

LANARKSHIRE VALUATION JOINT BOARD

Minutes of meeting held in Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 4 September 2017

Convener:

Councillor Alex McVey, North Lanarkshire Council

Councillors Present:

North Lanarkshire Council

Bob Burgess, Jim Reddin, Bill Shields, Annette Valentine

South Lanarkshire Council

Poppy Corbett, Peter Craig, Isobel Dorman, Fiona Dryburgh, Geri Gray, Lynsey Hamilton (Depute), Ann Le Blond, Jim Wardhaugh

Councillors' Apologies:

North Lanarkshire Council

David Baird, Tom Castles, Cameron McManus

Attending:

Assessor and Electoral Registration Service

G Bennett, Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer; D Combe, Assistant Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer (South Lanarkshire)

Clerk's Office

P MacRae, Administration Officer, South Lanarkshire Council

Treasurer's Office

P Manning, Treasurer; L O'Hagan, Finance Manager (Strategy), South Lanarkshire Council

Also Attending:

Audit Scotland

D Richardson, Senior Audit Manager

1 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 26 June 2017 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

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

3 Revenue Budget Monitoring 2017/2018 - Lanarkshire Valuation Joint Board

A report dated 25 July 2017 by the Treasurer was submitted comparing the Board's actual expenditure at 21 July 2017 against the budgeted expenditure for 2017/2018 and providing a forecast for the year to 31 March 2018.

The Board decided: that the underspend of £0.005m on the Board's revenue budget, as detailed in Appendix A to the report, and the forecast to 31 March 2018 of a breakeven position be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 26 June 2017 (Paragraph 8)]

4 External Auditor's Annual Audit Report to the Board and Audited Statement of Accounts 2016/2017

The following documents were submitted:-

- ◆ Annual Audit Report 2016/2017 to Members of the Lanarkshire Valuation Joint Board and the Controller of Audit by Audit Scotland, the Board's External Auditor
- ◆ report dated 25 August 2017 by the Treasurer on the audited accounts for the Board for 2016/2017

The Senior Audit Manager, Audit Scotland, spoke on the following aspects of the Annual Audit Report:-

- ◆ key messages
- ◆ 2016/2017 action plan on recommendations for improvement

The Treasurer advised that the Board's audited annual accounts for 2016/2017, which required to be approved for signature, had been audited by the External Auditor and had received a clear audit certificate.

The accounts would be available for inspection:-

- ◆ in Finance Services' offices in Almada Street, Hamilton
- ◆ in the offices of the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer, North Stand, Cadzow Avenue, Hamilton
- ◆ on the Lanarkshire Valuation Joint Board's website

Officers responded to members' questions on various aspects of the External's Auditor's report

The Board decided:

- (1) that the Annual Audit Report to Members and the Controller of Audit be noted;
- (2) that it be noted that the Statement of Accounts for 2016/2017 had received a clear audit certificate from the External Auditor; and
- (3) that the audited Statement of Accounts for 2016/2017 be approved for signature.

[Reference: Minutes of 5 September 2016 (Paragraph 4)]

5 Monitoring of Complaints - 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017

A report dated 17 August 2016 by the Assistant Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer was submitted on complaints received by the Lanarkshire Valuation Joint Board in the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017.

A total of 13 complaints had been received in the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017. Of those, 4 related to council tax, 8 to electoral registration and 1 to non-domestic rating. 2 of the complaints had been classified as upheld, 10 had not been upheld and one was partially upheld.

1 complaint had proceeded to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO), the same number as in 2015/2016. A shortcoming in communication had been noted by the SPSO, however, the complaint had not been upheld.

The Board decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 6 June 2016 (Paragraph 10)]

6 Progress Update

A report dated 22 August 2017 by the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer was submitted on:-

- ◆ an overview of the Service
- ◆ current issues and Service priorities
- ◆ an update on performance
- ◆ issues affecting the future direction of the Joint Board
- ◆ the closure of the Board's offices on 27, 28 and 29 December 2017
- ◆ complaints received and dealt with since the last progress update report

Statistical information, illustrating progress made in terms of key areas of the work undertaken by Lanarkshire Valuation Joint Board, was provided in the appendices to the report.

Officers responded to members' questions on various aspects of the report.

In response to a member's request for further information/training in relation to the work of the Board, officers indicated that, if this was required, they would arrange to meet with members on an individual basis.

The Board decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 26 June 2017 (Paragraph 14)]

7 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.