

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 19 SEPTEMBER 2023

Policy & Resources Committee

Tuesday 19 September 2023 at 3pm

Present: Councillors Armstrong, Cassidy (for Moran), Crowther (for Law), Curley, McCabe, McCluskey, McCormick, McGuire, McVey, 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
Morna Rae	Interim Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications
Matt Thomson	Finance Manager (Environment & Technical)
Angela Edmiston	Finance Manager (Corporate Services & Strategic Finance)
Craig Given	Head of Finance, Planning & Resources (Inverclyde HSCP)
Tracy Bunton	Revenues and Benefits Manager
Carol	Information Governance & Complaints Officer
Craig-McDonald	
Karen MacVey	Members' & Committee Services Team Leader
Colin MacDonald	Senior Committee Officer
Lindsay Carrick	Senior Committee Officer
PJ Coulter	Corporate Communications Officer (Media Relations)

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

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

454 Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest 454

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillor Law, with Councillor Crowther substituting and Councillor Moran, with Councillor Cassidy substituting.

No declarations of interest were intimated.

455 2023/24 Policy & Resources Committee and General Fund Revenue Budget Update as at 31 July 2023 455

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer, Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development and Chief Executive advising the Committee of (1) the Policy & Resources Revenue Budget outturn for 2022/23, (2) the 2023/24 projected position as at 31 July 2023, (3) the overall General Fund Revenue Budget projection, and (4) the position of the General Fund Reserve at the same date.

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 19 SEPTEMBER 2023

Decided:

- (1) that (a) the final outturn for the 2022/23 Policy & Resources Budget, and (b) the current projected overspend for 2023/24 of £124,000 as at 31 July 2023, be noted;
- (2) that (a) the projected overspend of £443,000 for the General Fund, and (b) the projected surplus reserves of £3.031million as at 31 July 2023, be noted;
- (3) that it be noted that officers are reviewing the adequacy of both the pay and non-pay inflation allowances and that an update will be provided at the next meeting;
- (4) that (a) the projected 2023/24 surplus of £5,120 for the Common Good Budget, as detailed in appendix 6 of the report be noted, and (b) the actions required to keep the Common Good and General Fund budgets in equilibrium as detailed in appendix 5 of the report be approved; and
- (5) that the virements as detailed in appendix 5 of the report be approved.

456 Policy & Resources Capital Budget and Council 2023/26 Capital Programme 456

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer providing an update on (1) the latest position of the Policy & Resources Capital Programme, and (2) the 2023/26 Capital Programme.

Decided:

- (1) that (a) the 2023/26 Policy & Resources Capital Budget, and (b) the current position of the 2023/26 Capital Programme, be noted;
- (2) that it be noted that there are reports elsewhere on the agenda seeking funding from the 2023/26 Capital Programme contingency in relation to Dunrod Road and Inverkip City Deal.

457 Finance Update 457

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer providing an update on various matters being progressed by the Finance Service relating to (1) debt recovery 2022/23 performance, (2) welfare benefits, (3) Scottish Government consultations, (4) Treasury activity, (5) audit of the Annual Accounts, (6) finance system – future, and (7) accountancy – service survey.

Decided:

- (1) that the various updates provided in relation to the activity within the Finance Service be noted; and
- (2) that it be agreed that no single response from the Council should be submitted to the “Fairer Council Tax” consultation and that individual political groupings may respond if they so wish.

458 Corporate Policy and Performance Update: May-September 2023 458

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development providing an update on Corporate Policy and Performance matters relating to (1) the Inverclyde Council Gaelic Language Plan 2023/28, (2) Corporate awards, (3) New Deal with Local Government – the Verity House Agreement, (4) the Scottish Parliament’s Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee report on community planning, (5) the Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2021/22 (Refresh), and (6) the Programme for Government 2023 – 2024.

Decided:

- (1) that the latest update in relation to Corporate Policy and Performance be noted;

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 19 SEPTEMBER 2023

(2) that it be noted that a more detailed report on the Verity House Agreement will be submitted to the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee on 21 November 2023; and

(3) that it be noted that additional information on the Programme for Government will be presented to the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee on 21 November 2023.

459 2024/26 Budget Update

459

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer (1) providing an update on developments in respect of the 2024/26 Budget, and (2) seeking approval for the first savings/adjustments in addition to the creation of a Savings Workstream programme.

Decided:

(1) that the work being progressed in relation to the 2024/26 Budget be noted;

(2) that (a) the creation of a Savings Workstream programme be supported, (b) the 2024/26 target of £2.5million for the programme, as detailed in appendix 1 of the report, be approved, and (c) it be noted that progress on delivery will be reported to the Committee on a regular basis;

(3) that the initial savings/adjustments, as detailed in appendix 2 of the report, be approved;

(4) that the latest 2024/26 Revenue Budget funding gap of £9.65million, as detailed in appendix 3 of the report, be noted; and

(5) that it be agreed that the consultation in respect of the 2024/26 Budget takes place in January 2024.

460 Non-Domestic Rates Empty Property Relief Policy - Consultation

460

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer seeking Committee views on the proposed consultation questionnaire, which raises the areas for potential changes to existing policy.

Decided: that (a) the use of the questionnaire, as detailed in appendix 1 of the report, be confirmed, and (b) it be noted that a further report incorporating the proposed Empty Property Relief Policy and financial implications will be brought back to the February 2024 meeting of the Committee.

461 Update – Supporting Employee Recruitment and Retention

461

There was submitted a report by the Interim Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications (1) providing an update on recent activity to support employee recruitment and retention, and (2) seeking approval on a number of related proposals.

Decided:

(1) that the work being progressed to support employee recruitment and retention across the Council be noted;

(2) that the revised Flexible Working Policy, as detailed in appendix 1 of the report, be approved;

(3) that the Positive Conversations Scheme, as detailed in appendix 2 of the report, be approved;

(4) that it be agreed that there is no longer a requirement for performance appraisals to be reported as a KPI; and

(5) that it be remitted to officers to bring a report to a future meeting of the Committee on the outcomes of staff leadership and training initiatives.

462 External Care at Home Service – Change of Cost/Quality Weighting

462

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 19 SEPTEMBER 2023

There was submitted a report by the Chief Officer Inverclyde Health & Social Care Partnership outlining (1) the need to change the cost/quality weightings for external care at home service provision in favour of a qualitative weighting as part of the Care at Home review, and (2) requesting approval to change the tender weightings as per Contract Standing Order 16.3.

Decided: that it be agreed to change the tender weightings for the Care at Home Services Framework Tender to 30% cost and 70% quality of service to ensure the required quality of service can be procured, in terms of Contract Standing Order 16.3.

463 Complaint Handling Annual Report 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023 463

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services providing details of the annual performance of all complaints received and handled by Inverclyde Council, Health and Social Care Partnership, and both arms-length organisations, Inverclyde Leisure and Riverside Inverclyde, for the period from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

Decided:

- (1) that the annual performance of Inverclyde Council's complaint handling procedure be noted; and
- (2) that the publication of the Annual Complaint Handling Report on the Council's website be approved.

464 Organisational Development, Policy & Communications Management Arrangements 464

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development (1) providing an update on the management arrangements within the Organisational Development, Policy & Communications Service, and (2) seeking approval to make changes to the remits of Service Manager posts.

Decided:

- (1) that it be agreed that the post of Service Manager – Communications, Tourism and Health & Safety be deleted;
- (2) that it be agreed that the remit of the Service Manager – Corporate Policy, Performance and Partnerships post be extended to include that of the Service Manager – Communications, Tourism and Health and Safety (with the exception of Health and Safety management responsibility);
- (3) that the creation of an additional Service Manager post, which will have responsibility for Organisational Development, Human Resources Support and Payroll, be agreed; and
- (4) that it be agreed that the remit of the Service Manager – Human Resources and Organisational Development be changed to cover Human Resources Operations and Health & Safety.

465 Inverkip Project Update – Remit from Environment & Regeneration Committee 465

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services to consider a remit from the Environment & Regeneration Committee regarding the City Deal project at Inverkip.

Decided: that the funding request of £0.3million from the 2023/26 Capital Programme contingency allocation be agreed.

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 19 SEPTEMBER 2023

466 Dunrod Road – Closure and Landslip – Remit from Environment & Regeneration Committee**466**

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services to consider a remit from the Environment & Regeneration Committee regarding the closure and landslip at Dunrod Road.

Decided: that the funding request of £1.5million from the 2023/26 Capital Programme contingency be approved.