

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 17 SEPTEMBER 2019

Policy & Resources Committee

Tuesday 17 September 2019 at 3pm

Present: Councillors Ahlfeld, Clocherty, J McEleny (for MacLeod), McCabe, Jackson (for McCormick), C McEleny, McVey, Moran, Rebecchi, Crowther (for Robertson) and Wilson.

Chair: Councillor McCabe presided.

In attendance: Chief Executive, Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development, Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources, Ms H Watson (for Corporate Director (Chief Officer), Inverclyde Health & Social Care Partnership), Head of Legal & Property Services, Ms R McGhee (Legal & Property Services), Chief Financial Officer, Revenues & Customer Services Manager, ICT Service Manager, Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications, Corporate Policy, Performance & Partnership Manager, Service Manager – Communications, Tourism and Health & Safety and Procurement, Regeneration & Building Services Manager.

The following paragraphs are submitted for information only, having been dealt with under the powers delegated to the Committee.

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| 550 | Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest | 550 |
| | <p>Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillor MacLeod, with Councillor J McEleny substituting, Councillor McCormick, with Councillor Jackson substituting, and Councillor Robertson, with Councillor Crowther substituting.</p> <p>No declarations of interest were intimated.</p> | |
| 551 | Policy & Resources Capital Programme 2019/2023 – Progress Report | 551 |
| | <p>There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer and the Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources (1) providing an update in respect of the status of the projects within the Policy & Resources Capital Programme and (2) highlighting the overall financial position.</p> <p>Decided: that the current position of the 2019/23 Capital Programme, the reported net advancement and the progress on the specific projects detailed in the report and Appendix 1 be noted.</p> | |
| 552 | 2019/23 Capital Programme | 552 |
| | <p>There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer on the latest position of the 2019/23 Capital Programme.</p> <p>Decided: that the current position of the 2019/23 Capital Programme be noted.</p> | |

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- 553 Policy & Resources Committee 2019/20 Revenue Budget – Period 4 to 31 July 2019 553**
- There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive, Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources, Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development and Chief Financial Officer on the 2018/19 Revenue Budget outturn and the 2019/20 projected outturn for the Policy & Resources Committee as at period 4, 31 July 2019.
- Decided:**
- (1) that the 2018/19 Revenue Budget outturn and the 2019/20 projected underspend of £1,067,000 for the Policy & Resources Committee as at period 4, 31 July 2019 be noted;
 - (2) that the projected 2019/20 surplus of £48,600 for the Common Good Fund be noted; and
 - (3) that approval be given to the virement detailed in Appendix 6 to the report.
- 554 2019/20 General Fund Revenue Budget as at 31 July 2019 554**
- There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer (1) on the position of the General Fund Revenue Budget as at 31 July 2019 and (2) providing an update in respect of the position of the General Fund Reserves and Earmarked Reserves.
- Decided:**
- (1) that the latest position of the 2019/20 Revenue Budget and General Fund Reserves be noted; and
 - (2) that it be noted that the use of any Free Reserves will be considered as part of the 2020/23 budget process.
- 555 Welfare Reform Update 555**
- There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer providing an update on recent developments in respect of Welfare Reform.
- Decided:** that the latest update regarding the impact of Welfare Reform within Inverclyde be noted.
- 556 ICT Services Performance Update 556**
- There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer providing an update on the Digital and ICT Strategies, performance and Channel Shift statistics, details of the Council's PC refresh programme and information on a number of upgrade projects being implemented by ICT and Finance Services.
- Decided:**
- (1) that the performance statistics report and action plan updates for the Digital and ICT Strategies be noted; and
 - (2) that the completion of the project to upgrade wireless provision within the corporate campus be noted.

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| 557 | Corporate Services Progress Report | 557 |
| | <p>There was submitted a report by the Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications updating the Committee on the delivery of the improvement actions by the Council's Corporate Services, as detailed in the Education, Communities & Organisational Development and the Environment, Regeneration & Resources Corporate Directorate Improvement Plans (CDIPs) 2019/22.</p> <p>Decided: that the progress made by the Council's Corporate Services during 2019/20 in delivering the year one improvement actions, as detailed in their respective CDIPs, be noted.</p> | |
| 558 | Inverclyde Best Value Assurance Report – Improvement Plan Progress Report | 558 |
| | <p>There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive providing an update on the Inverclyde Best Value Assurance Report (BVAR) Improvement Plan.</p> <p>Decided: that the progress made in regard to the BVAR improvement actions, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.</p> | |
| 559 | Debt Recovery Performance 2018/19 | 559 |
| | <p>There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer on the Council's Debt Recovery performance during 2018/19.</p> <p>Decided: that the Council's continued good Debt Recovery performance in 2018/19 be noted.</p> | |
| 560 | Customer Services Annual Performance Update | 560 |
| | <p>There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer providing an update on Customer Service Centre (CSC) performance for 2018/19 and the Action Plan.</p> <p>Decided:</p> <p>(1) that the performance in terms of the improvement in abandoned calls for Revenues and Benefits, quality outcomes and the high level of compliments received be noted;</p> <p>(2) that the smooth transition of Registration Services merging with Customer Services be noted; and</p> <p>(3) that the ongoing impact of Welfare Reform changes, particularly Universal Credit, including the new Scottish Social Security Agency, on the workload and service delivery within the Customer Service Centre be noted.</p> | |
| 561 | Inverclyde Council – Reserves Policy | 561 |
| | <p>There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer seeking approval of the Reserves Policy as part of the agreed triennial review.</p> <p>Decided:</p> <p>(1) that the latest position in respect of the Council's Reserves as set out in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 to the report be noted; and</p> <p>(2) that approval be given to the Reserves Policy attached to the report at Appendix 3.</p> | |

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562 Annual Procurement Report**562**

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources (1) seeking approval to publish the Annual Procurement Report set out in Appendix 1 to the report and (2) providing an update on the latest spend with SMEs and local suppliers.

Decided:

- (1) that approval be given to the Annual Procurement Report for publication on the Council's website;
- (2) that the latest spend with SMEs and local suppliers be noted; and
- (3) that a report on action to support smaller companies and to enable them to participate in bidding for Council contracts be submitted to the Committee in due course.

563 Procurement Policy – Request by Councillor C McEleny**563**

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources on a request received from Councillor C McEleny that a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee on (1) measures the Council can take that better include environmental impacts as a result of the Council's Procurement Policy eg, environmental weighting and (2) measures that can result in more locally based SMEs and Inverclyde workers being successful in being awarded Council contracts.

Decided: that a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee on (1) measures the Council can take that better include environmental impacts as a result of the Council's Procurement Policy, eg environmental weighting, and (2) measures that can result in more locally based SMEs and Inverclyde workers being successful in being awarded Council contracts.

564 2020/23 Revenue Budget Update**564**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer (1) updating the Committee on the 2020/23 Revenue Budget and (2) seeking approval for some initial adjustments in order to reduce the three year funding gap.

Decided:

- (1) that the ongoing activity and current position of the 2020/23 Revenue Budget be noted; and
- (2) that approval be given to the proposed budget adjustments contained in Appendix 2 to the report on the basis that none of these adjustments will impact on the current level of service with only vacant posts being deleted.

565 Budget Consultation and Engagement**565**

There was submitted a report by the Head of Organisation Development, Policy & Communications on proposals to consult and engage with the Inverclyde community as part of the Council's budget decision-making for 2020/23.

Decided: that approval be given to the proposals for budget consultation and engagement set out in the report and that detailed Officer options to be consulted on be progressed following engagement with the Members' Budget Working Group, recognising that the uncertainty over Brexit and/or a General Election could involve Council Officers promoting controversial information during a pre-election period.

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566 Remembrance Sunday – Canadian Armed Forces’ Involvement 566

There was submitted a report by the Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications highlighting the pivotal role played by Greenock in welcoming Canadian Forces to the United Kingdom at the start of World War 2 and proposing that a formal invitation be extended to the High Commissioner of Canada, or her representative, to attend the Greenock Remembrance commemorations each year.

Decided:

- (1) that the Council formally extend an invitation to the High Commissioner of Canada, or her representative, to attend the annual Greenock Remembrance commemorations each year; and
- (2) that a report be submitted to the Committee on the Dutch and Norwegian Armed Forces’ connection to Inverclyde and the appropriateness of including Dutch and Norwegian government representatives in future remembrance commemorations.

567 Travel and Subsistence Policy 567

There was submitted a report by the Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications seeking approval of an amended Travel and Subsistence Policy.

Decided:

- (1) that approval be given to the amended Travel and Subsistence Policy attached to the report at Appendix 1; and
- (2) that the current rates be approved as interim rates, subject to the finalisation of the budget process in January/February 2020.

568 High-Level Governance Review 568

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal & Property Services identifying key items of the Council’s governance processes for review by the Committee relating to Thematic Committees, the Committee agenda process, noting reports, consultation documentation and processes, background papers and impact assessments and duration of Committees.

Decided: that the terms of the report be noted and the proposals set out in section 5 endorsed.

569 School Transport Funding – Requests from the Education & Communities Committee 569

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer on a remit from the Education & Communities Committee of 3 September 2019 requesting (1) that the increased revenue budget funding for providing subsidised buses for St Columba’s High School where no alternative public service route is available be included in the 2020/23 Revenue Budget process and (2) that the cost of providing free transport to secondary school pupils in receipt of free school meals and who live between one and two miles of their school be met from Reserves.

Decided:

- (1) that the increased revenue budget funding for providing subsidised buses for St Columba’s High School where no alternative public service route is available be funded from the unallocated budget pressures allowance in 2020/21; and

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(2) that it be agreed to fund the cost of providing free transport to secondary school pupils in receipt of free school meals and who live between one and two miles of their school with the funding being identified through the budget process.

The Convener being of the opinion that the undernoted report by the Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources was relevant, competent and urgent moved its consideration in terms of the relevant Standing Order to allow the Committee to consider the matter at the earliest opportunity. This was agreed unanimously.

570 Operation Yellowhammer – Request by Councillor C McEleny

570

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources on a request from Councillor C McEleny that the Committee has sight of the Operation Yellowhammer report and gives consideration to any implications there may be to the Inverclyde local authority area as a result of a “No Deal” exit from the European Union on 31 October 2019.

Decided:

- (1) that the terms of the Operation Yellowhammer report, a copy of which was appended to the report, be noted; and
- (2) that it be noted that the Environment & Regeneration Committee receives updates on EU withdrawal and that Officers participate in working group arrangements with the Civil Contingency Service, and that a further, detailed report, including any mitigating actions, be submitted to the meeting of the Environment & Regeneration Committee scheduled to be held on 31 October 2019 or, if necessary, to a special meeting of that Committee.

Councillor Ahlfeld left the meeting following this item of business.

It was agreed in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended, that the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items on the grounds that the business involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the respective paragraphs of Part I of Schedule 7(A) of the Act as are set opposite each item.

Item	Paragraph(s)
Review of Members' Support	1
Joint Collaboration – Audit and Fraud Services Inverclyde and West Dunbartonshire Councils	1 & 11

571 Review of Members' Support

571

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal & Property Services on a review of Members' Support as requested by the Committee at its meeting in May 2019, outlining the resources and tasks of the Members' support team and including comparative information obtained from other Councils in relation to their structures and staffing resources.

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(Councillor Ahlfeld returned to the meeting during consideration of this item of business).

Decided: that the terms of the report be noted and that the situation with the Members' Support team be reviewed in consultation with all Members prior to September 2020 with a report on conclusions being submitted to the Committee.

**572 Joint Collaboration – Audit and Fraud Services
Inverclyde and West Dunbartonshire Councils**

572

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources (1) on discussions between senior officers in West Dunbartonshire Council and Inverclyde Council regarding collaboration opportunities around Internal Audit and Fraud Services and (2) seeking approval for shared management arrangements with West Dunbartonshire Council involving the appointment of a Shared Chief Internal Auditor leading two separate Audit and Fraud Teams employed within their respective Councils.

Decided:

- (1) that approval be given to the implementation of the internal audit shared management model between Inverclyde and West Dunbartonshire Councils, including the appointment of the Shared Chief Internal Auditor within West Dunbartonshire Council's management structure; and
- (2) that it be noted that a report providing an update on the matter would be submitted to the Shared Services Joint Committee in October 2019.