

FINANCE AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting held in Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 14 February 2012

Chair:

Councillor Eileen Logan

Councillors Present:

David Baillie, Walter Brogan, Graeme Campbell, Gordon Clark, Russell Clearie, Peter Craig, Jim Handibode, Bobby Lawson, Lesley McDonald, Mary McNeill, Anne Maggs, James Malloy (Depute), Archie Manson, Alan Scott, George Sutherland

Councillors' Apologies:

Pam Clearie, Lynn Filshie, Graeme Horne, Edward McAvoy, Jean McKeown, Danny Meikle, Henry Mitchell, Graham Simpson

Attending:

Finance and Corporate Resources

P Manning, Executive Director; K Brown, Head of Information Technology; D Lang, Personnel Officer; P MacRae, Administration Officer; H McNeil, Head of Audit and Improvement; J Taylor, Head of Finance

1 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Information Technology Resources Committee held on 22 November 2011 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

The Committee decided: that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

3 Minutes of Special Meeting

The minutes of the special meeting of the Finance and Information Technology Resources Committee held on 9 February 2012 were tabled for approval as a correct record.

The Committee decided: that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

4 Revenue Budget Monitoring 2011/2012 - Finance and Information Technology Resources

A report dated 9 January 2012 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted comparing actual expenditure at 22 December 2011 against budgetary expenditure for 2011/2012 under the following headings:-

- ◆ Finance Services
- ◆ Information Technology Services
- ◆ Procurement Services
- ◆ Audit and Improvement Services

Details were provided on proposed budget virements to realign budgets.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the underspend on Finance and Information Technology Resources' revenue budget of £0.010 million (0.1%) be noted;
- (2) that the forecast to 31 March 2012 of an underspend of £0.024 million be noted; and
- (3) that the proposed budget virements detailed in appendices B and C to the report be approved.

[Reference: Minutes of 22 November 2011 (Paragraph 3)]

Councillor Clark entered the meeting during consideration of this item

5 Capital Budget Monitoring 2011/2012 - Finance and Information Technology Resources

A report dated 9 January 2012 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted advising on progress of the capital programme 2011/2012 and summarising the expenditure position at 22 December 2011 for the following budget headings:-

- ◆ Finance Services
- ◆ Information Technology Services

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 22 November 2011 (Paragraph 4)]

6 Finance and Information Technology Resources - Workforce Monitoring - October and November 2011

A report dated 17 January 2012 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the following employee information for Finance and Information Technology Resources for October and November 2011:-

- ◆ attendance statistics
- ◆ occupational health statistics
- ◆ accident/incident statistics
- ◆ disciplinary hearings, grievances and Dignity at Work cases
- ◆ analysis of leavers

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 22 November 2011 (Paragraph 5)]

7 Finance and Information Technology Resources – Statutory Performance Indicators 2010/2011

A report dated 12 December 2011 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on Finance and Information Technology Resources' Statutory Performance Indicators for the financial year 2010/2011 and improvement actions identified by the Resource.

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 9 November 2010 (Paragraph 10) and Executive Committee of 14 December 2011 (Paragraph 10)]

8 Information Technology Strategy Update 2011/2012

A report dated 13 January 2012 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the Information Technology (IT) Strategy Update for 2011/2012.

The IT Strategy for the period 2008 to 2011 linked the Council Plan, Connect, to the IT Service Planning Framework. The Strategy for 2011/2012 aimed to consolidate the objectives contained in Connect and add clarity in terms of communicating strategic objectives to the Resource management teams.

The 2011/2012 update of the IT Strategy strengthened the governance arrangements for the delivery of IT services, particularly in relation to:-

- ◆ setting IT priorities
- ◆ determining the role of the ICT Programme Board
- ◆ reporting the progress of the IT programme to the Council's Corporate Management Team

The Strategy also contained a number of updated technology and operational standards.

The Committee decided: that the updated Information Technology Strategy for 2011/2012 and the governance arrangements for the delivery of IT services be approved.

[Reference: Minutes of 30 September 2008 (Paragraph 12)]

9 IT Service Centre Implementation

A report dated 28 December 2011 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the proposed implementation of a revised structure within Information Technology (IT) Services.

In order to streamline processes relating to commoditised IT Services, it was proposed to create an IT Service Centre which would be implemented in 2 phases. Phase 1 involved the IT Service Centre team undertaking all activities currently carried out by the IT Help Centre as well as a defined set of activities currently undertaken by Technology Services. This phase was scheduled for completion in April 2012. Phase 2 involved the development, implementation and rollout of self service tools to employees to allow them to log their own support calls and requests for service. This phase involved the Service Centre team undertaking a defined set of activities currently undertaken by the Business Systems Group and was scheduled for completion in October 2012.

It was proposed that 13 posts from existing teams across IT Services be matched into the IT Service Centre on their existing grade. Of those, 3 posts of Help Centre Operator would be redesignated Trainee Service Centre Engineer and regraded to Grade 2, Level 1 (£9.65 to £10.10 hourly rate) following assessment of competence in accordance with the Council's competence initiative.

The resulting cost of £3,069 would be met from existing budgets. There would be no change to the current management arrangements which would be considered during the review of IT Services scheduled to take place in 2012/2013.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that 13 full time equivalent (FTE) permanent posts from existing teams within IT Services be matched into the IT Service Centre; and
- (2) that 3 FTE permanent posts of Help Centre Operator at Grade 1 Level 4 (£9.10 to £9.51 hourly rate) be regraded to Grade 2, Level 1 (£9.65 to £10.10 hourly rate) and redesignated Trainee Service Centre Engineer in recognition of additional tasks.

10 Revenues Collection as at 31 December 2011 and Approval for Write-Off

A joint report dated 12 January 2012 by the Executive Directors (Finance and Corporate Resources) and (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on:-

- ◆ collection performance at 31 December 2011 on revenues income which comprised Council Tax, non-domestic rates and sundry debts
- ◆ the write-off of irrecoverable non-domestic rates, Council Tax, sundry debts, former council house tenant and lock-up rent arrears, associated charges and factoring charges

Details were given on:-

- ◆ current collection performance
- ◆ collection of arrears

It was proposed that the following debts be written off:-

- ◆ non-domestic rates for the years 2009/2010, 2010/2011 and 2011/2012 totalling £819,740.99 relating to debtors who were in liquidation, had ceased trading or had been sequestered
- ◆ irrecoverable Council Tax accounts from 1993/1994 to 2011/2012 to the value of £572,308.64 relating primarily to sequestration and estates of the deceased
- ◆ sundry debts to a value of £199,897.69. The debts related to liquidations, sequestrations and estates of the deceased
- ◆ former tenant council house and lock-up rent arrears and associated charges totalling £104,076.32
- ◆ factoring charges totalling £3,231.36

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the achievements in revenue collection performance be noted;
- (2) that the write-off of the following irrecoverable debts be approved:-
 - ◆ non-domestic rates for the years 2009/2010, 2010/2011 and 2011/2012 totalling £819,740.99
 - ◆ Council Tax debt from 1993/1994 to 2011/2012 to the value of £572,308.64

- ◆ sundry debts to a value of £199,897.69
- ◆ former tenant council house and lock-up rent arrears and associated charges totalling £104,076.32
- ◆ factoring charges to the value of £3,231.36

[Reference: Minutes of 22 November 2011 (Paragraph 9)]

11 Springbank Farm, Lanark - Proposed Use for Cemetery Provision

A report dated 19 January 2012 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on land proposed for use as a cemetery at Springbank Farm, Lanark.

At its meeting on 29 March 2011, the Committee had agreed, in principle, that part of Springbank Farm, Lanark be used for the provision of new cemetery facilities for Lanark. As the land in question was held in the Lanark Common Good Account, compensation would require to be paid to the Lanark Common Good Fund in the form of a capital receipt.

In addition to the land originally indicated for use as a cemetery, an area to the rear of the original site was also proposed for cemetery use. The extent of the area required was detailed in Appendices 1 and 2 to the report.

The District Valuer had provided an independent valuation of £90,000 for the land at Springbank Farm required for cemetery use. This sum would be paid by the Council to the Lanark Common Good Fund. The additional land identified for cemetery use would not be required immediately and would continue to be let for grazing. The annual rental for this area of land would be paid to Community and Enterprise Resources. In accordance with the Agricultural Holdings (Scotland) Act 2003, the Common Good, as landlord, was obliged to construct fencing around the grazing area. The estimated cost of providing and constructing this fencing was £14,000 which required to be met from the Lanark Common Good Fund.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the valuation of £90,000 for the land at Springbank Farm, Lanark to be used by Community and Enterprise Resources for the purpose of cemetery provision for Lanark be noted;
- (2) that the extent of the land proposed for purchase by Community and Enterprise Resources for the purpose of cemetery provision for Lanark be noted; and
- (3) that the cost of providing and constructing fencing around the grazing area, estimated at £14,000, be met from the Lanark Common Good Fund.

[Reference: Minutes of 29 March 2011 (Paragraph 7) and Minutes of South Lanarkshire Council (Special) of 7 September 2011 (Paragraph 2)]

12 Treasury Management Activity - Third Quarter Review

A report dated 19 January 2012 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the third quarter review of the Treasury Management Activity for 2011/2012.

Details were given on:-

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| ◆ market performance | ◆ management of risk |
| ◆ debt management and borrowing strategy | ◆ next quarter investment plans |
| ◆ investment activity | ◆ Treasury Management indicators |

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 22 November 2011 (Paragraph 13)]

13 Update of Finance and Information Technology Resources' Risk Register and Risk Control Plan

A report dated 19 January 2012 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the Risk Register and Risk Control Actions for Finance and Information Technology Resources.

The Council's Risk Management Strategy required Risk Registers and Risk Control Plans and Actions to be reviewed regularly. The Council's risk appetite required that no more than 20% of risks had a high residual risk score (between 7 and 9) and no more than 40% of risks had a low residual risk score (between 1 and 3). Of the 100 risks identified in the Resource Risk Register, 11% were in the high category, 52% in the medium category and 37% in the low category.

Details of the 11 risks with a high residual risk score were given in Appendix 1 to the report. In view of the controls in place, the assessment of the Resource's approach was adequate for all 11 risks.

3 risk control actions, scheduled for delivery between April and September 2011, had been completed. 25 actions were due for completion by 31 March 2012. Of those, 16 were associated with risks scored in the high category. Details of actions identified to mitigate against those risks were given in Appendix 2 to the report.

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 31 August 2010 (Paragraph 9)]

14 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

Closing Remarks

The Chair thanked the Depute Chair, the members of the Committee, the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) and his staff for their hard work and help over the past 5 years. She wished those members who were standing for re-election the best of luck and those who were standing down all the very best for the future.

Councilor Sutherland also thanked the Executive Director and his staff for their high level of commitment to the work of the Resource.