

**POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 4 FEBRUARY 2014**

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**Policy & Resources Committee**

**Tuesday 4 February 2014 at 3pm**

**Present:** Provost Moran, Councillors Clocherty, MacLeod, McCabe, McCormick, McEleny, McIlwee, Loughran, Nelson, Rebecchi and Wilson.

**Chair:** Councillor McCabe presided.

**In attendance:** Chief Executive, Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development, Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources, Corporate Director Inverclyde Community Health & Care Partnership, Head of Finance, Mr M Thomson (Finance Services), Head of Legal & Democratic Services, Business/Democratic Services Manager, Legal Services Manager (Licensing, Litigation & Advice), Head of Organisational Development, HR & Communications, Transitional Head of ICT, Corporate Policy & Partnership Manager and Mr M Bingham (Corporate Communications).

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

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| <b>79</b> | <b>Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest</b>   | <b>79</b> |
|           | No apologies for absence were intimated.   |           |
|           | Declarations of interest were intimated as follows:-<br>Agenda Item 6 (Corporate Performance Report) - Councillor Wilson.<br>Agenda Item 16 (Memorandum and Articles of Association of Riverside Inverclyde) - Councillors Clocherty, McCabe and Wilson.   |           |
| <b>80</b> | <b>Policy &amp; Resources Capital Programme - 2013/14 - 15/16 - Progress</b>   | <b>80</b> |
|           | There was submitted a report by the Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources and the Head of Finance (1) providing an update on the status of the projects forming the Policy & Resources Capital Programme 2013/14 - 15/16 and (2) highlighting the overall financial position.<br><b>Decided:</b> that the Committee note the current position of the 2013/16 Capital Programme and the progress of the specific projects detailed in appendix 1. |           |
| <b>81</b> | <b>Capital Programme 2013/16</b>   | <b>81</b> |
|           | There was submitted a report by the Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources on the latest position of the 2013/16 Capital Programme.<br><b>Decided:</b> that the Committee note the current position of the 2013/16 Capital Programme.   |           |

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- 82 Policy & Resources Committee 2013/14 Revenue Budget - Period 8 to 30 November 2013 82**
- There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive, Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources, Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development and the Head of Finance on the 2013/14 projected outturn for the Policy & Resources Committee as at Period 8 (30 November 2013).
- Decided:**
- (1) that the 2013/14 projected underspend of £194,000 for the Policy & Resources Committee as at Period 8 be noted;
  - (2) that it be agreed that any underspend in the Welfare Reform Budget be added to the existing Welfare Reform Earmarked Reserve;
  - (3) that the projected fund balance of £295,290 for the Common Good Fund be noted; and
  - (4) that the virement of £150,000 detailed in appendix 4 be approved.
- 83 General Fund Revenue Budget 2013/14 as at 30 November 2013 83**
- There was submitted a report by the Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources (1) on the position of the General Fund Revenue Budget as at 30 November 2013 and (2) providing an update on the position of the Reserves and Workstream Savings.
- Decided:**
- (1) that the Committee note the latest position of the 2013/14 Revenue Budget and General Fund Reserves; and
  - (2) that the Committee note the 2013/16 Workstream Savings position.
- 84 Corporate Performance Report 84**
- There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development providing performance information based on the most recent Corporate Directorate Improvement Plan Performance Reports which had been considered by the appropriate Service Committees.
- Councillor Wilson declared a non-financial interest in this item as a Director of Link Housing Association. He also formed the view that the nature of his interest and of the item of business did not preclude his continued presence in the Chamber or his participation in the decision making process.
- Decided:**
- (1) that the performance information contained in the report be noted; and
  - (2) that it be noted that further reports on Corporate Performance will be submitted to future meetings of the Committee.
- 85 Procurement - Update 85**
- There was submitted a report by the Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources on the progress being made with Procurement since the last report in September 2013.

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**Decided:** that the Committee note:

- (1) the progress on the Strategic Procurement Framework;
- (2) the progress made in savings delivery; and
- (3) the progress being made in paying Inverclyde suppliers.

**86 Welfare Reforms - Update**

**86**

There was submitted a report by the Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources (1) on the latest progress and developments relating to the Welfare Reform agenda and (2) seeking approval of action as required.

The Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources advised the Committee of the DWP's announcement on 31 January that for 2014/15, the Council's Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) ceiling would be £526,000, £83,000 more than the £443,000 ceiling in 2013/14 and that a report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee seeking approval of a revised DHP policy.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the Committee note the latest position in respect of the Scottish Welfare Fund, Discretionary Housing Payments and specific projects funded from the Welfare Reforms Earmarked Reserves;
- (2) that the Committee welcome the significant sums of external funding attracted by the Financial Inclusion Partnership to support work in mitigating the impact of Welfare Reform;
- (3) that approval be given to the draft remit of the Welfare and Financial Inclusion Champion as set out in appendix 5 to the report; and
- (4) that it be agreed that updates in respect of child poverty be reported via SOA6 to the Council and Alliance Board.

**87 Modernisation Programme Update - February 2014**

**87**

There was submitted a report by the Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources (1) providing an update on the status of the projects which comprise the Council's ongoing Modernisation Programme and (2) appending the Council's Digital Access Strategy for approval.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the current position of the projects which form the overall Modernisation Programme for the Council be noted; and
- (2) that approval be given to the Digital Access Strategy and that it be noted that updates on delivery of the strategy will be submitted to every second meeting of the Committee.

**88 Update on the SOLACE Improving Local Government Benchmarking Framework**

**88**

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development providing an update on the development of the Local Government Benchmarking Framework which is being progressed by the Improvement Service under the direction of SOLACE.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the Committee note the recent developments in the Local Government Benchmarking Framework; and

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(2) that performance data for 2012/13 be submitted to the Committee once this has been published by the Improvement Service.

**89 Information Governance and Management Framework**

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There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Inverclyde Community Health & Care Partnership providing an update on progress of the work of the Information Governance Steering Group (IGSG) and the Information Governance and Management Framework in preparation for securing consistent good information governance practice and developing the Council's Record Management Plan (RMP).

**Decided:**

- (1) that the Committee endorse the progress report and the continuation and activities of the Information Governance Steering Group;
- (2) that it be agreed that the IGSG Action Plan 2013/15 will take forward the Information Governance and Management Framework submitted in February 2012 and follow up the outstanding Audit Committee actions as at 31 October 2013, it being noted that further reports will be submitted on progress of the IGSG action plan 2013/15 and development of the Records Management Plan;
- (3) that the progress of the Information Management Sub-Groups in carrying forward the IGSG activities be endorsed; and
- (4) that it be agreed that a further progress report be submitted to the Committee in six months' time.

**90 2014/16 Budget**

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There was submitted a report by the Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources (1) updating the Committee in respect of the current position of the 2014/16 Budget, (2) providing information on the 2015/16 Workstream Savings Targets and (3) providing the Committee with the relevant information to enable the 2014/16 Budget to be confirmed at the Council meeting on 20 February 2014.

(Councillor McCormick left the meeting during consideration of this item of business).

**Decided:**

- (1) that the Committee note the current position of the 2014/16 Budget as outlined in appendix 1;
- (2) that the Committee approve the proposals in respect of the expenditure pressures outlined in appendix 2;
- (3) that approval be given to the summary proposals in respect of the use of the Children and Young Persons Revenue and Capital monies in 2014/15 and that it be noted that a more detailed report on the use of the monies will be considered by the Education & Communities Committee in March 2014;
- (4) that the Committee note the 2014/15 Government Grant Settlement and conditions attached by the Scottish Government and that Members will require to consider the implications of not agreeing to the three conditions when setting the 2014/16 Budget on 20 February 2014;
- (5) that the Committee note the projected free reserves of £3.78M detailed in appendix 4 and that decisions on the use of the free reserves will be taken as part of the 2014/16 Budget;
- (6) that it be agreed that £2.0M within the Capital Fund originally allocated towards Early Release costs be re-designated to meet increased Loan Charges costs in 2017/19;

- (7) that the Committee note the latest position in respect of the 2014/16 Capital Programme as shown in appendix 5 and agree that the £500,000 contingency not required for the Community Campus project be returned to the overall Programme;
- (8) that the Committee note the update from the Corporate Management Team in respect of the six Savings Workstreams shown in appendix 6 and that if Members wish to amend the targets, then this should form part of the 2014/16 Revenue Budget proposals on the basis that the total savings identified require to come to £800,000 to ensure the 2015/16 Budget year remains in balance;
- (9) that the initial estimate of the 2016/19 Budget funding shortfall shown in appendix 7 be noted; and
- (10) that it be noted that the level of Council Tax will be confirmed as part of the 2014/16 Budget meeting on 20 February 2014.

## 91 ICT Collaboration Project - Recommendations

91

There was submitted a report by the Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources (1) providing an update on progress with the ICT Collaboration Project and (2) making recommendations, taking into account the views of Services, anticipated benefits, available resources and progress with current local and national work.

(Councillor McCormick returned to the meeting during consideration of this item of business).

### **Decided:**

- (1) that Inverclyde Council withdraw from the ICT Collaboration project on the following grounds:
- (a) lack of clarity as to the overall costs and benefits of the collaboration opportunities at this time when compared with existing and planned work in equivalent areas;
  - (b) duplication of work in some areas where national initiatives are undertaking identical work;
  - (c) the risk of delaying progress with the existing agreed and planned work programmes within ICT and Council Services;
  - (d) continued involvement will divert scarce technical and management resources from the Council's priorities;
  - (e) collaboration and information sharing across a wider selection of organisations is already happening. An example of this relates to Public Sector Network (PSN) compliance work facilitated by SOCITM and this approach should continue;
- (2) that it be agreed to continue the planned work of the Modernisation Programme and the Digital Access, Customer Service and ICT Strategies and it be noted that updates on progress and delivery will be submitted to the Committee no less frequently than every second meeting;
- (3) that the remaining budget within the ICT Collaboration Earmarked Reserve be allocated to the Council's Modernisation Fund; and
- (4) that it be agreed to hold a briefing session for Members on the matters raised in the report.

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- 92 Charging for Services: Are You Getting It Right? 92**
- There was submitted a report by the Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources (1) highlighting the main messages from the Accounts Commission Document "Charging for Services: Are You Getting It Right?" which was published on 31 October 2013 and (2) seeking approval for a proposed action plan.
- Decided:**
- (1) that the Committee note the issues raised in the Accounts Commission document "Charging for Services: Are You Getting It Right?" attached as appendix 1 to the report;
- (2) that approval be given to the action plan attached as appendix 2; and
- (3) that it be noted that a progress report on the implementation of the action plan will be monitored by the Officer Charging Group with an update submitted to the Committee as part of the 2015/16 Budget.
- 93 Draft Gaelic Language Plan 93**
- There was submitted a report by the Head of Inclusive Education, Culture & Corporate Policy appending the draft Gaelic Language Plan for Inverclyde Council for consideration.
- Decided:** that the Committee approve the draft Gaelic Language Plan appended to the report and agree the actions set out in the Plan.
- 94 Memorandum and Articles of Association of Riverside Inverclyde 94**
- There was submitted a report by the Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources (1) advising that the Chief Executive had exercised the powers delegated to him by the Committee at its meeting on 24 September 2013 to amend Riverside Inverclyde's (ri's) Memorandum and Articles of Association and (2) informing the Members of the impact of the changes made.
- Councillors Clocherty, McCabe and Wilson each declared a non-financial interest in this item as Members of the Board of Riverside Inverclyde. They also formed the view that the nature of their interest in the item of business did not preclude their continued presence in the Chamber or their participation in the decision making process.
- Decided:** that the report be noted.
- 95 Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 (RIPSA) 95**
- There was submitted a report by the Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources (1) providing an update on surveillance carried out by Inverclyde Council employees under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 (RIPSA) and (2) advising of the pending inspection visit by the Inspector appointed by the Office of Surveillance Commissioners.
- Decided:**
- (1) that the Committee note the current position and the pending inspection by the Office of Surveillance Commissioners; and
- (2) that it be noted that reports on the application of and compliance with the Act will be submitted on an annual basis to the Corporate Management Team.

**96 Living Wage: Local Government Employees Wage Award****96**

There was submitted a report by the Head of Organisational Development, HR & Communications advising the Committee of the agreed increase in the Living Wage.

**Decided:** that the Committee note that the Living Wage hourly rate is being increased to £7.65 from 1 April 2014.