

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 15 AUGUST 2023

Policy & Resources Committee

Tuesday 15 August 2023 at 3pm

Present: Councillors Armstrong, Crowther (for Law), Curley, McCabe, McCluskey, McCormick, McGuire, McVey, Moran, Robertson and Wilson.

Chair: Councillor McCabe presided.

In attendance:

Louise Long	Chief Executive
Alan Puckrin	Chief Financial Officer
Stuart Jamieson	Director Environment & Regeneration
Ruth Binks	Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development
Kate Rocks	Chief Officer, Inverclyde Health & Social Care Partnership
Iain Strachan	Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services
Matt Thomson	Finance Manager (Environment & Technical)
Angela Edmiston	Finance Manager (Corporate Services & Strategic Finance)
Craig Given	Head of Finance, Planning & Resources (Inverclyde HSCP)
Martin Hughes	Solicitor (Information Governance)
Karen MacVey	Members' & Committee Services Team Leader
Colin MacDonald	Senior Committee Officer
Lindsay Carrick	Senior Committee Officer
Allan McDonald	ICT & Customer Service Manager
PJ Coulter	Communications Officer (Media Relations)

This meeting was held at the Municipal Buildings, Greenock with Councillors McCluskey, McCormick and McGuire attending remotely.

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

378 Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest 378

An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor Law, with Councillor Crowther substituting.

No declarations of interest were intimated.

379 Mr Jim MacLeod 379

Prior to the commencement of business, the Convenor referred to the recent death of former Councillor Jim MacLeod, and on behalf of the Committee, extended condolences to Mr MacLeod's wife and family.

380 Revenue Budget Out-Turn 2022/23 380

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer, advising the Committee of (1) the unaudited outturn of Service Committee Budgets for the year ending 31 March

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 15 AUGUST 2023

2023, and (2) any significant variances between revised budgets, Period 11 Budget reports and outturn per the 2022/23 Unaudited Accounts.

Decided:

(1) that the (a) underspend per the unaudited accounts for 2022/23 of £1,580,000, (b) reasons for the material variances from budget, and (c) movement of £1,338,000 from Period 11 to the unaudited Outturn be noted; and

(2) that it be noted that officers will identify where there are any matters which will impact on the 2024/26 Budget development.

381 Capital Programme Out-Turn 2022/23

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There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer advising of the performance in the delivery of the 2022/23 Capital Programme and to highlight issues which could continue to impact upon the delivery of the 2023/26 Capital Programme.

Decided: that the following be noted (a) the 2022/23 Capital Out-Turn position, and (b) that officers have factored in these on-going challenges when estimating the planned 2023/24 spend levels approved by the Council in March 2023.

382 Treasury Management – Annual Report 2022/23

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There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer (1) advising of the operation of the treasury function and its activities for 2022/23 as required under the terms of Treasury Management Practice 6 (TMP6) on 'Reporting Requirements and Management Information Arrangements', and (b) requesting that the report be remitted to the Inverclyde Council for their approval.

Decided:

(1) that the contents of the annual report on Treasury Management for 2022/23 and the ongoing work to seek to ensure the delivery of financial benefits for the Council during the current period of uncertainty and beyond be noted; and

(2) that it be agreed to remit the report to the Inverclyde Council for approval.

383 Approach to the March 2024 Budget

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There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer providing an initial assessment of the Council's short to medium term budget position and to seek decisions on elements of the approach to be taken in determining the March 2024 Budget.

Following discussion, Councillor Wilson moved that the recommendations contained in the report be approved, subject to the amendment of paragraph 2.3, second bullet point, also as detailed at paragraph 4.4 and a consequential amendment in the last line of that paragraph, to read "that the Budget Consultation includes an assumed increase in Council tax income of £3.6million by 2025/26."

As an amendment, Councillor McCabe moved that the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

Following a roll call vote, 1 Member, Councillor Wilson, voted in favour of the motion and 10 Members, Councillors Armstrong, Crowther, Curley, McCluskey, McCabe, McCormick, McGuire, McVey, Moran and Robertson voted in favour of the amendment which was declared carried.

Decided:

(1) that it be noted that the estimated 3 year funding gap faced by the Council, the growing pressures on the Capital Programme and the key messages from the Scottish Government Medium Term Financial Strategy, which confirm that the significant financial challenges facing the Council remain;

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 15 AUGUST 2023

(2) that (a) the contents of the Verity House Agreement be welcomed, and (b) the potential flexibilities this could provide to the Council in developing the March 2024 Budget be noted;

(3) that the proposals as detailed in section 4 of the report be approved, namely, (a) that the Council develops a 2 year Revenue Budget for approval in March 2024 covering the period 2024/26 and a 3 year Capital Programme covering 2024/27, (b) that the Budget Consultation includes an assumed increase in Council Tax income of £5.0million by 2025/26, (c) that £821,000 from the Scottish Government contribution to the 2023/24 pay award be added to the Council's contribution to the IJB in 2023/24, (d) that the Delivering Differently project proformas as detailed in appendices 3 and 4 be approved, and (d) that delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive to progress VER trawls associated with the Delivering Differently programme and the new savings options being developed by the Corporate Management Team on the basis that any proposed releases will require approval by elected members; and

(4) that it be noted that an update report including proposals in respect of savings options and the Budget Consultation will be presented to the Committee in September.

384 Review of Human Resources and Organisational Development

384

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive providing the findings and recommendations of a review into the Human Resources and Organisational Development Team along with information on actions to address the issues identified.

Decided:

- (1) that the findings and recommendations of the external review be noted;
- (2) that the actions as detailed in paragraph 3.21 of the report be noted; and
- (3) that the inclusion of relevant actions in the Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan be agreed.

385 Digital Modernisation Programme Update

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There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services (1) providing an update on the work of the Council's Digital Modernisation Programme, and (2) seeking approval of the proposed upgrade of the Verint customer service system, associated funding from the Digital Modernisation Earmarked Reserve, and the granting of delegated authority to the Chief Executive to approve the use of funds from the Digital Modernisation Earmarked Reserve up to a level of £100,000 for each such use, subject to regular updates on progress and deliverables.

Decided:

- (1) that the update on the work of the Digital Modernisation Programme, and the projects within it, be noted;
- (2) that the upgrade of the Verint customer service system, and the use of £101,450 from the Digital Modernisation Earmarked Reserve for the delivery of this, as detailed in paragraphs 4.4 to 4.7 of the report, be approved;
- (3) that it be noted that work is underway to scope the Council's requirements for an HR & Payroll System(s), and what the options for that might be, in both the short term and longer-term, and once this work has been completed an update will be provided in a future report to the Committee;
- (4) that the consolidation of earmarked reserves, as detailed in paragraph 4.10 of the report, be noted;
- (5) that delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive to approve the use of funds from the Digital Modernisation Earmarked Reserve up to a level of £100,000 for each such use, and subject to the same being reported back to the Committee for noting;

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 15 AUGUST 2023

- (6) that the update on the work of the Council's ICT Team be noted; and
(7) that it be noted that the updates on the progress of the Digital Modernisation Programme will continue to be reported to the Committee at least every second cycle.

386 Records Management Policy**386**

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services seeking the views and approval of the Committee for an updated version of the Council's Records Management Policy.

Decided:

- (1) that the updated Records Management Policy for the Council be approved; and
(2) that the update in respect of the approval of the Council's Records Management Plan be noted.

387 Mr Martin Hughes**387**

The Convenor referred to Mr Martin Hughes, Solicitor (Information Governance), and his forthcoming departure from the Council. The Convenor thanked Mr Hughes for his service to the Committee and wished him well for the future.

388 Update on HSCP Contracts**388**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Officer Inverclyde Health & Social Care Partnership (1) seeking approval to change the Council's standard tender weightings, as noted in Contract Standing Order 16.2, in respect of the forthcoming tender for the provision of the Carers Advice, Information and Support Service in Inverclyde, and (2) providing an update regarding the Electronic Care Monitoring system tender last reported to the Committee in January 2023.

Decided:

- (1) that the use of a 60% Quality and 40% Cost of Service weighting in the forthcoming tender for the Carers Advice, Information and Support Service, in terms of Contract Standing Order 16.3, be approved; and
(2) that the further 12 month Direct Award to the current Electronic Monitoring System provider, whilst a revised tender exercise is progressed, be noted.

389 Co-operative Councils' Innovation Network – Annual Update**389**

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services providing the annual report for 2022/23 on the benefits which have arisen during Inverclyde Council's period of membership of the Co-operative Councils' Innovation Network.

Decided: that (a) the contents of the report be noted, and (2) it be noted that the Committee will receive a further annual report in 2024.