

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 25 MARCH 2014

Policy & Resources Committee

Tuesday 25 March 2014 at 3pm

Present: Provost Moran, Councillors Clocherty, MacLeod, McCabe, McCormick, McEleny, McColgan (for McIlwee), Nelson, Loughran, Rebecchi and Wilson.

Chair: Councillor McCabe presided.

In attendance: Chief Executive, Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development, Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources, Corporate Director Inverclyde Community Health & Care Partnership, Head of Finance, Ms F Borthwick (Finance Services), Mr F Jarvie (for Head of Legal & Democratic Services), Head of Education, Ms K McCready (for Head of Inclusive Education, Culture & Corporate Policy), Acting Head of Organisational Development, HR & Communications, Transitional Head of ICT, Mr A McDonald (ICT), Corporate Communications Manager and Mr M Bingham (Corporate Communications).

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

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| 214 | Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest | 214 |
| | An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor McIlwee, with Councillor McColgan substituting. | |
| | No declarations of interest were intimated. | |
| 215 | Policy & Resources Capital Programme - 2013/14 - 15/16 - Progress | 215 |
| | There was submitted a report by the Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources and Head of Finance (1) providing an update on the status of the projects forming the Policy & Resources Capital Programme 2013/14 - 15/16 and (2) highlighting the overall financial position. | |
| | Decided: that the Committee note the current position of the 2013/16 Capital Programme and the progress of the specific projects detailed in Appendix 1. | |
| 216 | Capital Programme 2013/16 | 216 |
| | There was submitted a report by the Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources on the latest position of the 2013/16 Capital Programme. | |
| | Decided: that the Committee note the current position of the 2013/16 Capital Programme. | |
| 217 | Policy & Resources Committee 2013/14 Revenue Budget - Period 10 to 31 January 2014 | 217 |
| | There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive, Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources, Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development and Head of Finance on the 2013/14 projected outturn for the Policy & Resources Committee as at Period 10 (31 January 2014). | |

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Decided:

- (1) that the 2013/14 projected underspend of £257,000 for the Policy & Resources Committee as at Period 10 be noted; and
- (2) that the projected fund balance of £145,290 for the Common Good Fund be noted.

218 General Fund Revenue Budget 2013/14 as at 31 January 2014

218

There was submitted a report by the Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources (1) on the position of the General Fund Revenue Budget as at 31 January 2014 and (2) providing an update on the position of the Reserves and Workstream Savings.

Decided:

- (1) that the Committee note the latest position of the 2013/14 Revenue Budget and General Fund Reserves;
- (2) that the Committee note the 2013/16 Workstream Savings position; and
- (3) that the Committee note the latest position of the 2015/16 grant settlement.

219 Corporate Services Performance Report

219

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development and Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources updating the Committee on the progress made by the Council's Corporate Services towards achieving their key objectives and meeting performance targets, as detailed in the Education, Communities & Organisational Development and the Environment, Regeneration & Resources Corporate Directorate Improvement Plans (CDIPs) for 2013/16.

Decided: that the Committee note:

- (1) that the report reflects the progress made by the Council's Corporate Services in delivering their improvement actions as detailed within their respective Corporate Directorate Improvement Plans 2013/16;
- (2) that progress in delivering the remaining improvement actions that sit within the Education, Communities & Organisational Development and the Environment, Regeneration & Resources CDIPs has been reported to the appropriate Committee;
- (3) that an annual review of the Education, Communities & Organisational Development and the Environment, Regeneration & Resources CDIPs will be carried out and the corporate actions submitted to a future meeting of the Committee; and
- (4) that further Corporate Service progress reports will continue to be submitted to every second meeting of the Committee.

220 Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy - 2014/15 - 2016/17

220

There was submitted a report by the Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources on the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy for 2014/17, Treasury Policy Limits, the Council's Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators for the next three years and the list of Permitted Investments.

Decided:

- (1) that the following, as outlined in the report, be remitted to the Inverclyde Council for approval:
 - (a) Treasury Management Strategy;

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- (b) Annual Investment Strategy;
- (c) Treasury Policy Limits;
- (d) Prudential Indicators;
- (e) Treasury Management Indicators; and
- (f) List of Permitted Investments (including those for the Common Good Fund); and
- (2) that approval be given to a revised £60m limit for investments that may be held with the Bank of Scotland until the end of June 2015.

221 Modernisation Update

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There was submitted a report by the Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources (1) providing an update on the status of the Council's ongoing Modernisation Programme and (2) requesting authorisation to proceed with the procurement of Lagan Enterprise 14R1 upgrade and Integrated Self Service in support of the Council's Digital Access Strategy.

Decided:

- (1) that the current position of the projects which form the overall Modernisation Programme for the Council be noted;
- (2) that the Committee authorise the procurement of Lagan Enterprise 14R1 upgrade and self service software from the Modernisation Earmarked Reserve; and
- (3) that the Committee approve funding from the Modernisation Earmarked Reserve to allow a 12 month extension to the Project Officer's appointment.

222 PSN Accreditation Update 2014

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There was submitted a report by the Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources (1) updating the Committee on the current position with the Public Services Network (PSN) accreditation process and (2) highlighting changes that may be required to allow for continued accreditation.

Decided:

- (1) that it be noted the Council has successfully completed the PSN accreditation process for 2013/2014;
- (2) that the Committee note accreditation is an ongoing process and that there will be further changes required to Information Security policies, practices and infrastructure; and
- (3) that it be noted ICT will continue to work in conjunction with services and the Information Governance Steering Group to ensure the implementation of the necessary changes required to maintain the Council's PSN accreditation.

223 Repopulation Outcome Delivery Group - Update

223

There was submitted a report by the Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources updating the Committee in respect of the work of the Repopulation Outcome Delivery Group (ODG) which supports the delivery of the Repopulation Outcome of the Single Outcome Agreement.

Decided:

- (1) that the Committee note the progress being made in respect of promoting Inverclyde and developing strategies to repopulate the area; and
- (2) that approval be given to the proposal in respect of the Graduate Entry Scheme outlined in paragraph 5.4 of the report.

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- 224 Welfare Reforms Update 224**
- There was submitted a report by the Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources (1) updating the Committee in respect of the Council's response to Welfare Reform changes and (2) seeking approval of a revised Discretionary Housing Payments Policy to come into effect from 1 April 2014. There were circulated to the Committee, amended recommendations and Appendix 3 (Discretionary Housing Payments Policy).
- Decided:**
- (1) that the Committee note the content of the report;
 - (2) that approval be given to the amended Discretionary Housing Payments Policy and that Disability Living Allowance be disregarded when assessing an applicant's income;
 - (3) that, in order to maximise Discretionary Housing Payments in 2013/2014, the financial hardship limit be increased from £40 to £60 per week;
 - (4) that the Committee's concern at the late notification of the increase in the 2013/2014 Discretionary Housing Payments ceiling be recorded and that a letter be sent from the Council Leader to Mr David Mundell MP raising concerns and highlighting the implications for those impacted by the "bedroom tax"; and
 - (5) that a report on sources of funding for central heating be submitted to the Education & Communities Committee.
- 225 Job Centre Plus Wage Incentive 225**
- There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources on the JobCentre Plus Wage Incentive Programme and seeking support from the Council for engagement with the Programme.
- Decided:**
- (1) that the Committee note the JobCentre Plus Wage Incentive Programme, support the Council's participation in the scheme, agree that the relevant services liaise with JCP management to provide a single point of contact and, if monies are received from DWP, they be treated as found income and allocated to existing employability budgets within the Regeneration & Planning Service; and
 - (2) that a report on youth employment, including information on the number of part time and full time jobs, be submitted to the Environment & Regeneration Committee.
- 226 Scottish Procurement Policy Note Actions on Blacklisting 226**
- There was submitted a report by the Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources (1) on the Scottish Government's Procurement Policy Note providing advice on the exclusion from public contracts of companies which engage in the practice of blacklisting and (2) recommending that the Council adopt the approach outlined in the Policy Note.
- Decided:** that the Council adopt the proposals outlined in the Scottish Government's Scottish Procurement Policy Note, wherever it is appropriate, proportionate and legal to do so with effect from 1 April 2014.
- 227 Employee Survey 2012 – Actions Update 227**
- There was submitted a report by the Acting Head of Organisational Development, HR & Communications on progress following the last Council wide employee opinion survey carried out in 2012, specifically with regard to the action points raised by the employee

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focus groups.

(Councillor Rebecchi left the meeting during consideration of this item of business).

Decided:

- (1) that the Committee note the feedback given and action taken and action ongoing; and
 - (2) that it be noted the next employee survey is Spring 2015.
- (Councillor Rebecchi returned to the meeting at this juncture).

228 Sickness Absence Reporting

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There was submitted a report by the Acting Head of Organisational Development, HR & Communications proposing a change in the Council approach to sickness absence reporting.

Decided:

- (1) that quarterly absence statistics be drawn directly from the HR payroll system;
- (2) that the statistical analysis format be changed to reflect the annual SOLACE Statutory Performance Indicator of number of days absence per full time equivalent employee as set out in the report;
- (3) that annual absence reporting figures run from April to April in line with the SOLACE benchmarking indicators;
- (4) that services utilise the reporting functions of the HR payroll system to monitor and manage absence;
- (5) that the changeover to drawing absence data from the HR payroll system commence on 1 April 2014;
- (6) that the Council set an amended absence target of nine days absence per full time equivalent employee; and
- (7) that senior management continue to develop strategies and proposals to further improve absence rates within the Council.

229 Early Release – Earmarked Reserve

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There was submitted a report by the Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources updating the Committee in respect of the current status of the Early Release Voluntary Severance Earmarked Reserve.

Decided: that the Committee note the position in respect of the Council's Early Release Earmarked Reserve.

230 High Hedges (Scotland) Act 2013 - Remit from Environment & Regeneration Committee

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There was submitted a report by the Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources on a remit from the Environment & Regeneration Committee of 6 March 2014 seeking approval of the Committee's recommendations in relation to the High Hedges (Scotland) Act 2013.

Decided: that the Committee approve the recommendations from the Environment & Regeneration Committee in relation to the High Hedges (Scotland) Act 2013 as set out in the report.