

FINANCIAL RESOURCES SCRUTINY FORUM

Minutes of meeting held via Confero and in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 21 September 2023

Chair:

Councillor Julia Marrs

Councillors Present:

Councillor Mathew Buchanan, Councillor Colin Dewar, Councillor Elise Frame (*substitute for Councillor Grant Ferguson*), Councillor Ross Gowland, Councillor Gavin Keatt, Councillor Susan Kerr (*substitute for Councillor Monique McAdams*), Councillor Carol Nugent

Councillors' Apologies:

Councillor Grant Ferguson, Councillor Richard Lockhart, Councillor Monique McAdams

Attending:

Finance and Corporate Resources

A Irving, Finance Adviser (Strategy); E-A McGonigle, Administration Officer; K McLeod, Administration Assistant; J Taylor, Head of Finance (Strategy)

1 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Financial Resources Scrutiny Forum held on 24 August 2023 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

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

3a Capital Budget Monitoring 2023/2024 – General Fund Capital Programme

A report dated 4 September 2023 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the position of the General Capital Programme 2023/2024 for the period 1 April to 11 August 2023.

A revised General Fund Capital Programme for 2023/2024 was agreed by the Executive Committee at its meeting on 13 September 2023 which included proposed adjustments to the programme totalling a net decrease of £3.060 million. Those were detailed in Appendix A of the report. The main reason for this reduction was the profiling adjustment, proposed by Community and Enterprise Resources, reflecting a review of the anticipated timing of spend on the Glasgow City Region Deal Project at Stewartfield Way, East Kilbride, Hairmyres Station and Lanark Road, Larkhall.

The programme spend for the General Fund and a full breakdown of expenditure across Services were detailed in appendices B and C to the report. Total funding for the General Fund was summarised in Appendix D to the report.

Budget for the period was £15.161 million and spend to 11 August 2023 was £14.654 million, which was behind programme by £0.507 million. This mainly related to the new Wooddean Early Learning Centre, Bothwell (formerly Clyde Terrace) within Education Resources, which was scheduled to handover in November 2023. Actual funding received at 11 August 2023 was £42.661 million.

The physical progress achieved with the General Fund Capital Programme 2023/2024 at 11 August 2023 was detailed in appendices E to G of the report.

The Forum decided: that the position on the General Fund Capital Programme as at 11 August 2023 be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 24 August 2023 (Paragraph 5) and Minutes of the Executive Committee of 13 September 2023 (Paragraph 4)]

3b Capital Budget Monitoring 2023/2024 – Housing Capital Programme

A report dated 4 September 2023 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the position of the Housing Capital Programme 2023/2024 for the period 1 April to 11 August 2023 (Period 5).

The revised Housing Capital Programme for 2023/2024 totalled £69.596 million. Budget for the period was £16.115 million and spend to 11 August 2023 was £15.580 million, which represented an underspend of £0.535 million, as detailed in Appendix A to the report. Actual funding received at 11 August 2023 was £15.580 million.

The physical progress achieved with the Housing Capital Programme 2023/2024 at 11 August 2023 was detailed in Appendix B to the report.

Any significant increases in contract values for the Housing Capital Programme would be brought to members' attention.

The Forum decided: that the position on the Housing Capital Programme as at 11 August 2023 be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 24 August 2023 (Paragraph 6)]

4 Revenue Budget Monitoring 2023/2024

A report dated 31 August 2023 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the overall financial position of the Council's General Fund Revenue Account and Housing Revenue Account for the period 1 April to 11 August 2023.

At 11 August 2023, the position on the General Fund Revenue Account was breakeven. Details were given on:-

- ◆ budget pressures within Children and Families Services
- ◆ the position within the Adult and Older People Service following the outcome of the job evaluation exercise for Home Carers
- ◆ maintenance of teacher and pupil support numbers

An update was provided on the budget position within the Adult and Older People Service, detailed at sections 4.5 and 4.6 of the report, whereby the outcome of the job evaluation exercise for Home Carers had resulted in recurring costs of approximately £7 million from 2023/2024. Those costs had not been included in the Integration Joint Board (IJB) budget for 2023/2024. At the meeting of the IJB on 19 September 2023, solutions and an overall recovery plan had been presented, however, those were not approved. To manage the spend position this year, work would be required by the IJB Chief Officer and Chief Financial Officer, in conjunction with the Council's officers, to address this. This was likely to be achieved in the short-term through management controls pending further decisions to be taken by the IJB to balance the in-year budget.

The Housing Revenue Account showed a breakeven position at 11 August 2023, as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report.

The Head of Finance (Strategy) responded to a member's question in relation to the position taken by the Scottish Government to hold back funding for the maintenance of teacher numbers.

The Forum decided:

- (1) that the breakeven position on the General Fund Revenue Account at 11 August 2023, detailed in section 4 and Appendix 1 of the report, be noted; and
- (2) that the breakeven position on the Housing Revenue Account at 11 August 2023, detailed in section 5 and Appendix 2 of the report, be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 24 August 2023 (Paragraph 9) and Minutes of the Executive Committee of 13 September 2023 (Paragraph 3)]

5 Revenue Budget Monitoring 2023/2024 – Detailed Resource Analysis

A report dated 31 August 2023 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted comparing actual expenditure against budgeted expenditure for the period 1 April to 11 August 2023 (Period 5).

Appendices A to F to the report provided the following information for each Resource and the Housing Revenue Account:-

- ◆ an Executive Summary showing the top-level position for each of the Services within the Resource and the Housing Revenue Account as at 11 August 2023
- ◆ details of the most significant variances within Resources and the Housing Revenue Account across subjective headings and across Services as at 11 August 2023
- ◆ a line by line trend analysis of the total Resources' expenditure and income across subjective headings as at 11 August 2023

The Forum decided: that the position as at 11 August 2023 (Period 5) be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 24 August 2023 (Paragraph 10)]

6 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.