

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 24 MARCH 2020

Policy & Resources Committee**Tuesday 24 March 2020 at 3pm**

Present: Councillors Ahlfeld (by telephone conference), Clocherty (by telephone conference), MacLeod (by telephone conference), McCabe, McCormick (by telephone conference), C McEleny, McVey, Moran, Robertson (by telephone conference) and Brooks (for Wilson).

Chair: Councillor McCabe presided.

In attendance: Chief Executive, Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development, Corporate Director (Chief Officer), Inverclyde Health & Social Care Partnership, Head of Legal & Property Services, Ms R McGhee (Legal & Property Services), Chief Financial Officer (by telephone conference), Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications, Head of Environmental & Public Protection and Service Manager, Communications, Tourism and Health & Safety.

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

Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Rebecchi and Wilson, with Councillor Brooks substituting for Councillor Wilson.

No declarations of interest were intimated.

2019/20 General Fund Revenue Budget as at 31 January 2020

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer (1) on the position of the General Fund Revenue Budget as at 31 January 2020 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 Budget be noted; and
- (2) that it be noted that the use of any Free Reserves was considered as part of the 2020/21 Budget.

2019/23 Capital Programme

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer on the latest position of the 2019/23 Capital Programme.

Decided:

- (1) that the current position of the 2019/23 Capital Programme be noted; and
- (2) that it be noted that a refreshed 2020/23 Capital Programme was approved as part of the March 2020 budget.

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Policy & Resources Committee 2019/20 Revenue and Capital Budget – Period 10 to 31 January 2020

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive, the Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources, the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development and the Chief Financial Officer on the position of the 2019/20 Revenue and Capital Budget as at Period 10 to 31 January 2020.

Decided:

- (1) that the 2019/20 Revenue Budget projected underspend of £2,083,000 as at Period 10 to 31 January 2020 be noted;
- (2) that the projected 2019/20 surplus of £34,200 for the Common Good Fund be noted; and
- (3) that the current projected capital position be noted.

Welfare Reform Update

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer providing an update on various matters relating to welfare reforms and associated issues.

Decided: that the updates contained in the report be noted.

Inverclyde Best Value Assurance Report – Improvement Plan Progress Report

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive providing an update on the Inverclyde Best Value Assurance Report (BVAR) Improvement Plan.

Decided: that the progress made in regard to the Inverclyde BVAR improvement actions, as set out at Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.

SOLACE Improving Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2018/19

There was submitted a report by the Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications (1) providing details of the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) 2018/19 data and (2) highlighting Inverclyde's performance across the range of indicators.

Decided:

- (1) that the LGBF 2018/19 data published on 31 January 2020 be noted; and
- (2) that it be agreed that the information in the appendix to the report be used to form the basis of the Council's public performance reporting on the LGBF 2018/19.

Capital Strategy 2020/30 and Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy 2020/21 – 2023/24

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer presenting an updated Capital Strategy as required by the CIPFA prudential code and seeking approval of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy for 2020/24, Treasury Policy Limits, a policy on the repayment of Loans Fund advances, the Council's Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators for the next four years and the List of Permitted Investments.

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Decided: that the following, as outlined in the report, be remitted to a future meeting of the Inverclyde Council for approval:-

- (a) Capital Strategy for 2020/30;
- (b) Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy;
- (c) Authorised limits for 2020/24;
- (d) Treasury Management Policy Statement set out in paragraph 6.2 of the report;
- (e) Policy on repayment of Loans Fund advances set out in paragraph 9.2 of the report;
- (f) Treasury Policy Limits;
- (g) Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management Indicators; and
- (h) List of Permitted Investments (including those for the Common Good Fund).

Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 2020

There was submitted a report by the Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications (1) providing a more detailed analysis of the results from the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 2020 and (2) informing the Committee of the work currently being taken forward in connection with this.

Decided: that the additional analysis carried out on the SIMD 2020 be noted and that it be noted this work continues to be ongoing through the SIMD data group.

Review of Community Council Grant Funding

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal & Property Services (1) on the feedback received from the Community Councils on proposals to change the basis of their grant funding and, having regard to that feedback, (2) seeking approval of a proposed new Scheme of Funding for Community Councils.

Decided: that consideration of the matter be deferred to a future meeting of the Committee.

Proposed Re-appropriation of the Site of the Former Hector McNeil Baths

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal & Property Services seeking authority to progress both the public consultation and the action for consent of the Court required as detailed in the report relating to proposals to appropriate the site of the former Hector McNeil Baths for use as a Learning Disability Hub.

Decided:

- (1) that the Head of Legal & Property Services be authorised to carry out a public consultation in terms of Section 104 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 on the proposals set out in the report;
- (2) that it be noted a further report will be submitted to the Environment & Regeneration Committee on the outcome of that consultation; and
- (3) that the Head of Legal & Property Services be authorised to progress an action at Greenock Sheriff Court in terms of Section 75 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 for consent to the proposals set out in the report.

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Creation of Earmarked Reserves – Remit from Education & Communities Committee

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources requesting the Committee to consider a remit from the Education & Communities Committee of 10 March 2020 relative to the creation of Earmarked Reserves for (a) Early Learning and Child Care Expansion and (b) Support for Additional Support for Learning Implementation.

Decided: that approval be given to the creation of Earmarked Reserves for (a) Early Learning and Child Care Expansion and (b) Support for Additional Support for Learning Implementation.

The Role of Elected Members in Locality Planning

There was submitted a report by the Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications seeking agreement on the role of Elected Members in locality planning.

Decided: that consideration of the matter be deferred to a future meeting of the Committee or the Policy & Resources Executive Sub-Committee, depending on the length of the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) crisis.

Process for Tackling Poverty and Multiple Deprivation in Inverclyde

There was submitted a report by the Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications on the process to reinvest £750,000 from the Council, supplemented by £250,000 from the Integration Joint Board, to create a £1 million investment in Inverclyde's communities to mitigate poverty, reduce inequalities and deprivation, with a particular focus on engaging and empowering those living in the localities that fall within the most deprived in Scotland, according to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020.

Decided: that consideration of the matter be deferred to a future meeting of the Committee or the Policy & Resources Executive Sub-Committee, depending on the length of the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) crisis.

14 East Blackhall Street, Greenock – Remit from Environment & Regeneration Committee

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources requesting the Committee to consider a remit from the Environment & Regeneration Committee of 5 March 2020 in relation to the lease of premises at 14 East Blackhall Street, Greenock to Inverclyde Shed.

Decided: that approval be given to the lease of the premises at 14 East Blackhall Street, Greenock to Inverclyde Shed at less than best value, all as detailed in the excerpt of the report to the Environment & Regeneration Committee of 5 March 2020 appended to the report.

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COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

There were submitted:

- (a) a report by the Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources providing an update on the actions taken to mitigate the risks around the COVID-19 outbreak together with appendix detailing actions, as at 23 March 2020, taken and in course to ensure that essential services can continue to be delivered to the public and that the core business of the Council is maintained;
- (b) a report by the Chief Financial Officer (1) highlighting the current financial pressures and supports relating to COVID-19 and (2) seeking delegated powers where required to release funding;
- (c) a report by the Head of Legal & Property Services proposing temporary arrangements for future Committee meetings in the light of current circumstances; and
- (d) a further report by the Head of Legal & Property Services (1) updating the temporary arrangements for tele-conference participation at meetings and (2) seeking approval for temporary decision-making arrangements in order to reduce face-to-face meetings during the COVID-19 emergency.

The Head of Environmental & Public Protection provided an update on the position since 23 March 2020.

Decided:

- (1) that the actions taken to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 outbreak in Inverclyde be noted and approved;
- (2) that the main financial issues identified in relation to the COVID-19 outbreak and the very significant support packages announced by both the UK and Scottish Governments be noted;
- (3) that the detail of the Scottish Government support package detailed in Appendix 1 to the report by the Chief Financial Officer be noted and that the distribution of funding/support as soon as practicable be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer and the Corporate Management Team;
- (4) that the other financial pressures identified by the Corporate Management Team be noted and that it be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer and the Corporate Management Team to take the required action to support partners, businesses and the community;
- (5) that it be agreed that any unbudgeted costs associated with COVID-19 not met from Government funding packages be met initially from the £3.8m Contingency Reserve and that it be noted that updates will be provided to each meeting of the Committee;
- (6) that Standing Orders and the Scheme of Administration be suspended for the duration of the COVID-19 emergency, that attendance at all of the Council's Committees, Sub-Committees and Boards by telephone conference, subject to the details set out in the report by the Head of Legal & Property Services on proposed temporary arrangements for Committee meetings, be permitted and that appropriate powers and all functions delegated to Committees be remitted to the Policy & Resources Executive Sub-Committee for the duration of the emergency.