to tenants and landlords.

Question 24 from Councillor Goodall

How many times in the last 3 months has Fife Council failed to meet its statutory commitment to provide temporary accommodation to homeless applicants?

Answer (Spokesperson for Housing and Building Services)

Breaches are monitored monthly and recorded formally on an ongoing basis as part of short term housing emergency measures reported nationally. Officers are working to mitigate breaches but the main issues are where customers have exhausted temporary accommodation resources through previous behaviours, lack of contingency accommodation (e.g. B&B) and issues out of hours.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Number of instances where households have not been offered temporary accommodation (rolling total since 1 April 2024)	306	323	327	338	353
Offer Breaches per month (No of Households)	9	17	4	11	15

Supplementary

Do these figures make the housing spokesperson reconsider the position when so many places of temporary accommodation could be provided through the acquisition of former council houses?

Answer

Agree the breaches are not acceptable and officers are working hard to ensure that we can become compliant again. In recent reports to Cabinet Committee we

have evidence that there is a significant reduction in the use of B & B as a temporary accommodation and lower breaches of the unsuitable accommodation order. Although we have still got some work to go I am confident that we are moving in the right direction of travel.

Question 25 from Councillor Goodall

Following the announcement of additional funding for Affordable Housing in the Scottish Government's budget for 2025/26, how many additional new Council Houses will be built or bought in Fife?

Answer (Spokesperson for Housing and Building Services)

Due to the increase in RPA from 24/25 to 25/26 then then there is an increase in the number of FC new build of 36 units and an increase in acquisitions of 8 units that can be funded using affordable housing grant. See below for assumptions used.

Year	Core RPA	Share of £40m for OMPS	Total RPA	Outturn RPA at Year end
2024/25	£26.237m	£1.848m	£28.858m	30.858*
2025/26	£34.556m	£2.242m	£36.798m	TBC

*additional
£2.0 m
allocated to
FC at year
end

Year	FCs Share of Core RPA (50%)	Average Grant per Unit	Approx. number of New Build Units Delivered	Share of £40m for OMPS (100%)	Average Grant per unit	Approx. number of
2024/25	£13,118,500	£117,118	112	£1,848,000	£50,000	37
2025/26	£17,278,000	£117,118	148	£2,242,000	£50,000	45

Supplementary

Does the housing spokesperson agree with me that in order to address the affordable housing crisis we need to actually use all the resources that we have available to us to deliver against our targets whether that is for new builds or acquisitions?

Answer

The reduction of the Scottish grant in 24/25 did slow down the programme. It has reduced the momentum that we had over the years and I think that the Scottish Government have realised that and they have now restored the affordable

housing budget. Going forward you will see a steady stream of new build coming on and that slippage in the capital programme will be taken up during that time.

Question 26 from Councillor Robb

To ask the Spokesperson how the Council is tracking its progress against the Community Learning and Development Plan 2024-2027.

Answer (Spokesperson for Communities and Leisure Services)

In the current year one bridging plan we have set out our shared priorities and overarching actions, and have agreed measures of success for all of these, including our area delivery actions.

We are using the national CLD KPI's to support this and a copy of these are attached for information. (CLD Staff record their work in our management information system, including summary of activity and participant feedback. We extract information from this system for reporting on these KPI's and for our performance scorecard).

In addition, case studies will highlight specific examples of practice, and capture impact. We have set an action in the CLD Plan about extending the use of these National KPI's to CLD partners and work on this is still to be progressed. The CLD Partnership reports annually to the Communities and Wellbeing Partnership, and annual progress reporting will also go to the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

The next report is due in September and this will highlight key areas of delivery, update on year one progress, and set out proposed actions for years 2 and 3 of the CLD Plan. At local area level, CLD activity is also reported to the area committees and local wards as per local area arrangements.

Supplementary

Does the spokesperson agree with me that our CLD staff are the backbone of our local communities, particularly in our most deprived areas like Cowdenbeath and if she does I am sure she will agree with me that the long running campaign that youthwork changes lives, what steps is she and the administration taking to ensure that the concerns of the CLD staff and youth staff around the No Wrong Door Pilot in the Cowdenbeath area are being properly addressed without detriment to their profession or indeed our local communities?

Answer

Part of the answer to that question would be officer responsibility. Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods given an undertaking that the CLD work would not be impacted by the No Wrong Door and I would fully expect that to be the case. I am very supportive and really value the work that the CLD partners and staff do across our area, they are quite remarkable in what they manage to achieve in the limited resources and support that they get.

Question 27 from Councillor Robb

To ask the Spokesperson when the administration expects to publish the findings of the on-going Estate Management Review being undertaken jointly by Property Services and Communities and Neighbourhoods.

Answer (Spokesperson for Communities and Leisure Services)

Our review of the council's estate is ongoing and we hope to report in the Autumn. Meanwhile, an update on our estate was considered by Finance, Economy and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee on 5th June.

Supplementary

Await the publication of these findings. Do you accept the worries that have been shared with me from staff and communities that this is just another cost saving exercise through the back door by this administration and if not can you give a cast iron guarantee to my communities in ward 7 that their facilities will be improved rather than shut and sold off?

Answer

If people want to safeguard their communities, I would expect you, the same as myself, if there is an issue about a potential closure in their area there would be challenge. I think you know more about what's happening than I do because I have had no word and seen nothing about any potential closures in our area. I would expect, as we have done previously, when we go through estates services review that there will be challenges and that councillors will be able to confront them and put proposals forward. If everyone wants to guarantee and save the resources they should be putting things in the annual budget round to make sure that that can happen.

Question 28 from Councillor Robb

To ask the Leader of the Council when the Administration will bring proposals to Council for a review of Governance Arrangements including their proposals to devolve additional powers and budgets to Area Committees.

Answer (Leader of the Council)

A review of decentralisation arrangements was undertaken in 2023 with conclusions reported to the Cabinet at the end of that year. This resulted in changes to practice in specific areas identified through the review by area committee members. Updates on progress with this and with additional budget devolution such as the Community Recovery Fund have been provided at Cabinet and area committee. The Scheme of Committee Powers was also subsequently updated. A number of other reports on this matter have been presented to committee.

Supplementary

Does the Leader think he has delivered on this commitment and if not when does he think he will?

Answer

Absolutely we are delivering on that commitment and if you look at all the things I mentioned about housing, capital investment, regeneration in areas, on greenspaces, we will continue to do that. It is an ongoing process, not a dynamic process and we expect area committees to play a leading role in that and not just wait to be hand fed.

Question 29 from Councillor Allan

Can the spokesperson for Transportation advise why eleven months have elapsed since the resurfacing at the intersection of Charlotte Street and the Prom in Kirkcaldy, a busy and important junction in our town centre, and we are still awaiting the relining of this junction?

Answer (Spokesperson for Finance, Economy and Transportation)

Unfortunately, reinstatement of the road markings has been delayed due to ongoing mechanical issues with the Service's Road marking vehicle. However, I'm pleased to inform that we have invested in an additional road marking vehicle, which will be operational within the next few weeks. This will help to address the current backlog.

Question 30 from Councillor Backhouse

Can you provide numbers per area committee of how many of the 4500 public bins in Fife are not Seagull and Wind proof?

Answer (Spokesperson for Environment and Climate Change)

We don't hold that information. I have a record on Whitespace of every bin we have and its location but we don't have the level of detail to show whether it is seagull proof or not.

Supplementary

Please can we have statistics on what is not seagull and windproof.

Answer

We do not hold this information but will put the request to the service.

Question 31 from Councillor Backhouse

What are the costs of making a bin Seagull and windproof?

Answer (Spokesperson for Environment and Climate Change)

All new bins that we buy are now seagull proof and are used to replace old stock when a replacement is required. These cost £625 each. The seagull proof element when we buy these bins is an additional cost of around £25.

Supplementary

Can you ensure that existing bins are upgraded to ensure they are seagull and windproof?

Answer

I have already advised that new bins will be seagull proof when installed.

Question 32 from Councillor Backhouse

What is the Transportations target time for repairing walls damaged by Motor Vehicles?

Answer (Spokesperson for Finance, Economy and Transportation)

There are no specified target times. Damage to walls, which can often be bridge parapets, are prioritised on a risk basis, with practical repair times varying depending on location, severity, risks to the community and the travelling public.

These are balanced against work programmes and budget priorities and works scheduled accordingly.

It should be noted that, in certain instances, infrastructure may not be owned by the council and therefore there can be legal issues which require to be investigated and concluded before repairs can be undertaken.

Supplementary

How long to Burntisland residents have to wait to have the wall at Kirkton Road rebuilt?

Answer

I will get an update from the service.

Question 33 from Councillor Backhouse

How many empty buildings does Fife Council hold on its asset register?

Answer (Spokesperson for Finance, Economy and Transportation)

A list of vacant buildings (as at April 2025) was reported to Finance, Economy and Corporate Services Committee on 5th June.

Supplementary

Would it not be better to spend money making these empty properties into homes for overcrowded families?

Answer

Many of these buildings are not suitable to turn into residential properties and when we do our asset register we are always looking for alternative uses.

Question 34 from Councillor Backhouse

When will we see a breakdown of Fife council spend on a gender budgeting basis?

Answer (Spokesperson for Finance, Economy and Transportation)

Fife Council is committed to making inclusive and evidence-informed decisions about how we allocate resources and shape services.

To support this, we are developing an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) framework that will embed equality considerations, including gender, into our budget and policy processes in a systematic and transparent way.

As there are challenges attributing spend directly to gender outcomes in a consistent and meaningful way across all services, our focus is on strengthening how we assess the impact of decisions on different groups.

The IIA will bring together key statutory duties, such as the Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty, to ensure that equality, including gender, is considered from the outset of decision making.

This work is already underway and will begin to be integrated into budget planning towards the end of 2025.

Supplementary

Please can I ask that you move this forward at a quicker rate?

Answer

Yes and the work that is being done by the service will be taken forward in the next budget.

188. PROPOSED CHANGES TO LIST OF COMMITTEE POWERS

The council considered a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services proposing minor changes to the List of Committee Powers, as a result of decisions made by the Cabinet Committee at its meeting on 29 May 2025 (2025 CC 200 382 refers).

Decision

The council:-

- (1) agreed that the List of Committee Powers be amended, as set out in section 1.3 of the report, with changes taking effect from 20 June 2025;
- (2) agreed that a report be brought to Fife Council in September detailing proposals for reducing the membership of the Regulation and Licensing Committee;
- (3) and delegated authority to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to amend the List of Committee Powers and List of Officer Powers to reflect any consequential amendments.

189. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

The council considered a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services requiring the council to consider motions submitted in terms of Standing Order 10. Motions 2 and 3 were considered before Motion 1 to provide members with an opportunity read amendments that had been received.

Motion 1

Councillor Dempsey, seconded by Councillor Kathleen Leslie, moved as follows:-

“Council:-

- Notes the current programme of review of the Service Level Agreements/other governance documents setting out the arrangements that exist between the Council and its ALEOs, as reported to the Cabinet Committee in December 2024;
- Requests that, wherever practicable, the revised documents resulting from this review specify and quantify the levels of service to be provided to the public such that an external observer could readily determine whether those levels have been reached.”

Amendment

Councillor Barratt, seconded by Councillor Patrick, moved as follows:-

“Council notes that in August 2024 the Cabinet Committee agreed:

“Committee requests a report be tabled at a Cabinet Committee meeting by the close of 2024 addressing how the council and its elected members can influence policy in areas where our Arms Length External Organisations (ALEOs) operate”.

Council also notes that on consideration of the resulting report on 5th December 2024 Cabinet Committee agreed:

“The committee noted the contents of the report and requested officers review and report back on how the governance arrangements of the council’s ALEOs could be strengthened to ensure fuller alignment with council policy and that they were clearly operating in the interests of the sole shareholder, i.e. the council, which would incorporate a workshop of the Cabinet Committee or members nominated by the Cross Party Leaders’ Group.

Council notes that there may be a lack of clarity or understanding as to what was meant by the request to “review and report back on how the governance arrangements of the council’s ALEOs could be strengthened”.

Requests that ALEO governance arrangements are reviewed to seek to deliver clear and transparent service level agreements and governance documents.

Requests that service level agreements and governance documents should ensure that Councillors, through Full Council, Cabinet or Scrutiny as appropriate, should retain the ability to scrutinise service delivery and to request reports setting out how services might be changed”.

With the agreement of the Provost, the mover of the motion agreed to conjoin with the amendment. The conjoined motion was agreed as follows:-

“Council:-

2025 FC 301

- Notes the current programme of review of the Service Level Agreements/other governance documents setting out the arrangements that exist between the Council and its ALEOs, as reported to the Cabinet Committee in December 2024;
- Requests that, wherever practicable, the revised documents resulting from this review specify and quantify the levels of service to be provided to the public such that an external observer could readily determine whether those levels have been reached.

Council notes that in August 2024 the Cabinet Committee agreed:

"Committee requests a report be tabled at a Cabinet Committee meeting by the close of 2024 addressing how the council and its elected members can influence policy in areas where our Arms Length External Organisations (ALEOs) operate".

Council also notes that on consideration of the resulting report on 5th December 2024 Cabinet Committee agreed:

"The committee noted the contents of the report and requested officers review and report back on how the governance arrangements of the council's ALEOs could be strengthened to ensure fuller alignment with council policy and that they were clearly operating in the interests of the sole shareholder, i.e. the council, which would incorporate a workshop of the Cabinet Committee or members nominated by the Cross Party Leaders' Group.

Council notes that there may be a lack of clarity or understanding as to what was meant by the request to "review and report back on how the governance arrangements of the council's ALEOs could be strengthened".

Requests that ALEO governance arrangements are reviewed to seek to deliver clear and transparent service level agreements and governance documents.

Requests that service level agreements and governance documents should ensure that Councillors, through Full Council, Cabinet or Scrutiny as appropriate, should retain the ability to scrutinise service delivery and to request reports setting out how services might be changed".

Decision

The council agreed the conjoined motion unanimously.

Motion 2

Councillor Craik, seconded by Councillor Kathleen Leslie, moved as follows:-

Supporting and Promoting Social Enterprise Scotland's "Buy Social" Pledge in Local Government

"Council aspires to promote and support the "Buy Social" Pledge. A Social Enterprise Scotland, values led initiative, bringing together private businesses, small and medium sized enterprises, academic institutions and public sector

bodies who are looking to make a commitment to promote and bring social enterprises into their direct and indirect supply chain. Council note:-

- That social enterprises are vital to our local and national economy as they foster an ecosystem that nurtures and supports positive impacts in our local communities.
- The free pledge covers five key areas including; Recognise Fair Work, Commitment to Net Zero Policy, Procurement, Prompt Payment and Positive Impact – a commitment to report annual spend with Social Enterprises.
- The benefit of signing onto this pledge includes access to the "Buy Social" Business Pledge Logo, access to social enterprise suppliers in the local area or specific industries. Inclusion in marketing materials – promoting and showcasing the council's support for social procurement.
- That other local authorities and Scotland Excel have already adopted and quickly signed up to the "Buy Social" Pledge.

Council therefore:-

- Commits to signing the council up to Social Enterprise Scotland's "Buy Social" pledge.
- To promote and support our region's local social enterprises.
- Agrees to engage with our social enterprises and continue working with them, promoting them and adopt them in the council's direct and indirect supply chain.
- To engage with the social enterprise agencies here in Fife, and the National membership organisation, Social Enterprise Scotland."

Decision

The council agreed the motion unanimously.

*The meeting adjourned at 1.10 pm and reconvened at 1.55 pm.
Councillor Kennedy joined the meeting following the break.*

Motion 3

Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Barrera, moved as follows:-

"Fife Council notes with deep concern the increasingly hostile and punitive approach to immigration adopted by the Labour UK Government. This includes policies that have caused significant distress and uncertainty for individuals and families, harms Scotland's international reputation by association, and creates economic challenges by limiting access to labour and talent essential to our communities and public services.

In Fife, like many parts of Scotland, it is widely acknowledged and accepted that immigration is needed to support vital sectors such as our NHS, health and social care, agriculture, hospitality, and education. The Labour UK Government's restrictive immigration policies are damaging our economy, undermining social cohesion, and are at odds with Scotland's values of compassion, inclusion, and internationalism.

2025 FC 303

Council further notes that the Scottish Government have consistently sought to have powers over immigration policy so that a more humane and pragmatic approach to migration, grounded in Scotland's unique demographic and economic needs can be implemented.

Given this context, Fife Council:

1. Condemns the UK Government's current stance and direction on immigration policy.
2. Recognises the vital contribution that migrants make to Fife and to Scotland as a whole.
3. Supports the devolution of immigration powers to the Scottish Parliament so that policies can better reflect Scotland's values and needs.
4. Calls on the UK Government to engage constructively with the Scottish Government to explore a differentiated approach to immigration policy.
5. Agrees that the Council Leader to write to the Prime Minister and the UK Home Secretary to express Fife Council's position as outlined in this motion."

Amendment

Councillor Boubaker-Calder, seconded by Councillor Ross, moved as follows:-

Council notes:

- With concern, the rise of divisive politics across Scotland and the UK, including in relation to the issue of immigration.
- That the UK has a long, proud history of welcoming newcomers – whether people seeking to build their lives here, or refugees fleeing war and persecution and that many of these newcomers have contributed in different ways, including in health and social care, agriculture, hospitality, and education.

Council further notes that:

- The survey undertaken by Scottish Care estimates that around 26% of the total social care workforce in Scotland. It concludes that the sector in Scotland is fundamentally dependent on international workers and that restrictions on that workforce would have a profoundly negative and potentially catastrophic impact on the social care sector.
- The Leader of the Council has written to the Home Secretary and the Secretary of State for Scotland raising these concerns.

Council believes that:

- Migrants make a significant and valuable contribution to Scotland, to our culture and our economy, and this will continue.
- Exploitative employment and hiring practices that rely on underpaying migrants instead of building a robust system that works for everyone should be ended, and it is not progressive to prop up a system that undercuts one set of workers by exploiting and underpaying others.
- The biggest challenge to recruitment and retention in the social care sector is that our social care workforce is not paid enough, and we support better pay for the social care workforce.
- The main threat to the operation of the social care system is due to its historic underfunding by the Scottish Government.

Council therefore resolves:

2025 FC 304

- To call for the UK and Scottish Governments to engage positively with each other to ensure an immigration policy that is both sensitive and pragmatic to the needs of areas across the UK.
- To write to the UK Prime Minister, UK Home Secretary and Scottish First Minister to express Fife Council's position as outlined in this motion.

Roll Call

For the Motion – 31 votes

Councillors David Alexander, Blair Allan, Naz Anis-Miah, Lesley Backhouse, Alistair Bain, David Barratt, Auxi Barrera, John Beare, Ken Caldwell, Rod Cavanagh, Derek Glen, Brian Goodall, Jean Hall Muir, Alycia Hayes, Stefan Hoggan, Lynda Holton, Andy Jackson, Louise Kennedy-Dalby, Rosemary Liewald, Carol Lindsay, David MacDiarmid, Lynn Mowatt, Sarah Neal, John O'Brien, Nicola Patrick, Bailey-Lee Robb, Sam Steele, Alistair Suttie, Ann Verner, Craig Walker and Daniel Wilson.

For the Amendment – 37 votes

Councillors Tom Adams, Mary Lockhart, Karen Beaton, Aude Boubaker-Calder, Patrick Browne, James Calder, Alistair Cameron, Ian Cameron, Alex Campbell, Al Clark, Eugene Clarke, Fiona Corps, Altany Craik, Colin Davidson, Dave Dempsey, Sean Dillon, Gavin Ellis, Linda Erskine, Peter Gulline, Judy Hamilton, Cara Hilton, Gary Holt, Margaret Kennedy, Allan Knox, Robin Lawson, Jim Leishman, James Leslie, Kathleen Leslie, Jane Ann Liston, Donald Lothian, Derek Noble, Gordon Pryde, David Ross, Jonny Tepp, Darren Watt, Jan Wincott and Conner Young.

Abstained – 1

Councillor Julie MacDougall.

Decision

Having received a majority of votes, the motion was accordingly carried.

*Councillor Eugene Clarke joined the meeting during consideration of the above item.
Councillors Glen and Alistair Cameron left the meeting after consideration of the above item.*

Motion 4

Councillor Anis-Miah, seconded by Councillor Lindsay, moved as follows:-

End UK Arms Sales to Israel – Uphold International Law and Support Humanitarian Aid

“Council Notes:

The UK Government continues to license the export of military equipment and components to Israel, including critical parts used in F-35 fighter jets, which have been deployed in the ongoing bombardment of Gaza. These jets, jointly produced by UK-based companies, have played a central role in aerial attacks that have

devastated civilian infrastructure, including hospitals, schools, homes and aid convoys.

The humanitarian situation in Gaza has dramatically worsened in recent months. UN agencies have repeatedly warned of imminent famine, the collapse of the health system, and mass displacement. Over 50000 Palestinians have been killed since October 2023, the vast majority being civilians, including thousands of children.

The International Court of Justice (ICJ), in its provisional ruling in January 2024 and subsequent updates, found a plausible case that Israel's actions in Gaza may amount to genocide. The court ordered Israel to take immediate steps to prevent such outcomes, ensure the flow of humanitarian aid, and protect civilian life. Legal experts in the UK and internationally have raised serious concerns that continuing to export arms to Israel may place the UK in breach of its obligations under international law, including the Genocide Convention, the Arms Trade Treaty, and the Geneva Conventions.

Despite all of this the UK Government continues to allow the of supply components to Israel. Human rights organisations have taken the UK Government to the High Court in May 2025 with an aim to stop all arms sales to Israel. Similar Legal proceedings have already been launched in several jurisdictions against governments that have continued arms sales to Israel, citing domestic and international legal frameworks.

UK Government Legal Proceedings

A growing number of countries, including Canada, the Netherlands, Spain, Belgium and Italy, have suspended arms sales to Israel citing humanitarian and legal concerns. Despite this, the UK Government continues to approve arms export licenses with minimal transparency or robust human rights assessment.

Council Believes:

Fife Council, as a public body committed to human rights, social justice and international law, must take a clear position against the UK Government's continued arming of Israel amid credible allegations of war crimes and crimes against humanity. The UK should replace military support with increased humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people, focusing on urgent relief for those affected by the ongoing crisis and long-term support for reconstruction and peacebuilding. The UK Government must immediately suspend all arms export licenses to Israel and conduct an urgent review of its export policy to ensure full compliance with international law.

Council Resolves To:

Agree the Leader of Fife Council to write to the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary and the Secretary of State for Business and Trade to call for the immediate suspension of all UK arms sales and military components to Israel.

The letter should reaffirm Fife Councils condemnation of Hamas's attacks on Israeli civilians on 7 October 2023 and also of Israel's disproportionate military response, which has led to more than 50,000 Palestinian deaths and left millions of civilians in Gaza in urgent need of humanitarian aid contrary to international law; and support for a permanent ceasefire, full humanitarian access, the return of hostages and prisoners, and a just and lasting peace through a two-state solution.

The letter should also request that the UK Government increase humanitarian aid to Palestinians, including support for access to food, water, shelter and medical care, and urge a full review of the UK's decision-making and export licensing framework to ensure it does not place the UK in violation of international law or complicit in potential war crimes.

Fife Council will publicly express its solidarity with the Palestinian people and its commitment to peace, justice and adherence to international law. The Council will also share this motion with all Scottish local authorities and COSLA, encouraging similar positions of advocacy and humanitarian support."

Amendment

Councillor Ross, seconded by Councillor Hilton, moved as follows:-

"Council views with the utmost concern current events in the Middle East and the continuing humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

Council reiterates its previous call for an immediate cease fire and for the provision of adequate humanitarian aid for people in Gaza.

Council calls on the Government as a matter of urgency to consider further use of sanctions and withdrawal of export licences to prevent the further escalation of conflict, promote an immediate cease fire and uphold human rights, social justice and international law."

Following discussion, and in agreement with the Provost, the mover of the amendment agreed to withdraw his amendment and the mover of the motion agreed to remove the last sentence of the motion.

The revised motion was agreed as follows:-

End UK Arms Sales to Israel – Uphold International Law and Support Humanitarian Aid

"Council Notes:

The UK Government continues to license the export of military equipment and components to Israel, including critical parts used in F-35 fighter jets, which have been deployed in the ongoing bombardment of Gaza. These jets, jointly produced by UK-based companies, have played a central role in aerial attacks that have devastated civilian infrastructure, including hospitals, schools, homes and aid convoys.

The humanitarian situation in Gaza has dramatically worsened in recent months. UN agencies have repeatedly warned of imminent famine, the collapse of the health system, and mass displacement. Over 50000 Palestinians have been killed since October 2023, the vast majority being civilians, including thousands of children.

The International Court of Justice (ICJ), in its provisional ruling in January 2024 and subsequent updates, found a plausible case that Israel's actions in Gaza may amount to genocide. The court ordered Israel to take immediate steps to prevent such outcomes, ensure the flow of humanitarian aid, and protect civilian life. Legal experts in the UK and internationally have raised serious concerns that continuing

to export arms to Israel may place the UK in breach of its obligations under international law, including the Genocide Convention, the Arms Trade Treaty, and the Geneva Conventions.

Despite all of this the UK Government continues to allow the of supply components to Israel. Human rights organisations have taken the UK Government to the High Court in May 2025 with an aim to stop all arms sales to Israel. Similar Legal proceedings have already been launched in several jurisdictions against governments that have continued arms sales to Israel, citing domestic and international legal frameworks.

UK Government Legal Proceedings

A growing number of countries, including Canada, the Netherlands, Spain, Belgium and Italy, have suspended arms sales to Israel citing humanitarian and legal concerns. Despite this, the UK Government continues to approve arms export licenses with minimal transparency or robust human rights assessment.

Council Believes:

Fife Council, as a public body committed to human rights, social justice and international law, must take a clear position against the UK Government's continued arming of Israel amid credible allegations of war crimes and crimes against humanity. The UK should replace military support with increased humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people, focusing on urgent relief for those affected by the ongoing crisis and long-term support for reconstruction and peacebuilding. The UK Government must immediately suspend all arms export licenses to Israel and conduct an urgent review of its export policy to ensure full compliance with international law.

Council Resolves To:

Agree the Leader of Fife Council to write to the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary and the Secretary of State for Business and Trade to call for the immediate suspension of all UK arms sales and military components to Israel.

The letter should reaffirm Fife Councils condemnation of Hamas's attacks on Israeli civilians on 7 October 2023 and also of Israel's disproportionate military response, which has led to more than 50,000 Palestinian deaths and left millions of civilians in Gaza in urgent need of humanitarian aid contrary to international law; and support for a permanent ceasefire, full humanitarian access, the return of hostages and prisoners, and a just and lasting peace through a two-state solution.

The letter should also request that the UK Government increase humanitarian aid to Palestinians, including support for access to food, water, shelter and medical care, and urge a full review of the UK's decision-making and export licensing framework to ensure it does not place the UK in violation of international law or complicit in potential war crimes.

Fife Council will publicly express its solidarity with the Palestinian people and its commitment to peace, justice and adherence to international law.

Decision

The amended motion was agreed unanimously.

190. BUSINESS BROUGHT FORWARD BY THE PROVOST AS A MATTER OF URGENCY

No business was brought forward under this item.