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| <b>Report To:</b>       | <b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>   | <b>Date:</b>       | <b>12 August 2014</b> |
| <b>Report By:</b>       | <b>Acting Corporate Director<br/>Environment, Regeneration &amp;<br/>Resources</b>                                | <b>Report No:</b>  | <b>HC/LP/021/14</b>   |
| <b>Contact Officer:</b> | <b>Helena Couperwhite</b>   | <b>Contact No:</b> | <b>01475 712111</b>   |
| <b>Subject:</b>         | <b>Budget Expenditure Requests: (1) Purchase of New Polling Booths and (2) Hire of Buses for Drumhead Service</b> |                    |                       |

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## 1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for two budget expenditure requests, those being (1) the purchase of new voting booths for use in polling stations with effect from September 2014 and (2) the hire of up to 3 buses to transport guests to the Drumhead Service to be held on Sunday 10 August 2014.

## 2.0 SUMMARY

### Polling Booths

- 2.1 Inverclyde Council is responsible for managing elections. The existing wooden voting booths are approaching the end of their useable lives and can no longer be maintained for safe usage.

### Drumhead Service

- 2.2 Inverclyde Council has received an allocation of 82 invitations to attend the Drumhead Service to take place at Edinburgh Castle on Sunday 10 August 2014.

## 3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That approval be given for the purchase of 50 four way aluminium voting booths at an estimated cost of £17,000 to be funded from contingencies; and
- 3.2 That approval be given to hire up to 3 buses to transport guests to the Drumhead Service at an estimated cost of £600, to be funded from the Common Good Fund.

## **4.0 BACKGROUND**

### **Polling Booths**

- 4.1 The existing wooden voting booths are approaching the end of their useable lives and can no longer be maintained for safe usage.
- 4.2 The new voting booths are lightweight and portable. They are designed to provide four compartments for voting and the desk can be adapted to different levels to enable access to all electors, including wheelchair users. These booths are flexible in their design and can be set up with fewer than four compartments if space is limited.
- 4.3 The use of these polling booths will enable the efficient delivery of elections and provide an improved customer experience. The Council obtains additional financial support by way of government grant for the running of elections and referendums, but this purchase of election equipment is outwith the grant and is the Council's responsibility.

### **Drumhead Service**

- 4.4 The Scottish Commemorative Programme has highlighted 8 dates, which will afford the country with the opportunity to reflect on the impact which the Great War had on our country and our people as well as enabling us to recognise Scotland's contribution to the War and its lasting social and civic legacy.
- 4.5 The first event in the programme calendar will be a Drumhead Service, which will take place within Edinburgh Castle on Sunday 10 August 2014. This multi-faith Service will re-enact what would have taken place 100 years ago, familiar to generations of Servicemen and women since. The Service will last for 30 minutes, after which the Tri-Service contingents on Parade will 'March as to War' down the Royal Mile to Holyrood Park.
- 4.6 The congregation in attendance will also have the opportunity to progress down the Royal Mile and those choosing so to do will, upon arrival at Holyrood Park, join members of the public at a Memorial (marked by headstones in the style of Commonwealth War Grave Cemeteries across the world) at which all will be able to leave wreaths or commemorative markers.
- 4.7 Inverclyde Council has received 82 invitations for this event and a wide range of individuals from the Inverclyde Community have been invited to attend the Service. To ease traffic congestion at Edinburgh Castle, transport in the form of hired buses will be available from Clyde Square, Greenock and will leave at 7am and return from Edinburgh at 2.30pm. It is appropriate to fund this from the Common Good Fund.

## **5.0 PROPOSALS**

### **Polling Booths**

- 5.1 It is proposed that the Policy & Resources Committee agree to renew the remaining stock of polling booths, by purchasing 50 four way polling booths at an estimated cost of £17,000.

### **Drumhead Service**

- 5.2 It is proposed that the Policy & Resources Committee agree to the hire of up to 3 buses to transport the Inverclyde guests to and from the event at an estimated cost of £600, to be funded from the Common Good Fund.

## 6.0 IMPLICATIONS

### Finance

- 6.1 This purchase will be a one-off sum with no ongoing maintenance costs for the life of the new booths.

#### Financial Implications:

##### One off Costs

| Cost Centre | Budget Heading      | Budget Years | Proposed Spend this Report £000 | Virement From | Other Comments |
|-------------|---------------------|--------------|---------------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Elections   | Elections Equipment | 2014/15      | £17,000                         | Contingencies |                |
| Common Good | Events Contingency  | 2014/15      | £600                            |               |                |

##### Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

| Cost Centre | Budget Heading | With Effect from | Annual Net Impact £000 | Virement From (If Applicable) | Other Comments |
|-------------|----------------|------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|
| N/A         |                |                  |                        |                               |                |

### Legal

- 6.2 There are no legal issues.

### Human Resources

- 6.3 There are no HR issues.

### Equalities

- 6.4 Each four way voting booth provides a compartment which is accessible to voters who use wheelchairs or those who need to sit whilst marking their ballot paper as one desk within every unit is at a lower level. This provides a greater level of accessibility to people with disabilities than the current wooden voting booths. This removes a barrier to access and will accommodate all electors.

### Repopulation

- 6.5 There are no repopulation issues.

## 7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 None.