

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 13 AUGUST 2013

Policy & Resources Committee

Tuesday 13 August 2013 at 3 pm

Present: Provost Moran, Councillors Clocherty, Loughran, Campbell-Sturgess (for MacLeod), McCabe, McCormick, Brooks (for McEleny), McIlwee, Nelson and Rebecchi.

Chair: Councillor McCabe presided.

In attendance: Chief Executive, Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources, Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development, Ms V Pollock (for Head of Legal & Democratic Services), Chief Financial Officer, Finance Manager, Ms A Edmiston (Finance Services), Transitional Head of ICT, Mr A McDonald (ICT Services), Head of Property Assets & Facilities Management, Chief Internal Auditor and Corporate Communications Manager.

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

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| 457 | Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest | 457 |
| | Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillor McEleny, with Councillor Brooks substituting, Councillor MacLeod, with Councillor Campbell-Sturgess substituting, and Councillor Wilson.
No declarations of interest were intimated. | |
| 458 | ICT Strategy 2013-16 | 458 |
| | There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources seeking approval of the ICT Strategy covering the period 2013-2016, appended to the report.
The Committee heard a presentation on the Strategy by the Transitional Head of ICT who answered a number of questions from Members.
Decided:
(1) that approval be given to the ICT Strategy 2013-2016; and
(2) that the Committee note the possibility that shared services developments may have an impact on agreed work. | |
| 459 | 2013/16 Capital Programme | 459 |
| | There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer on the latest position of 2013/16 Capital Programme.
Decided: that the Committee note the much reduced slippage levels experienced in 2012/13 and the current position of the 2013/16 Capital Programme. | |
| 460 | 2012/13 Efficiency Performance | 460 |
| | There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer (1) on the level of efficiencies achieved by the Council in 2012/13 and (2) seeking approval of the annual return which requires to be submitted to COSLA by 27 August 2013.
Decided:
(1) that the Committee note the achievement of £2.096m recurring efficiency | |

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savings in 2012/13; and

(2) that approval be given to the submission of the annual return to COSLA by 27 August 2013.

461 Treasury Management - Annual Report 2012/13

461

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer on the operation of the treasury function and its activities for 2012/13 as required under the terms of Treasury Management Practice 6 ("TMP6") on "Reporting Requirements and Management Information Arrangements".

Decided:

(1) that the Committee note the contents of the Annual Report on Treasury Management for 2012/13 and the ongoing work to ensure the delivery of financial benefits for the Council; and

(2) that the Annual Report be remitted to The Inverclyde Council for approval.

462 Revenue Budget Outturn 2012/13

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There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer advising the Committee of the unaudited outturn of Service Committee Budgets for the year ending 31 March 2013 and the position in respect of free General Fund Reserves.

Decided:

(1) that the Service Committee underspend of £2,835,000 as set out in the unaudited accounts for 2012/13 and the information contained in the various appendices be noted; and

(2) that it be noted that decisions on the surplus free reserves are scheduled to be taken at the November meeting of the Committee.

463 Major Capital Investments in Councils - Accounts Commission Report

463

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources (1) highlighting the main messages arising from the Accounts Commission document "Major Capital Investments in Councils" which was published in late March 2013 and (2) advising of the implications of the report's recommendations.

Decided:

(1) that the Committee note the publication of the Accounts Commission report "Major Capital Investments in Councils", its recommendations and the action proposed to implement these where they apply to Inverclyde Council; and

(2) that a further report on progress of the implementation of the action plan appended to the report be submitted for Members' consideration in 12 months' time.

464 Inverclyde Council - Reserves Policy

464

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer seeking approval of the Council's revised Reserves Policy.

Decided:

(1) that the Committee endorse the Reserves Policy appended to the report and agree that the next review of the Policy will be no later than August 2016; and

(2) that it be agreed that the Strategic Housing Reserve be added to the Repairs and Renewals Fund.

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- 465 Non-Domestic Rates - Short Term Part Empty Relief 465**
- There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer seeking approval of the Short Term Part Empty Relief (Non Domestic Rates) Policy appended to the report.
- Decided:**
- (1) that approval be given to the draft policy for Short Term Part Empty Relief from Non-Domestic Rates as set out in the appendix to the report; and
 - (2) that it be noted that a comprehensive draft Non-Domestic Rates Relief Policy document will be submitted to the November meeting of the Committee for consideration.
- 466 Methods of Council Tax Payment 466**
- There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer seeking approval for the Council to cease accepting Council Tax payments by Standing Order with effect from financial year 2014/15.
- Decided:** that approval be given to cease accepting Standing Orders as a method of payment for Council Tax with effect from financial year 2014/15.
- 467 Water Direct Pilot 467**
- There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer seeking approval for the Council to act as a pilot in respect of the Water Direct Scheme which the Scottish Government is keen should be progressed.
- Decided:** that agreement be given to Inverclyde Council's participation in the pilot implementation of the Water Direct Scheme.
- 468 Fly a Flag for the Commonwealth - 10 March 2014 468**
- There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development advising of the use of the powers delegated to the Chief Executive to agree to the Council's participation in the "Fly a Flag for the Commonwealth" event to mark Commonwealth Day on 10 March 2014 and to hold this as an annual activity in the Council calendar.
- Noted**
- 469 Draft Information Classification Policy 469**
- There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Inverclyde Community Health & Care Partnership requesting the Committee to approve the draft Information Classification Policy appended to the report.
- Decided:**
- (1) that approval be given to the Information Classification Policy set out in the appendix to the report; and
 - (2) that it be agreed that the Corporate Director Inverclyde Community Health & Care Partnership, through the Information Governance and Management Working Group, submit a further report on the implementation of the Policy to the Committee for approval.

470 Reduction in Discretionary Housing Payment Funding**470**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer advising the Committee of notification received from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) that due to an error in its calculation for Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP), the Council will be receiving reduced funding for DHP from 2014/15.

Decided:

- (1) that the Committee note the error in Discretionary Housing Payment funding advised by the Department for Work and Pensions;
- (2) that it be remitted to the Chief Executive to write to Mr Pete Searle, Strategy Director, Working Age Benefits, at the DWP and Mr David Mundell MP expressing the Council's deep concern at the reduction in DHP funding from 2014/15 and highlighting the potential impact this could have on those affected by the "Bedroom Tax";
- (3) that the Council set aside up to £118,000 from the previously advised surplus reserves to ensure that DHP levels are maintained for the period 2013/16 at the level approved by the Council prior to the DWP error; and
- (4) that it be noted that a further report on this matter will be submitted to the Committee prior to the end of the current financial year.

471 Request for Delegated Authority to Accept Insurance Tender**471**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer seeking approval for delegated authority to be granted to the Head of Legal & Democratic Services to accept the most economically advantageous tender received for Insurance Services on behalf of the Council.

Decided: that delegated authority be granted to the Head of Legal & Democratic Services to accept the most economically advantageous tender received for Insurance Services on behalf of the Council.