

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 21 NOVEMBER 2023

Policy & Resources Committee

Tuesday 21 November 2023 at 3pm

Present: Councillors Armstrong, Brennan (for McGuire), Curley, Law, McCabe, McCluskey, McCormick, 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
Iain Strachan	Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services
Morna Rae	Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications
Tony McEwan	Head of Culture, Communities & Educational Resources
Craig Given	Head of Finance, Planning & Resources (Inverclyde HSCP)
Matt Thomson	Finance Manager (Environment & Technical)
Angela Edmiston	Finance Manager (Corporate Services & Strategic Finance)
Jonathan Hinds	Chief Social Work Officer and Head of Children & Families and Criminal Justice Services (Inverclyde HSCP)
Tracy Bunton	Revenues and Benefits Manager
Vicky Pollock	Legal Services Manager (Procurement, Conveyancing & Information Governance)
Carol	Information Governance & Complaints Officer
Craig-McDonald	
Roisin Dillon	Trading Standards and Enforcement Team Leader
Karen MacVey	Members' & Committee Services Team Leader
Colin MacDonald	Senior Committee Officer
Diane Sweeney	Senior Committee Officer
PJ Coulter	Corporate Communications Officer (Media Relations)

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

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

593 Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest

593

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillor McGuire, with Councillor Brennan substituting.

No declarations of interest were intimated, but certain connections were intimated for the purposes of transparency as follows:

Agenda Item 12 (Governance of External Organisations – Annual Update and Review) – Councillors Curley, McCabe, McCluskey and Robertson.

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 21 NOVEMBER 2023

Agenda Item 14 (Update on Inverclyde Anti-Poverty Initiatives) – Councillor Law.

594 2023/24 Policy & Resources Committee and General Fund Revenue Budget Update as at 30 September 2023 594

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 2023/24 Revenue Budget position as at 30 September 2023, (2) the overall General Fund Revenue Budget projection, and (3) the position of the General Fund Reserve at the same date.

Decided:

- (1) that the current projected Committee underspend for 2023/24 of £198,000 as at 30 September 2023 be noted;
- (2) that the projected overspend of £500,000 for the General Fund and the projected surplus reserves of £3.200 million be noted;
- (3) that the projected 2023/24 surplus of £770 for the Common Good Budget, as detailed in appendix 6 of the report be noted;
- (4) that the virements as detailed in appendix 5 of the report be approved; and
- (5) That the creation of the Smoothing Reserve for Non-Domestic Rates Empty Property Relief from April 2023 be approved.

595 Policy & Resources Capital Budget and Council 2023/26 Capital Programme 595

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 current position of 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 officers agreed via COSLA to swap £2.0 million of revenue grant for £2.0 million capital grant to free up revenue resources within the Scottish Government and this report and the Revenue Budget report reflect this action; and
- (3) that it be noted that there is a proposal elsewhere in the agenda to reduce two recurring capital allocations by £74,000 per year from 2024/25 as part of the alignment of projects and resources in the medium term.

596 Finance Update 596

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) Non-Domestic Rates Empty Property Relief, (2) Council Tax Collection, (3) Discretionary Housing Payments, (4) Scottish Welfare Fund Payments, (5) Delivering Differently Annual Update, (6) Insurance Fund position at 30 September 2023, and (7) extension to the Financial Management System contract.

Decided:

- (1) that the various updates provided in relation to the activity within the Finance Service be noted;
- (2) that the temporary amendment to the Discretionary Housing Payments Policy as detailed in appendix 1 of the report be approved;
- (3) that the Committee notes the following, (a) the annual Insurance Fund update, (b) the overall insurance premium increase from October 2023, and (c) the increase in

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 21 NOVEMBER 2023

insurance recharges relating to the creation of a Risk Management resource, both of which will be funded from the non-pay inflation contingency; and

(4) that (a) the annual update on the Delivering Differently programme be noted, and (b) it be noted that reports will be presented to the relevant Committee at the appropriate time.

597 Corporate Policy and Performance Update: September-November 2023 597

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) publication of the first census 2022 outputs, (2) an update on national developments relating to Best Value, (3) National Records of Scotland life expectancy statistics 2020/22, (4) success at national awards, and (5) the results from the Citizens' Panel Summer 2023 survey.

Decided:

(1) that the latest update in relation to Corporate Policy and Performance be noted;
 (2) that it be noted that officer discussions have taken place with National Records of Scotland and representations made regarding local population estimates in relation to the publication of the first 2022 census outputs; and
 (3) that it be noted that an update on Pension Credit uptake will be included in a future Anti-Poverty report.

598 Policy & Resources Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan 2023/26 Performance Report 598

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive providing an update on the progress made in the delivery of the Policy & Resources Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan 2023/26.

Decided: that the progress made in the delivery of the Policy & Resources Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan 2023/26 be noted.

599 Treasury Management – Mid-Year Report 2023/24 599

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer (a) advising of the operation of the treasury function and its activities for the first six months of 2023/24 as required under the terms of Treasury Management Practice 6 on 'Reporting Requirements and Management Information Arrangements', and (b) requesting that the report be remitted to the Full Council for approval.

Decided:

(1) that the contents of the Mid-Year Report on Treasury Management for 2023/24 and the ongoing work to seek to ensure the delivery of financial benefits for the Council during the current uncertainty and beyond, be noted;
 (2) that the early repayment of three Market Loans totalling £29.9 million, and that Officers believe this will generate savings for the Council in the medium to long term, be noted; and
 (3) that the report be remitted to the Full Council for approval.

600 Inverclyde Council Plan 2023/28 – Six Monthly Progress Report 600

There was submitted a report by the Interim Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications (1) presenting the first six monthly progress report on the Council Plan

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 21 NOVEMBER 2023

2023/28 covering the period 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023, and (2) seeking approval for its publication.

Decided:

- (1) that the progress report on the new Council Plan 2023/28 be noted; and
- (2) that publication of the progress report on the Inverclyde Council website be approved.

601 Inverclyde Council Annual Performance Report 2022/23 601

There was submitted a report by the Interim Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications seeking approval for the publication of the Inverclyde Council Annual Performance Report 2022/23, which is the final report to be produced on the Inverclyde Council Corporate Plan 2018/23.

Decided:

- (1) that the progress made in the delivery of the organisational priorities within the Corporate Plan 2018/23 be noted; and
- (2) that the publication of the Corporate Plan Annual Performance Report 2022/23 be approved.

602 Data Protection Officer Annual Report 2023 602

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services providing the Data Protection Officer's Annual Report, which sets out a note of the Council's data protection performance over the past year, together with the Data Protection Officer's assessment of Inverclyde Council's compliance with data protection legislation.

Decided: that the Data Protection Officer's Annual Report 2023, as detailed in appendix 1 of the report, be noted.

603 Updated Policy and Annual Update on the use of surveillance powers – The Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 (RIPSA) 603

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services (1) seeking approval of an updated version of the Council's RIPSA Policy, and (2) providing an overview and update on the use of directed surveillance powers by the Council.

Decided:

- (1) that the contents of the report, including the recent inspection by the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office, be noted;
- (2) that the updated Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 Policy, as detailed in appendix 3 of the report, be approved; and
- (3) that it be noted that a further update, including a review of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 policy, will be provided in a year's time.

604 Governance of External Organisations – Annual Update and Review 604

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer (1) providing the annual report on the Committee's key external partnerships and (2) seeking approval for the list of external organisations subject to the revised External Organisational Governance Process in the next 12 months.

Councillors Curley, McCabe, McCluskey and Robertson declared connections in this item of business. Councillor Curley declared a connection as a member of the Board of

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 21 NOVEMBER 2023

Riverside Inverclyde and the Kilmacollm Community Centre and a Director of Inchgreen Marine Park, Councillor McCabe declared a connection as a Director of Inchgreen Marine Park, Councillor McCluskey declared a connection as a member of the Board of Greenock Arts Guild Ltd. and Councillor Robertson as a member of the Board of Greenock Arts Guild Ltd. and Financial Fitness. They also formed the view that the nature of their connections and of the item of business did not preclude their continued presence in the meeting or their participation in the decision making process and were declaring for transparency.

Decided:

- (1) that the significant improvement in the commissioning and service procurement landscape since the current approach to external organisations was implemented in 2011 be noted;
- (2) that the assessment of adherence to the Governance of External Organisations requirements in the last 12 months be noted;
- (3) that the list of organisations subject to the revised External Organisation Governance process in the next 12 months, the list and process being as detailed in appendices 2 and 3 of the report respectively, be approved;
- (4) that it be noted that organisations covered by relevant Social Care contracts will continue to be monitored with updates being provided on a cyclical basis to the IJB and the Social Work & Social Care Scrutiny Panel and therefore they will no longer form part of this annual report;
- (5) that it be noted that specific reports in respect of the two Council arm's-length external organisations will be presented to the relevant strategic Committee next cycle covering the requirements set out in the Financial Regulations; and
- (6) that it be agreed that a further report be presented to the Council by the Chief Executive following a review of the appropriateness of Councillor nominations to the Boards of organisations which tender for Council contracts.

605 2024/26 Budget Update

605

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer (1) providing an update on several matters in relation to the 2024/26 Revenue Budget and 2024/27 Capital Programme, and (2) seeking a number of decisions from the Committee.

Decided:

- (1) that the latest 2024/26 Budget update, and specifically the impact of the Council Tax Freeze announcement and the date of the Scottish Government Draft 2024/25 Budget announcement on the Council's anticipated decision-making timescales, be noted;
- (2) that the proposed 2024/26 Budget Pressures, as detailed in appendix 2 of the report, including the proposal to provide a one-off sum of £600,000 from the Inflation Smoothing Reserve for the ASN transport pressure whilst the current Delivering Differently review is being progressed, be approved;
- (3) that (a) the proposed reductions to the capital programme, as detailed in appendix 3 of the report, be approved, and (b) the decision to progress with the peatland restoration project whilst grant condition discussions are on-going be noted;
- (4) that the proposed approach in respect of the savings which will be experienced by Inverclyde Leisure due to the recent actuarial review, as detailed in paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3 of the report, be agreed;
- (5) that (a) the savings and adjustments, as detailed in appendix 4 of the report be approved, and (b) the illustrative 2024/26 Revenue Budget funding gap, as detailed in appendix 5 of the report, be noted; and

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 21 NOVEMBER 2023

(6) that it be agreed that the Council Leader write to the First Minister raising concerns regarding the announcement of a Council Tax freeze for 2024/25, which was made at the SNP Conference on 17 October 2023.

606 Update on Inverclyde Anti-Poverty Initiatives

606

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development providing evaluations on the Anti-Poverty Initiatives funded by the Inverclyde Council Anti-Poverty recurring budget to date and make recommendations for next steps.

Councillor Law declared a connection as a Member of the Board of the Inverclyde Community Development Trust. She also formed the view that the nature of her connection and of the item of business did not preclude her continued presence in the meeting of her participation in the decision making process and she was declaring for transparency.

Decided:

- (1) that the contents of this report and the evaluations as detailed in section 4 of the report be noted;
- (2) that (a) the financial information in appendix 1 of the report be noted, and (b) the proposals in section 5 of the report be agreed;
- (3) that the use of delegated powers to support food insecurity in Winter 2023 be noted;
- (4) that the use of emergency powers to make payments to families in receipt of free school meals on days of school industrial action be noted; and
- (5) that it be agreed that a further progress report be submitted to the Committee in six months' time.

607 Update on the Digital Modernisation Programme and Delivery of the ICT and Digital Strategies

607

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services providing an update on the work of the Council's Digital Modernisation Programme.

Decided:

- (1) that the update on the work of the Digital Modernisation Programme, and the projects within it, be noted;
- (2) that the Chief Executive's use of delegated authority to authorise the use of £2,000 from the Digital Modernisation Earmarked Reserve to commission consultancy work from Talentlink, as detailed in paragraph 4.3 of the report, be noted;
- (3) that the use of £105,000 from the Digital Modernisation Earmarked Reserve to appoint a two year ICT Project Support Officer within the ICT Team, to help support delivery and implementation of the approved digital modernisation projects, as detailed in paragraph 4.5 of the report, be approved;
- (4) that the update on the work of the Council's ICT Team be noted; and
- (5) 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.

608 Vehicle Replacement Programme

608

It was noted that this item was withdrawn from the agenda.

609 Tender for the Provision of a Children's Advocacy Service

609

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 21 NOVEMBER 2023

There was submitted a report by the Chief Officer, Inverclyde Health & Social Care Partnership seeking approval to change the tender weightings for the forthcoming tender process for a Children’s Advocacy Service in Inverclyde as noted in Contract Standing Order 16.3.

Decided: that approval be given to the use of an 80% Quality and 20% Cost of Service weighting in the forthcoming tender for the Inverclyde HSCP Children’s Advocacy Service and therefore suspends Contract Standing Order 16.2.

610 Business Continuity Policy 610

There was submitted a report by the Director Environment & Regeneration seeking approval for the Business Continuity Policy in line with the requirement to review the policy every three years so that changes in the legislative and risk landscapes can be considered.

Mr Mark Harris of the Joint Local Authorities Civil Contingencies Service was present at the meeting.

Decided: that the Business Continuity Policy be approved.

611 Revised Risk Management Strategy – Remit from Audit Committee 611

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services requesting consideration of a remit from the Audit Committee relative to a review of the Council’s Risk Management Strategy.

Decided: that the revised Risk Management Strategy, as detailed in appendix 2 of the report, be approved.

612 Use of Powers Delegated to the Chief Executive to vote on Members for the Executive Oversight Committee of the Cooperative Councils Innovation Network 612

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services notifying the Committee of the use of Emergency Powers in September 2023 to enable the Council to cast its vote to elect two new members to the Executive Oversight Committee of the Cooperative Councils Innovation Network.

Decided: that it be noted that the Chief Executive used their powers under the Scheme of Delegation (Officers) to agree that the Council cast its vote to elect two new members to the Executive Oversight Committee of the Cooperative Councils Innovation Network, which vote was to be cast by the Leader of the Council, Cllr McCabe, in terms of the Network’s constitution.

The Convener being of the opinion that the undernoted report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development was relevant, competent and urgent moved its consideration in terms of the relevant Standing Order to allow the Committee to consider the 2023/24 pay offer agreed by COSLA Leaders and associated backdating.

613 Use of Delegated Powers to Implement 2023/24 Pay Increase and Backdating and Agreement for Early Implementation of the Living Wage 613

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development (1) noting the use of emergency powers in November 2023 to enable the Council to implement the 2023/24 pay offer agreed by COSLA Leaders and

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 21 NOVEMBER 2023

associated backdating, and (2) seeking agreement to implement the new Living Wage rate of £12 per hour from November 2023 (the date of its announcement), in advance of the previously agreed timescale of the April following the increase.

Decided:

(1) that it be noted that the Chief Executive used their powers under the Scheme of Delegation (Officers) to agree that delegated authority be granted to the Interim Head of Service for Organisational Development, Policy & Communication in order to immediately implement the pay increase agreed by COSLA Leaders on 3 November 2023 for including in the 6 December 2023 pay to all SJC/Chief Officer employees;

(2) that it be agreed that the new Living Wage rate will be implemented from November 2023; and

(3) that it be agreed that going forward the Committee will consider the implementation of future changes in the Living Wage rate annually.

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 item on the grounds that the business involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs 6 & 8 of Part I of Schedule 7(A) of the Act.

614 Public Space CCTV Contract**614**

There was submitted a report by the Director Environment & Regeneration seeking approval to enter into a contract for a solution for Public Space CCTV which will provide continuity of service while allowing an informed decision to be taken on future provision in the 2024/26 budget process.

Decided: Following consideration, the Committee agreed to the actions recommended all as detailed in the Private Appendix.