

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting held via Microsoft Teams on 25 August 2021

Chair:

Councillor John Ross (ex officio)

Councillors Present:

Councillor Alex Allison, Councillor John Anderson, Councillor Robert Brown, Councillor Maureen Chalmers (Depute), Councillor Margaret Cooper, Councillor Peter Craig, Councillor Maureen Devlin, Councillor Isobel Dorman, Councillor Joe Fagan, Councillor Allan Falconer, Councillor Lynsey Hamilton, Councillor Mark Horsham, Councillor Ann Le Blond (*substitute for Councillor Richard Nelson*), Councillor Eileen Logan, Councillor Katy Loudon, Councillor Monique McAdams, Councillor Catherine McClymont (*substitute for Councillor Gerry Convery*), Councillor Kenny McCreary, Councillor Gladys Miller, Councillor Lynne Nailon, Councillor David Shearer, Councillor Jim Wardhaugh, Councillor Josh Wilson

Councillors' Apologies:

Councillor John Bradley, Councillor Gerry Convery, Councillor Poppy Corbett, Councillor Joe Lowe, Councillor Jim McGuigan, Councillor Richard Nelson

Attending:

Chief Executive's Service

C Sneddon, Chief Executive

Community and Enterprise Resources

M McGlynn, Executive Director

Education Resources

T McDaid, Executive Director; K Mullarkey, Children's Services Planning Partnership Manager

Finance and Corporate Resources

P Manning, Executive Director; R Leith, Community Participation and Development Manager; T Little, Head of Communications and Strategy; P MacRae, Administration Adviser; G McCann, Head of Administration and Legal Services; K McLeod, Administration Assistant; S Somerville, Administration Manager

Housing and Technical Resources

D Lowe, Executive Director

Health and Social Care/Social Work Resources

I Beattie, Head of Health and Social Care

1 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 23 June 2021 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

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

3 Revenue Budget Monitoring for Period 4 - 1 April 2021 to 16 July 2021

A report dated 3 August 2021 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 2021 to 16 July 2021.

The total COVID-19 funding available in 2021/2022, including £31.490 million carried forward from reserves in 2020/2021, amounted to £57.075 million, details of which were provided in Table 1 of the report. £25.186 million of that sum constituted specific funding for the purposes detailed in the report and it was anticipated that this funding would be spent in the year. The remaining funding of £31.889 million would be used to meet potential costs detailed in Section 5 of the Executive Director's report as well as ongoing costs into 2022/2023. The estimated costs of COVID-19 in 2021/2022, totalling £18.199 million, were detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

The total COVID net expenditure, before funding, at 16 July 2021 amounted to £6.759 million. This was an increase of £5.465 million on the previously reported figure. Those costs were partially offset by specific funding of £4.512 million, leaving costs of £2.247 million to be met from the non-specific funding. A full breakdown of the position to 16 July 2021 was provided in Appendix 3 to the report

At 16 July 2021, the position on the General Fund Revenue Account was an overspend of £0.364 million, as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report. This included a breakeven position on COVID spend and income.

The Housing Revenue Account showed a breakeven position at 16 July 2021, as detailed in Appendix 4 to the report.

Following discussion, the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) undertook to respond to issues raised by members in relation to charges to Social Work and Day Care clients for services which might not have been provided.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the 2021/2022 COVID-19 position, as detailed in section 4.5 and Appendix 1 to the report, be noted;
- (2) that the total net expenditure of £2.247 million, after specific funding in relation to COVID-19, offset by Government Grant included in the Council's position as at 16 July 2021 and detailed in section 4.8 of the report, be noted;
- (3) that the net overspend of £0.364 million on the General Fund Revenue Account at 16 July 2021, after COVID-19 spend and funding, as detailed in section 5.1 and Appendix 2 to the report, be noted; and
- (4) that the breakeven position on the Housing Revenue Account at 16 July 2021, as detailed in section 6 and Appendix 4 to the report, be noted.

4 Capital Programme 2021/2022 Update and Monitoring for Period 4 – 1 April 2021 to 16 July 2021

A report dated 4 August 2021 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on progress of the General Fund Capital Programme and the Housing Capital Programme for the period 1 April 2021 to 16 July 2021.

At its meeting on 23 June 2021, the Committee had approved a General Fund Capital Programme for 2021/2022 totalling £85.066 million. A revised programme of £85.415 million was now anticipated which included adjustments to the programme totalling £0.349 million. Those were detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

At 16 July 2021, £10.547 million had been spent on the General Fund Capital Programme, a slight overspend of £0.138 million, and actual funding received to 16 July 2021 totalled £56.289 million. The programme spend and funding for the General Fund for the period was detailed in Appendices 2 and 3 to the report.

The Housing Capital Programme 2021/2022, approved by the Executive Committee at its meeting on 23 June 2021, totalled £94.360 million. Details of the position of the programme at 16 July 2021 were provided in Appendix 4 to the report. At 16 July 2021, £20.360 million had been spent on the Housing Capital Programme, in line with the respective budgets for the period. Timescales for the new build Housing Programme were currently being considered and a report detailing a revised position would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

COVID-19 had led to shortages in materials, longer lead times and steep price increases and it was anticipated that this would continue to impact the supply chain for the foreseeable future. This would continue to be monitored and further updates would be provided to members.

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

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the Period 4 position, at 16 July 2021, of the General Fund Capital Programme, detailed in Appendices 1 to 3 of the report, and the Housing Capital Programme, detailed at Appendix 4, be noted;
- (2) that the adjustments to the General Fund Programme, listed at Appendix 1, be approved; and
- (3) that the revised programmes be monitored by the Financial Resources Scrutiny Forum.

[Reference: Minutes of 23 June 2021 (Paragraph 3)]

5 Additional Funding from Scottish Government and Other External Sources

A report dated 26 July 2021 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on additional revenue funding, totalling £27.557 million, which had been made available to the Council by the Scottish Government and other external sources.

The funding had been allocated as follows:-

Revenue Funding

Resource	2021/2022 (£m)
Community and Enterprise	15.768
Education	2.223
Finance and Corporate	6.126
Housing and Technical	2.828
Social Work	0.612
Total	27.557

In response to a member's question, the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) undertook to provide further information on the purpose of the Pupil Equity Fund Premium.

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 23 June 2021 (Paragraph 7)]

6 Land and Property Transfers and Disposals

A report dated 28 July 2021 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on proposed actions in respect of land and property transactions.

The recommendations had been made in terms of agreed procedures for dealing with surplus land and property.

The Committee decided

- (1) that the land and property, as detailed in Appendix A to the report, be transferred from the Housing and Technical Resources' account to the Education Resources' account; and
- (2) that the areas of land, as detailed in Appendix B to the report, be declared surplus to Council requirements.

7 Local Child Poverty Action Report 2021

A report dated 28 July 2021 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the Local Child Poverty Action Report 2021, attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 introduced a new requirement for local authorities and each relevant Health Board to prepare Local Child Poverty Action Reports (LCPAR) as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of each reporting year.

The report required to contain any measures taken in the local authority area during the reporting year and planned measures for the year ahead. Those would contribute to the 4 national income based child poverty reduction targets to be achieved by 2030 as follows:-

- ◆ less than 10% of children in relative poverty
- ◆ less than 5% of children in absolute poverty
- ◆ less than 5% of children in combined low income and material deprivation
- ◆ less than 5% of children in persistent poverty

The Poverty and Inequality Commission had been tasked by the Scottish Government to provide feedback on all the local action reports. Feedback on the South Lanarkshire LCPAR had been positive. In addition, the South Lanarkshire LCPAR had been used as an example of good practice for other local authorities and health boards.

Details were given on the:-

- ◆ scope of the LCPAR
- ◆ impact of COVID-19 on the publication of the LCPAR together with the increased challenges faced in reducing child poverty as a result of the pandemic

Actions against the following key improvement areas were presented within the LCPAR:-

- ◆ increased income from benefits and entitlements
- ◆ reducing the costs of living
- ◆ increasing income from employment

Actions for the year would be to:-

- ◆ continue to monitor the impact of the pandemic and any further challenges to mitigate an increase in child poverty

- ◆ work with the Improvement Service to develop activity to address areas for improvement, step change activity and additionality to further mitigate the impact of poverty on families

Following a full discussion, and officers having responded to members' questions on various aspects of the report, officers undertook to submit reports to a future meeting of the Committee:-

- ◆ providing an update on initiatives in connection with the Local Child Poverty Action Plan
- ◆ detailing duties of and services provided by Money Matters and other advice services

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the progress in developing the third Local Child Poverty Action Report be noted;
- (2) that the "step change" approach taken by the Child Poverty Working Group be noted; and
- (3) that the draft Local Child Poverty Report, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, be approved for publication.

8 End of Current Council and Preparations for the New Council

A report dated 1 August 2021 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on arrangements for the end of the current Council term and preparations for the new Council term following the local government elections on 5 May 2022.

Details were given on:-

- ◆ the proposed final cycle of meetings in the current Council term
- ◆ the proposal, in line with normal practice, to delegate authority to the Chief Executive to deal with issues which would normally have been dealt with by Committee in the period between the last meeting of the Council and the first meeting of the new Council
- ◆ arrangements for the review of the Council's procedural documentation in advance of the new Council term and an end of term survey for elected members
- ◆ proposals for a member induction and training programme
- ◆ members' ICT provision

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the final cycle of meetings in the current Council term, as detailed in the appendix to the report, covering the period up to the final meeting of the Council on 2 March 2022, be noted;
- (2) that, in line with normal practice, the Chief Executive be authorised to deal with any issues during the period from 2 March 2022 until the establishment of the new Council, with a report on the issues dealt with being submitted to the first meeting of the new Council for noting; and
- (3) that preparations for the new Council, as detailed in sections 5 to 9 of the report, be noted.

9 Risk and Audit Scrutiny Committee - Appointment of Chair

A report dated 10 August 2021 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on nominations to the vacant position of Chair of the Risk and Audit Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Allison nominated Councillor Holford to the position of Chair of the Risk and Audit Scrutiny Committee and there were no further nominations. Councillor Allison also proposed that Councillor Holford replace Councillor Wark as a member of the Risk and Audit Scrutiny Committee, with Councillor Wark filling the resultant vacancy as a substitute member of the Committee.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that Councillor Holford be appointed Chair of the Risk and Audit Scrutiny Committee; and
- (2) that Councillor Holford replace Councillor Wark as a member of the Risk and Audit Scrutiny Committee, with Councillor Wark filling the resultant vacancy as a substitute member of the Committee.

10 School Clothing Grants

A report dated 22 July 2021 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the action taken, in terms of Standing Order No 36(c), due to the timescales involved, by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources), in consultation with the Chair and an ex officio member, to increase the level of the school clothing grant award to £150 for secondary school pupils, in line with the new minimum level set by the Scottish Government, to maintain the award for primary school pupils at the current level of £130 and to make payment to eligible households prior to the new academic year.

The Committee decided: that the action taken, in terms of Standing Order No 36(c) by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources), in consultation with the Chair and an ex officio member, to increase the level of school clothing grant award for secondary school pupils to £150, to maintain the primary school pupil award at £130 from August 2021 and to make payment to eligible households prior to the new academic year, be noted.

11 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

Chair's Closing Remarks – Delivery of Services

The Chair advised that, at the request of the Group Leaders, a report would be submitted to the next meeting of the full Council on the position with regard to the delivery of Council Services.

At the Chair's invitation, the Chief Executive:-

- ◆ confirmed that the report would be submitted to the meeting of the Council to be held on 22 September 2021
- ◆ advised that Service spreadsheets would be updated and circulated to members
- ◆ highlighted the high number of COVID-19 cases currently being experienced in South Lanarkshire and the impact which this had had on delivery of Council Services
- ◆ asked members for their support in leading an understanding among residents of South Lanarkshire that Services were currently under unprecedented pressure