

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 4 JUNE 2024

Policy & Resources Committee

Tuesday 4 June 2024 at 3pm

Present: Councillors Armstrong, 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
Ruth Binks	Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development
Lynsey Brown	Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services
Morna Rae	Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications
Eddie Montgomery	Head of Physical Assets
Tony McEwan	Head of Culture, Communities & Educational Resources
Angela Edmiston	Finance Manager (Corporate Services & Strategic Finance)
Tracy Bunton	Revenues and Benefits Manager
Rhoda Braddick	Corporate Policy, Performance and Communications Manager
Vicky Pollock	Legal Services Manager (Procurement, Conveyancing & Information Governance)
Colin MacDonald	Senior Committee Officer
Lindsay Carrick	Senior Committee Officer

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

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

280 Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest 280

An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor Law.

No declarations of interest were intimated.

281 2023/24 Policy & Resources Committee and General Fund Revenue Budget Update 281

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 Policy & Resources Committee Revenue Budget projected position, (2) the overall General Fund Revenue Budget projection, and (3) the position of the General Fund Reserves.

Decided:

(1) that the current projected Committee underspend for 2023/24 of £570,000 be noted;

(2) that the projected overspend of £601,000 for the General Fund and the projected balance of reserves of £4.364million be noted;

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(3) that the projected surplus of £17,110 for the Common Good Budget set out in appendix 5 of the report, be noted;

(4) that (a) the 2024/25 Workstream Savings achieved to date be noted, and (b) it be noted that progress will be reported each Committee cycle; and

(5) that it be noted that the 2023/24 outturn will be reported to Committee after the summer recess.

282 Policy & Resources Capital Budget and Council 2023/28 Capital Programme 282

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 2023/28 Capital Programme, and (3) the impact of the 2024/25 Capital Grant settlement confirmed by the Scottish Government on 29 February 2024.

The Chief Financial Officer advised of a typographical error in the report and, accordingly, at paragraphs 1.4 and 3.9 references to “0.43%” should read “4.3%”.

Decided: that the current position of the 2023/28 Policy & Resources Capital Budget and the current position of the 2023/28 Capital Programme be noted.

283 Finance Services Update 283

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer providing an update on a number of matters relating to (1) Council Tax collection, (2) Council Tax one off credit, (3) Council Tax Second Home Policy, (4) Welfare reform, (5) Scottish Welfare Fund, (6) Loans Fund accounting changes, (5) 2023/24 Annual Accounts Closure, (6) Accounts Commission briefing – Local Government Budgets 2024/25, and (7) Internal Audit Shared Service.

Councillor Wilson joined the meeting during consideration of this item of business.

Decided:

(1) that the updates provided in the report be noted; and

(2) that it be agreed that officers continue to develop options for consideration relating to a wider Internal Audit Shared Service and that an update is provided to the Committee once options have been developed.

284 Corporate Policy and Performance Update: April – June 2024 284

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 publication of national reports relating to population, (2) development relating to Best Value, and (3) Equalities.

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

285 Policy & Resources Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan 2023/26 – Annual Refresh and Performance Summary 2023/24 285

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive presenting the refreshed Policy & Resources Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan, which contains new or revised improvement actions requiring approval.

Decided:

(1) that the progress made in the delivery of the Policy & Resources Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan during 2023/24 be noted; and

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(2) that the refreshed Policy & Resources Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan, which will be implemented from 2024/25 onwards, be approved.

286 Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2022/23 286

There was submitted a report by the Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications providing details of Inverclyde Council's Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) performance in 2022/23.

Decided:

- (1) that the publication of LGBF data for 2022/23 be noted; and
- (2) that Inverclyde Council's LGBF, as detailed in appendix 1 of the report, be noted.

287 Non-Domestic Rates: Mandatory and Discretionary Relief Policy 287

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer seeking approval for the updated Non-Domestic Rates Relief Policy to reflect the fact that new legislation and amendments to existing legislation have been introduced since the Non-Domestic Rates Relief Policy was last reported in February 2018.

Decided:

- (1) that the large number of legislative amendments made to Non-Domestic Rates Relief by the Scottish Government since the policy was last reviewed be noted;
- (2) that the proposed Non-Domestic Rates Mandatory and Discretionary Relief Policy, as detailed at appendix 1 of the report, noting that amendments are recorded on the policy change template as detailed in appendix 2 of the report, be noted; and
- (3) that the proposed Non-Domestic Rates Mandatory and Discretionary Relief Policy be approved.

288 Draft British Sign Language Plan 2024/30 288

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development seeking approval for the Council's draft British Sign Language (BSL) Plan 2024/30, as detailed in appendix 1 of the report.

Decided:

- (1) that it be noted that the Council was required to develop and publish a BSL Plan 2024/30 by 6 May 2024;
- (2) that the draft BSL Plan 2024/30, which has been published on the Council's website, be approved; and
- (3) that it be noted that the Council will contribute, as appropriate, to the Scottish Government's National Progress Report on its BSL Plan 2023/29 at the mid-point of its delivery.

289 Update on Inverclyde Anti-Poverty Initiatives June 2024 289

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development providing an update on progress and developments on the Anti-Poverty Initiatives funded by the Inverclyde Council Anti-Poverty recurring budget to date.

Decided:

- (1) that the content and progress of the projects contained in the report be noted;
- (2) that the financial information as detailed in appendix 1 of the report be noted; and
- (3) that the outcome of the food insecurity funding in Winter 2023/24 be noted.

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(4) that it be remitted to the Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development to submit a report to a future meeting of the Committee on proposals for the unallocated Anti-Poverty Earmarked Reserve.

290 Leadership Development 290

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development providing an update on the outcome of staff leadership training initiatives.

Decided: that the contents of the report be noted.

291 External Condition Surveys – Remit from Environment & Regeneration Committee 291

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services requesting consideration of a remit from the Environment & Regeneration Committee relative to external condition surveys of all Council property assets.

Decided: that the use of £0.200m from the 2023/26 Capital Programme contingency, in order to carry out external condition surveys for Council property assets, be approved.

292 Human Resources and Health and Safety Policy Updates 292

There was submitted a report by the Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications seeking approval for the following updated or amended policies, (1) Whistleblowing (Confidential Reporting), (2) Code of Conduct (Employees), (3) Grievance, Dignity and Respect at Work, (4) Violence Against Women, (5) Equality and Diversity, (6) Sexual Harassment, and (7) Violence, Managing Aggression and Lone Working in the Workplace.

Decided: that the policies, as outlined in appendices 2 to 8 of the report, be approved.

293 SJC - 2024/25 Pay Negotiations Update 293

There was submitted a report by the Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications providing an update on negotiations relating to the 2024/25 pay award for the Scottish Joint Council employees, which covers almost all employees not covered by the teachers' pay negotiations.

Decided: that the following be noted, (a) the 2024/25 pay offer made by Cosla, and (b) that the current offer exceeds the allowance for Scottish Joint Council pay built into the approved 2024/25 Budget by approximately £0.28million.

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 paragraphs 6, 8 & 9 of Part I of Schedule 7(A) of the Act.

294 Award of Contract for Inverclyde Community Hub Project 294

There was submitted a report by the Head of Physical Assets (1) providing an update on the progression of the Inverclyde Community Hub Project, and (2) seeking approval to conclude the award of the contract.

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Decided: that (1) progression of the project be approved, and (2) approval be given to the Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services to execute and deliver the Design and Build Development Agreement for the Inverclyde Community Hub project.