

# LANARKSHIRE VALUATION JOINT BOARD

Minutes of meeting held via Microsoft Teams and in Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 4 March 2024

## **Convener:**

Councillor Walter Brogan, South Lanarkshire Council

## **Councillors Present:**

### **North Lanarkshire Council**

Councillor Bob Burgess, Councillor Kenneth Duffy, Councillor Margaret Hughes, Councillor Lesley Jarvie, Councillor Jim Reddin (Depute)

### **South Lanarkshire Council**

Councillor Ross Clark, Councillor Colin Dewar, Councillor Martin Hose, Councillor Cal Johnston-Dempsey (*substitute for Councillor Janine Calikes*), Councillor Gavin Keatt

## **Councillors' Apologies:**

### **North Lanarkshire Council**

Councillor Tom Johnston, Councillor Alex McVey, Councillor Anne Thomas

### **South Lanarkshire Council**

Councillor Janine Calikes, Councillor Lynsey Hamilton, Councillor Mark McGeever

## **Attending:**

### **Assessor and Electoral Registration Service**

R Pacitti, Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer; J Dell, Assistant Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer; C Maxwell, Assistant Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer

### **Clerk's Office**

P Manning, Clerk; S McLeod, Administration Officer; L Wyllie, Administration Assistant, South Lanarkshire Council

### **Treasurer's Office**

L O'Hagan, Finance Manager (Strategy), South Lanarkshire Council

## **Also Attending:**

### **Audit Scotland**

D Meechan, Senior Auditor

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## **1 Declaration of Interests**

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No interests were declared.

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## **2 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

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The minutes of the meeting of the Lanarkshire Valuation Joint Board held on 4 December 2023 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

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

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### **3 Revenue Budget Monitoring and Probable Outturn Position 2023/2024 - Lanarkshire Valuation Joint Board**

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A report dated 13 February 2024 by the Treasurer was submitted comparing the Board's actual expenditure at 26 January 2024 against the budgeted expenditure for 2023/2024 and providing a forecast for the year to 31 March 2024.

As at 26 January 2024, there was an underspend of £0.284 million on the Board's revenue budget. Following the probable outturn exercise, the position was an anticipated transfer to Reserves of £0.120 million compared to a budgeted transfer from Reserves of £0.272 million. This would leave a balance of £1.841 million to be carried into 2024/2025.

The Finance Manager responded to a member's question on the level of Reserves and the implications of the current staffing position.

#### **The Board decided:**

- (1) that it be noted that, following the probable outturn exercise, there would be a transfer to Reserves of £0.120 million for the current financial year;
- (2) that it be noted that, following the transfer to Reserves of £0.120 million, £1.841 million would be carried forward to the Balance Sheet at 31 March 2024; and
- (3) that the underspend on the Board's revenue budget of £0.284 million at 26 January 2024, as detailed in Appendix A to the report, be noted.

*[Reference: Minutes of 4 December 2023 (Paragraph 3)]*

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### **4 Resignation of Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer**

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A report dated 15 February 2024 by the Clerk was submitted advising of the resignation of the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer and to set out arrangements to fill the subsequent vacancy.

The Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer had submitted his resignation and would leave his post on 15 April 2024.

As a result of this resignation, the post of Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer would become vacant. Appropriate arrangements would be put in place to advertise the post and for a Recruitment Panel to be convened for shortleeting and recruitment.

The Clerk, by way of an update, advised members that the advert inviting applications had gone live with a closing date in the middle of March 2024. He added that the intention was to arrange interviews prior to the end of April 2024.

#### **The Board decided:**

- (1) that the resignation of the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer be noted; and
- (2) that the recruitment and selection process for the post of Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer be noted.

*Councillor Clark thanked R Pacitti for his contribution to the work of the Board and wished him the very best for the future*

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## **5 Lanarkshire Valuation Joint Board Annual Audit Plan 2023/2024**

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The Board considered the Lanarkshire Valuation Joint Board Audit Plan for 2023/2024, dated February 2024, submitted by the Council's external auditors, Audit Scotland. The Plan set out the audit work necessary to allow Audit Scotland to provide an independent auditor's report and meet the wider scope requirements of public sector audit.

The Plan was structured around the following areas:-

- ◆ introduction
- ◆ annual accounts
- ◆ wider scope and Best Value
- ◆ reporting arrangements, timetable and audit fee
- ◆ other matters including internal audit, independence and objectivity and audit quality

Details were given on key aspects of those areas.

**The Board decided:** that the Annual Audit Plan be noted.

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## **6 Lanarkshire Valuation Joint Board – Service Plan – 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2025 – Update**

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A report dated 15 February 2024 by the Assistant Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer was submitted providing an update on the Lanarkshire Valuation Joint Board Service Plan for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2025.

The current Service Plan, approved by the Board on 7 March 2022, set out the Board's key business areas over the period from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2025. The Plan, which was attached as an appendix to the report, assisted in ensuring that services were delivered as effectively and efficiently as possible to service users.

The key challenges facing the Board over the period of the Plan were detailed in the report.

A further update report on the progress of the Plan would be submitted to a future meeting of the Board.

The Assistant Assessor and Electoral Registration Officers responded to members' questions in relation to:-

- ◆ engagement with young people and gypsy/traveller people in terms of the extension of the franchise allowing 16 and 17 year olds to vote in Scottish Parliament elections
- ◆ hybrid working arrangements
- ◆ the number of Voter Authority Certificate requests that had been received and the reasons for rejected applications

**The Board decided:** that the report be noted.

*[Reference: Minutes of 6 March 2023 (Paragraph 7)]*

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## **7 Risk Register Update 2024**

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A report dated 12 February 2024 by the Assistant Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer was submitted on the review and update of Lanarkshire Valuation Joint Board's Risk Register for 2024.

The Board's Organisational Risk Register had been fully reviewed by the management team and updated to reflect a reassessment of existing risks on the register and to document new risks which had emerged.

The review had identified 39 risks, which had been categorised as follows:-

- ◆ 3 as high risk
- ◆ 19 as medium risk
- ◆ 17 as low risk

The updated register was attached as Appendix 1 to the report. The Risk Scoring Matrix, which explained the allocation of inherent and residual risk, was attached as Appendix 2 to the report.

An Assistant Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer responded to a member's question regarding the risk to Valuation/Electoral Registration Officer staff of assault.

**The Board decided:** that the report be noted.

*[Reference: Minutes of 6 March 2023 (Paragraph 8)]*

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## **8 Progress Update**

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A report dated 27 February 2024 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

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.

**The Board decided:** that the report be noted.

*[Reference: Minutes of 4 December 2023 (Paragraph 7)]*

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## **9 Urgent Business**

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There were no items of urgent business.

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## **Convener's Closing Remarks – Resignation of the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer**

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The Convener advised that this would be the last meeting of the Board that Renzo Pacitti, Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer, would be attending following his resignation. On behalf of the members of the Board, the Convener thanked Mr Pacitti for his dedicated service and contribution to the work of the Board and wished him the very best for the future. Mr Pacitti responded in suitable terms.