

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 4 FEBRUARY 2025

Policy & Resources Committee

Tuesday 4 February 2025 at 3pm

Present: Councillors Armstrong, Brennan, Brooks, Curley, Law, McCabe, McCormick, McGuire, McVey, Moran and Robertson.

Chair: Councillor McGuire presided.

In attendance:

Louise Long	Chief Executive
Alan Puckrin	Chief Financial Officer
Stuart Jamieson	Director Environment & Regeneration
Lynsey Brown	Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services
Morna Rae	Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications
Tony McEwan	Head of Culture, Communities & Educational Resources
Craig Given	Head of Finance, Planning & Resources (Inverclyde HSCP)
Matt Thomson	Finance Manager (Environment & Technical)
Tracy Bunton	Revenues and Benefits Manager
Deborah Clark	Corporate Risk Adviser
Peter MacDonald	Principal Solicitor
Colin MacDonald	Senior Committee Officer
Lindsay Carrick	Senior Committee Officer
PJ Coulter	Corporate Communications Officer (Media Relations)

This meeting was held at the Municipal Buildings, Greenock with Councillors Law, McCabe and McCormick attending remotely.

The following paragraphs are submitted for information only, having been dealt with under the powers delegated to the Committee.

48 Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest

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No apologies for absence were intimated.

Councillor Law declared an interest in Agenda Item 7 (Inverclyde Zero Waste Food Pantries)

Certain connections were intimated as follows:

Agenda Item 5 (Corporate Policy and Performance Update) – Councillor Curley.

49 2024/25 Policy & Resources and General Fund Revenue Budget

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There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer, Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development and Chief Executive advising the Committee of (1) the Policy & Resources Revenue Budget 2024/25 proposed position (2) the projected overspend in the overall General Fund Revenue Budget and (3) the impact this will have on the General Fund Reserve.

The Chief Financial Officer provided a verbal update to the report, advising of a further £300,000 Energy Workstream saving in 2025/26, following a review of the utility saving.

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Decided:

- (1) that the current projected overspend in the Committee's Revenue Budget for 2024/25 of £220,000, a reduction of £84,000 since the last report, be noted;
- (2) that the projected overspend of £530,000 for the General Fund and the projected reserve balance of £3,940,000 be noted;
- (3) that the projected 2024/25 surplus of £10,800 for the Common Good Budget as set out in appendix 5 to the report be noted; and
- (4) that the Savings Workstream programme update as detailed in appendix 9 to the report, including the £300,000 increase in the 2025/26 Energy Workstream saving as verbally advised at the meeting, be noted.

50 Policy & Resources Capital Budget and Council 2024/28 Capital Programme 50

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer providing the latest position of the Policy & Resources Capital Programme and the 2024/28 Capital Programme. Councillor Law joined the meeting during consideration of this item of business.

Decided:

- (1) that the current position of the 2024/28 Policy & Resources Capital Budget and the current position of the 2024/28 Capital Programme be noted; and
- (2) that (a) the impact of the draft Settlement from the Scottish Government on the Capital Programme be noted, and (b) it be noted that the Council will approve the 2025/28 Capital Programme at a special meeting of the Council on 6 March 2025.

51 Finance Services Update 51

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer seeking approval for a time limited proposed change to Scottish Welfare Fund Crisis Grant payments policy and updates on the following matters being progressed by the Finance Service (1) Non-Domestic Rate – Empty property Relief, (2) Pensions Winter Heating Payment, (3) e-billing/e-forms, (4) Scottish Welfare Fund – increased funding, and (5) Internal Audit Shared Services.

Decided:

- (1) that the various updates from the Finance Service be noted; and
- (2) that (a) the proposal to pay £100 to eligible crisis grant applicants who require assistance with heating costs be approved (b) it be noted that this policy change will be reviewed later in 2025/26.

52 Corporate Policy & Performance Update: November 2024-February 2025 52

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development providing an update on Corporate Policy and Performance matters relating to (1) The Young Person's Guarantee, (2) Best Value, (3) Participatory Budgeting, (4) PG250, and (5) Public Service Awards 2024.

Councillor Curley declared a connection in this item of business as an organiser of the Port Glasgow 10K marathon race. He also formed the view that the nature of his connection and of the item of business did not preclude his continued presence in the meeting or his participation in the decision making process and he was declaring for transparency.

Decided:

- (1) that the Council formally pledging its support for the 'Young Person's Guarantee' be approved;

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- (2) that the latest update in relation to Best Value, Participatory Budgeting and PG250 be noted;
- (3) that the recent success for the Council at the Public Service Awards 2024 be noted; and
- (4) that it be remitted to officers to bring a report to a future meeting of the Committee providing an update on Participatory Budgeting.

53 Inverclyde Council Plan 2023/28 – Mid-Year Progress Report 2024/25

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There was submitted a report by the Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications (1) presenting a mid-year progress report (2024/25) on the Council Plan 2023/28 and (2) seeking approval for its publication. The progress report covers the period 1 April 2024 – 30 September 2024.

Decided:

- (1) that the Council Plan mid-year progress report 2024/25 be considered and noted; and
- (2) that the publication of the report on the Inverclyde Council website be approved.

54 Inverclyde Zero Waste Food Pantries

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There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development providing an update on the funding positions of the Inverclyde Zero Waste Food Pantries situated at Grieve Road, Greenock and John Wood Street, Port Glasgow and operated by the Inverclyde Community Development Trust. Councillor Law declared an interest as a Member of the Board of the Inverclyde Community Development Trust and left the meeting during consideration of this item.

Decided:

- (1) that the update on Inverclyde's Zero Waste Pantries be noted;
- (2) that further funding of up to £40,000 from the Council's anti-poverty fund to support the Grieve Road Pantry until March 2026 be agreed;
- (3) that it be noted that the Inverclyde Community Development Trust has applied for external funding to support the Port Glasgow pantry beyond April 2025; and
- (4) that officers' intention to undertake work during 2025 to map Inverclyde's current position in relation to alleviating food poverty, and specifically to consider the future Food Pantry provision within Inverclyde, be noted.

Councillor Law rejoined the meeting at this juncture.

55 2025 Greenock West and Cardwell Bay Community Council Interim Election

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There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services seeking approval (1) of a timetable for an interim election for Greenock West and Cardwell Bay Community Council, and (2) to appoint the Chief Executive as Returning Officer for those elections.

Peter MacDonald advised the Committee of a typographical error in the report and, accordingly, at paragraph 3.4 the reference to '7 vacancies for members' should read '8 vacancies for members'.

Councillor Cassidy was present as a Member with a specific interest in the item as the Community Council Champion and, with the consent of the Convenor, participated in the debate.

Decided:

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(1) that it be agreed to hold an interim election for the Greenock West and Cardwell Bay Community Council;

(2) that (a) it be agreed to appoint the Chief Executive to act as Returning Officer for the Interim Election, and (b) delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive to administer the interim election on the Council's behalf; and

(3) that (a) the provisional election timetable as detailed in appendix 1 to the report be approved, and (b) delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive (as Returning Officer) to make such changes to this timetable as are considered appropriate for the effective administration of the election and to take account of the views of Greenock West and Cardwell Bay Community Council.

56 Corporate Risk Register – Remit from Audit Committee

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There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services requesting consideration of a remit from the Audit Committee relative to the Corporate Risk Register.

Decided: that the most significant corporate risks facing the Council and the key actions being taken by the Council in response to them, as detailed in appendix 1 of the report, be noted.

57 OD, Policy and Communications Policy Updates

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There was submitted a report by the Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications seeking approval for the following updates policies (a) Infection Control Policy, (b) Reservists Policy, (c) Moving and Handling Policy, and (d) Discipline and Supporting Performance Policy.

Decided: that the updates policies be approved.