

FINANCE AND CORPORATE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting held in Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 15 November 2017

Chair:

Councillor Gladys Miller

Councillors Present:

Alex Allison, John Bradley (*substitute for Councillor Horne*), Walter Brogan, Robert Brown, Graeme Campbell, Peter Craig, Maureen Devlin, Mary Donnelly (*substitute for Councillor Anderson*), Isobel Dorman, Joe Fagan, Geri Gray, Eileen Logan, Monique McAdams, Ian McAllan, Catherine McClymont, Jim McGuigan, Lynne Nailon (*substitute for Councillor McGeever*), Graham Scott, Collette Stevenson (Depute), Jim Wardhaugh, Jared Wark

Councillors' Apologies:

John Anderson, Janine Calikes, Eric Holford, Graeme Horne (Depute), Hugh Macdonald, Mark McGeever, John Ross (ex officio)

Attending:

Finance and Corporate Resources

P Manning, Executive Director; S Abbott, Administration Assistant; T Little, Head of Communications and Strategy; G McCann, Head of Administration and Legal Services; S McLeod, Administration Officer; K McVeigh, Head of Personnel Services; P Murphy, Head of Finance (Transactions); J Taylor, Head of Finance (Strategy); B Teaz, Head of Information Technology Services

1 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Corporate Resources Committee held on 6 September 2017 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

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

3 Minutes of Appeals Panel

The minutes of the meetings of the Appeals Panel held on 12 and 25 October 2017 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

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

4 Minutes of Grievance and Disputes Panel

The minutes of the meetings of the Grievance and Disputes Panel held on 31 August and 7 September 2017 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

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

5 Revenue Budget Monitoring 2017/2018 - Finance and Corporate Resources

A report dated 26 September 2017 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted comparing actual expenditure for the period 1 April to 15 September 2017 against budgeted expenditure for 2017/2018 for Finance and Corporate Resources.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the breakeven position on the Finance and Corporate Resources' revenue budget, as detailed in Appendix A to the report, be noted;
- (2) that the forecast to 31 March 2018 of a breakeven position be noted; and
- (3) that the budget virements, as detailed in the appendices to the report, be approved.

[Reference: Minutes of 6 September 2017 (Paragraph 4)]

6 Capital Budget Monitoring 2017/2018 - Finance and Corporate Resources

A report dated 11 October 2017 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted advising of progress on Finance and Corporate Resources' capital programme for 2017/2018 and summarising the expenditure position at 15 September 2017.

The Committee decided: that the Finance and Corporate Resources' capital programme of £1.933 million, and expenditure to date of £0.458 million, be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 6 September 2017 (Paragraph 5)]

7 Finance and Corporate Resources - Workforce Monitoring - July to September 2017

A report dated 11 October 2017 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the following employee information for Finance and Corporate Resources for the period July to September 2017:-

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

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 6 September 2017 (Paragraph 6)]

8 Council-wide Workforce Monitoring - July to September 2017

A report dated 11 October 2017 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the following Council-wide employee information for the period July to September 2017:-

- ◆ attendance statistics
- ◆ occupational health statistics

- ◆ accident/incident statistics
- ◆ disciplinary hearings, grievances, Dignity at Work cases and mediation referrals
- ◆ analysis of leavers and exit interviews
- ◆ recruitment monitoring

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 6 September 2017 (Paragraph 7)]

9 Treasury Management Activity - Second Quarter Review

A report dated 17 October 2017 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the second quarter review of Treasury Management activity for 2017/2018.

Details were given on:-

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|--|----------------------------------|
| ◆ 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 6 September 2017 (Paragraph 8)]

10 Finance and Corporate Resources' Resource Plan - Quarter 2 Progress Report 2017/2018

A report dated 16 October 2017 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the draft Finance and Corporate Resources' Resource Plan for 2017/2018. Details were provided on progress made at the end of quarter 2, covering the period from 1 April to 30 September 2017, in implementing the priority projects identified in the draft Resource Plan.

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of the Executive Committee of 8 November 2017 (Paragraph 16)]

11 Revenue Collection and Approval for Write-Offs

A report dated 16 October 2017 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on:-

- ◆ collection performance for 2017/2018 on revenues income which comprised Council Tax, non-domestic rates, sundry debts and arrears
- ◆ performance against the Business Rates Incentivisation Scheme (BRIS) target
- ◆ the write-off of irrecoverable Council Tax, non-domestic rates, Hamilton and Carluke Town Centre Improvement District (BID) levies, sundry debt, former tenant rent arrears, factoring arrears and housing benefit overpayments

The BRIS was intended to incentivise growth of the local business tax base with a view to increasing non-domestic rates income yields. The Scottish Government set annual targets for growth (buoyancy) and councils that met their target would retain 50% of the additional income generated. The annual buoyancy target for South Lanarkshire Council for 2017/2018 had been set at 1.7% and the Council's performance against the target for the second quarter to the end of September 2017 was +0.03%. This meant that the Council's tax base required to achieve growth of 1.67% by 31 March 2018 to secure additional funding under the Scheme.

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

- ◆ irrecoverable Council Tax accounts from 1993/1994 to 2017/2018 to the value of £629,547.03 relating primarily to prescribed debt, sequestrations and estates of the deceased
- ◆ non-domestic rates from 2015/2016 to 2017/2018 totalling £2,541,310.39 relating to debtors who were in liquidation, had ceased trading or had been sequestrated
- ◆ non-domestic rates over 3 years old from 2014/2015 totalling £2,041,616.88
- ◆ BID levies totalling £17,451.74
- ◆ sundry debts to a value of £538,683.57
- ◆ former tenant rent arrears totalling £187,647.57, factoring arrears totalling £17,809 and housing benefit overpayments totalling £112,716.80

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the Council's performance in the collection of revenues be noted;
- (2) that the Council's performance against the Business Rates Incentivisation Scheme target be noted; and
- (3) that the write-off of the following irrecoverable debts be approved:-
 - ◆ Council Tax debt from 1993/1994 to 2017/2018 to the value of £629,547.03
 - ◆ non-domestic rates from 2015/2016 to 2017/2018 totalling £2,541,310.39
 - ◆ non-domestic rates over 3 years old from 2014/2015 totalling £2,041,616.88
 - ◆ Hamilton and Carlisle Town Centre Business Improvement District levies totalling £17,451.74
 - ◆ sundry debts to a value of £538,683.57
 - ◆ house rent totalling £187,647.57
 - ◆ factoring arrears totalling £17,809
 - ◆ housing benefit overpayments totalling £112,716.80

[Reference: Minutes of 6 September 2017 (Paragraph 10)]

12 Mobile Men's Shed Project

A report dated 3 November 2017 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on:-

- ◆ the mobile Men's Shed project
- ◆ a proposal to add a post of 0.5 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Mobile Men's Shed Project Worker to the establishment for a fixed term of 3 years

The Men's Shed programme had started in Australia and had been very successful in engaging older men in sharing and learning new skills and enabling them to meet new friends. Seniors Together had helped to support older men in South Lanarkshire to develop static Men's Sheds. Feedback from those involved had identified that a mobile Men's Shed, with the support of a development worker, would help to engage older men in activities within areas where no Men's Sheds had been established.

Seniors Together had recently been awarded funding by the Big Lottery Fund, amounting to £117,000 over a 3 year period, which would cover the cost of setting up a mobile Men's Shed and recruiting a part-time development worker. It was proposed that a former mobile library be converted to a Men's Shed and located for approximately 8 weeks at a time in the grounds of leisure and community facilities within South Lanarkshire to enable men who attended to also engage in other programmes which were available at the facilities.

It was hoped that, with the support of the development worker, a minimum of 2 Men's Sheds would be established during the 3 year period of the project. The men that participated in Men's Sheds' activities would form the South Lanarkshire Men's Shed Network which would provide support and assistance to help ensure the long-term sustainability of existing Sheds as well as helping to support the continued growth of new Men's Sheds within the Council area.

In order to support the project, it was proposed to add a fixed term post of 0.5 FTE Mobile Men's Shed Project Worker on Grade 3, Level 2, SCP 55-65 (£13,322 to £15,456) to the Finance and Corporate Resources' establishment for a fixed term of 3 years.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the report be noted; and
- (2) that a post of 0.5 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Mobile Men's Shed Project Worker, as detailed in the report, be added to the Finance and Corporate Resources' establishment for a fixed term of 3 years.

[Reference: Minutes of the Equal Opportunities Forum of 20 September 2017 (Paragraph 5)]

13 2016/2017 Year End Insured Risks Report

A report dated 16 October 2017 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on insurance claims made against the Council during 2016/2017.

The Council had in place insurance policies for employer's and public liability as well as motor and property insurance. Those constituted the main classes of insurance. Insurance was also in place for other miscellaneous risks.

A full review of the Council's insurance programme had been undertaken prior to the renewal of insurance policies on 1 April 2017. The aim of the review had been to ensure the optimum balance between self-insurance and purchased insurance cover and to reduce the total cost of loss to the Council. As a result of the review, the main change to the insurance programme had been that the level of purchased insurance cover had been reduced and the level of self-insured risk had increased. The changes to the programme had been based on a calculated risk which had taken account of historic claims and had demonstrated that the changes were likely to generate savings in the Council's overall cost of risk.

The number and value of claims by Resource in 2016/2017 and a comparison of the number of claims and costs of incidents reported from 2012/2013 to 2015/2016 were detailed in Appendix 1 to the report. Appendix 2 compared the claim numbers and costs for incidents reported in 2015/2016 to incidents reported in 2016/2017. The overall number of claims received to date for incidents occurring during 2016/2017 was 1,001, a decrease of 256 claims on the numbers reported for 2015/2016. The total estimated cost of claims had decreased from £2.374 million for 2015/2016 to £1.662 million for 2016/2017.

A review of all claims that had been reported to the Council during the period from 1 April 2014 to 31 December 2016 had been undertaken by the Council's Risk Management section. The review had identified claim trends and had highlighted new emerging areas of risk.

Details of insurance hotspots were provided in the report and 43 actions to mitigate hotspot areas had been agreed with Resource Risk Sponsors.

There were currently 13 asbestos related disease claims ongoing in respect of employees who had been employed by one of the Council's predecessor authorities and 3 new employers' liability claims had been intimated during 2016/2017 in respect of asbestos exposure. Where insurers were known, the claims had been passed onto them to handle.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the insured risks report for year ended 31 March 2017 and positive claims trends be noted;
- (2) that the outcome of the review of the Council's insurance programme be noted; and
- (3) that the actions agreed to mitigate risks and the outcome of the insurance hotspots review be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 23 November 2016 (Paragraph 14)]

14 2017 Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Asset Management Plan

A report dated 24 October 2017 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the outcomes from the 2017 Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Asset Management Plan.

The Asset Management Plan outlined the priorities and strategies required to develop and support the ICT asset estate which supported the business objectives of the Council whilst ensuring business continuity. The Plan highlighted the 4 corporate themes for ICT priorities and also highlighted the key support work planned for the year ahead to ensure that the Council's ICT assets were fit for purpose.

Details of the key support work were provided in the report and key facts from the Asset Management Plan were provided in Appendix 1 to the report.

The Committee decided: that the 2017 update to the Information and Communication Technology Asset Management Plan be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of the Executive Committee of 7 September 2016 (Paragraph 10)]

15 Early Retirement, Voluntary Severance and Switch 2

A report dated 16 October 2017 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on early retirements, voluntary severances, re-employment of early retirees and the Switch 2 programme for the period 1 April to 30 September 2017.

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 6 September 2017 (Paragraph 23)]

16 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.