

**POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 26 MARCH 2024**

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**Policy & Resources Committee**

**Tuesday 26 March 2024 at 3pm**

**Present:** Councillors Armstrong, Curley, Law, McCabe, McCluskey, McCormick, McGuire, McVey, Moran, Robertson and Wilson.

**Chair:** Councillor McCabe presided.

**In attendance:**

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| Alan Puckrin    | Chief Financial Officer  |
| Stuart Jamieson | Director Environment & Regeneration  |
| Ruth Binks      | Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development                     |
| Vicky Pollock   | Interim Head of Legal & Democratic Services  |
| Morna Rae       | Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications                                |
| Craig Given     | Head of Finance, Planning & Resources (Inverclyde HSCP)                                    |
| Angela Edmiston | Finance Manager (Corporate Services & Strategic Finance)                                   |
| Matt Thomson    | Finance Manager (Environment & Technical)  |
| Gerard Smith    | Capital Assets Principal Accountant  |
| Mary McCabe     | Finance Manager (Education & Communities)  |
| Allan McDonald  | Digital & Customer Service Manager   |
| Hugh Scott      | Service Manager, Community Learning & Development, Community Safety & Resilience and Sport |
| Karen MacVey    | Members' & Committee Services Team Leader  |
| Peter MacDonald | Principal Solicitor  |
| Colin MacDonald | Senior Committee Officer   |
| Diane Sweeney   | Senior Committee Officer   |
| Alison Ramsey   | Corporate Communications Officer (Media Relations)   |

This meeting was held at the Municipal Buildings, Greenock with Councillor Wilson attending remotely.

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

**177 Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest 177**

No apologies or declarations of interest were intimated.

**178 2023/24 Policy & Resources Committee and General Fund Revenue Budget Update as at 31 January 2024 178**

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 31 January 2024, (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 £542,000 as at 31 January 2024 be noted;

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(2) that the projected underspend of £122,000 for the General Fund and the projected surplus reserves of £4.478million as at 31 January 2024 be noted;

(3) that it be noted that the above projection reflects confirmation that the £655,000 funding held back pending assessment of the 2023 Teachers Census will now be paid in full to the Council; and

(4) that the projected 2023/24 surplus of £25,910 for the Common Good Budget set out in appendix 5 of the report, be noted.

**179 Policy & Resources Capital Budget and Council 2023/26 Capital Programme 179**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer providing an update on (1) the latest position of the Policy & Resources Capital Programme, (2) the 2023/26 Capital Programme, and (3) the impact of the 2024/25 Capital Grant settlement confirmed by the Scottish Government on 29 February 2024.

**Decided:** that the current position of the 2023/26 Policy & Resources Capital Budget and the current position of the 2023/26 Capital Programme be noted.

**180 Corporate Policy and Performance Update: February-March 2024 180**

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) Cyber Security and Resilience Annual Report, (2) Gaelic Language Plan: Bòrd na Gàidhlig response to Implementation Report 2022/23, (3) Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2022/23, (4) Self-evaluation to support continuous improvement, and (5) International Women's Day 2024.

**Decided:** that the latest updates in relation to Corporate Policy and Performance be noted.

**181 Policy & Resources Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan 2023/24 Performance Report 181**

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:**

(1) that the progress made in the delivery of the Policy & Resources Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan 2023/26 be noted; and

(2) that it be noted that a refreshed Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan will be brought to the next meeting of the Committee for approval.

**182 2024/26 Revenue Budget Update 182**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer providing an update regarding the latest position of the 2024/26 Revenue Budget and seeking decisions as required. Following discussion, Councillor McCabe moved the recommendations contained in the report.

As an amendment, Councillor Robertson moved that the report be remitted to the Inverclyde Council for consideration.

Following a roll call vote, 4 Members, Councillors Armstrong, Curley, Law and Robertson voted in favour of the amendment and 7 Members, Councillors McCabe, McCluskey, McCormick, McGuire, McVey, Moran and Wilson voted in favour of the motion which was declared carried.

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**Decided:**

- (1) that the developments around the 2024/26 Budget since 29 February 2024 and the contents of the letter dated 16 March 2024 from the Deputy First Minister and subsequent exchange of letters be noted;
- (2) that delegated authority be granted to the Chief Financial Officer to process a one-off credit to relevant 2024/25 Council Tax accounts to offset the financial impact of the 8.2% Council Tax increase once the Council's share of the £62.7million is confirmed and on the basis that this is in line with the share estimated by the Chief Financial Officer and the Scottish Government;
- (3) that the proposal to reverse the 2024/25 Council Tax increase prior to considering the level of Council Tax in 2025/26 be supported in principle, noting that this will require approval from the Full Council no later than February 2025;
- (4) that the revised 2024/26 Budget Proposal as detailed in appendix 3 of the report, including the planned 7.0% increase in Council Tax in 2025/26, be approved; and
- (5) that it be noted that the Scottish Government has given a commitment that, subject to approval by the Inverclyde Council of recommendations (2) and (3) as listed above, from 2025/26 the Council will receive a baselined share of the £210million funding linked by the Scottish Government to freezing the 2024/25 Council Tax.

**183 Capital Strategy 2024-2034 and Treasury Management Strategy Statement & Annual Investment Strategy 2024/25-2027/28 183**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer requesting that the Committee remits to the Inverclyde Council, for approval, the Capital Strategy 2024-34 and the Treasury Management and Annual Investment Strategy 2024/25-2027/28.

**Decided:**

- (1) that (a) the significant financial challenges facing the Council in maintaining the existing asset base be noted, and (b) the Capital Strategy 2024-34, as detailed in appendix 1 of the report, be remitted to the Inverclyde Council for approval; and
- (2) that the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2024/25-2027/28, as detailed in appendix 2 of the report, be remitted to the Inverclyde Council for approval.

**184 People and Organisational Development Strategy 2024 – 2027 184**

There was submitted a report by the Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications (1) advising of the progress made against the 2020-23 People and Organisational Development Strategy and (2) seeking approval of the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the strategy for 2024-27.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the progress made in relation to the People and Organisational Development Strategy 2020-2023 be noted; and
- (2) that the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the People and Organisational Development Strategy for 2024-27 be approved.

**185 Update on the Digital Modernisation Programme and Delivery of the ICT and Digital Strategies 185**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive 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;

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- (2) that the proposed upgrade to Chris21, the use of the Digital Modernisation Earmarked Reserve for project costs including support from another Local Authority and a temporary post to manage and support the project, be approved; and  
 (3) that the update on the work of the Council's ICT Service be noted.

**186 Review of Council Policy Framework**

**186**

There was submitted a report by the Interim Head of Legal & Democratic Services providing a refresh of the Council's policy framework, fulfilling an action from the 2022/23 external audit undertaken by KPMG and reported to the Inverclyde Council on 16 November 2023.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the Council policy hierarchy, as detailed in appendix 1 of the report, be approved;  
 (2) that the Council Policy Template, as detailed in appendix 2 of the report, which will be rolled out across Council service areas by the Corporate Quality Improvement Group, together with guidance and training, be approved;  
 (3) that (a) the list of policies and strategies included in appendix 3 of the report be noted, and (b) it be noted that officers will take forward the review of those policies in accordance with the planned review dates, subject to such adjustment as the relevant Director considers appropriate; and  
 (4) that the content of the report, the actions that officers are intending to take, and the undertaking that progress will be reported back to the Committee every other cycle, be noted.

**187 2024 Inverclyde Community Council Elections**

**187**

There was submitted a report by the Interim Head of Legal & Democratic Services and the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development providing an update on the outcome of the recent Community Council Elections and, following the same, the proposed actions of officers.

Councillor Cassidy was present as a Member with a specific interest in the item as the Community Council Champion and, with the consent of the Convenor, participated in the debate.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the outcome of the 2024 Inverclyde Community Council Elections and the actions officers propose to undertake both in relation to the community councils re-established or newly established in those elections and in relation to those areas in which no community council has been formed, be noted; and  
 (2) that it be noted that as per the undertaking provided to the Special Meeting of the Inverclyde Council on 28 September 2023, as there remain two areas without established community councils, officers will within 12 months of completion of the elections bring a report to a future meeting of the Inverclyde Council on the developments of community council activity, which report may include recommendations for a further review, in whole or in part of the Scheme and/or the community council areas.

**188 Tender for the Provision of Electronic Call Monitoring System: Care at Home Services – Delegated Authority and Change of Weightings**

**188**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Officer, Inverclyde HSCP seeking approval to (1) grant delegated authority to the Interim Head of Legal & Democratic Services to accept a tender, and (2) to change the tender weightings for the forthcoming tender process for

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the provision of an Electronic Call Monitoring System for Care at Home Services as per the Standing Orders for Contracts 20.3 (ii) and 16.3.

**Decided:** that delegated authority be granted to the Interim Head of Legal & Democratic Services to (a) approve the award of Contract for the period 1 July 2024 until 31 March 2028 with options to extend until 31 March 2029 and 31 March 2030, (b) enter into all contractual documentation necessary to complete the award of the Contract, and (c) approve the use of a 60% Quality and 40% Cost of Service weighting in the forthcoming tender for the Inverclyde HSCP Electronic Call Monitoring System for Care at Home Services and therefore suspend Contract Standing Order 16.2.

**189      Water Quality Management Policy and Control of Asbestos Policy      189**

There was submitted a report by the Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications seeking approval of a new Water Quality Management Policy and an updated Control of Asbestos Policy.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the Water Quality Management Policy be approved; and
- (2) that the updates to the Control of Asbestos Policy be approved.

**190      Proposal to Earmark Projected Over Recovery in Planning Income – Remit from Environment & Regeneration Committee      190**

There was submitted a report by the Interim Head of Legal & Democratic Services requesting consideration of a remit from the Environment & Regeneration Committee relative to a proposal to earmark the projected over recovery in Planning income for the Local Development Plan.

**Decided:** that approval be given to the earmarking of £50,000 in over recovery in Planning income for the one off costs associated with the development of the Local Development Plan.