

2023 FECSS 24

THE FIFE COUNCIL - FINANCE, ECONOMY AND CORPORATE SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – BLENDED MEETING

Committee Room 2, Fife House, North Street, Glenrothes

26 October, 2023

10.00 am – 1.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Allan Knox (Convener), Alistair Bain, Naz Anis-Miah (substituting for Councillor Lynn Ballantyne-Wardlaw), Auxi Barrera, Ian Cameron, Rod Cavanagh, Eugene Clarke, Colin Davidson, Sean Dillon, Graeme Downie, Robin Lawson, Dave Dempsey (substituting for Councillor James Leslie), Gordon Pryde, Alistair Suttie and Ann Verner.

ATTENDING: Eileen Rowand, Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services; Les Robertson, Head of Revenue and Commercial Services, Revenue and Commercial Services; Pam Ewen, Head of Planning, Economy Planning and Employability Services, Gordon Mole, Head of Business and Employability, Peter Corbett, Lead Officer - Economy and Morag Millar, Programme Manager, Economy Tourism and Town Centre, Economy Planning and Employability Services; Sharon McKenzie, Head Of Human Resources, Graham Arnott, Health & Safety Lead Officer, and Barbara Cooper, Service Manager - HR, Health Safety and Wellbeing; Human Resources Service; Shelagh McLean, Head of Education and Childrens Services; Charlie Anderson, Head of Business Technology Solutions, Bob Urquhart, Security and Compliance Specialist, Business, Technology Solutions and Service Assurance - Security; Donna Grieve, Accountant, and Jackie Johnstone, Accountant, Lindsay Thomson, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Helena Couperwhite, Service Manager - Committee Services and Michelle Hyslop, Committee Officer, Finance and Corporate Services.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors Lynn Ballantyne-Wardlaw and James Leslie.

68. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were submitted in terms of Standing Order No. 22.

69. MINUTE

The committee considered the minute of meeting of the Finance, Economy and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee of 24 August 2023.

Decision

The committee agreed to approve the minute.

70. BAD DEBTS 2022-23

The committee considered a report by the Head of Revenue and Commercial Services and the Head of Housing Services updating members on the irrecoverable bad debts that had been written off during 2022-23 by the Finance and Corporate Services Directorate and Housing Services.

Decision

The committee noted the contents of the report.

71. SMART PLACE APPROACH – CITY OF DUNFERMLINE

The committee considered a report by the Head of Business and Employability Service updating members on the smart place approach within the City of Dunfermline.

Decision

The committee:

- (1) welcomed and the noted presentation;
- (2) noted the contents of the report; and
- (3) agreed that an update report on the smart place approach within the City of Dunfermline would be brought back to committee in 12 months time.

Councillor Suttie joined the meeting during consideration of the above item.

72. ENTERPRISE AND ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE: BUSINESS & EMPLOYABILITY SERVICES AND PLANNING SERVICES PERFORMANCE REPORT

The committee considered a report by the Head of Business and Employability and the Head of Planning presenting the 2022/23 performance scorecard for the Enterprise and Environment Directorate, Business and Employability and Planning Services.

Decision

The Committee:

- (1) noted the arrangements set out in Section 1.0 to fulfil the Council's obligation to comply with Audit Scotland's 2021 SPI Direction; and
- (2) considered the Enterprise and Environment Directorate, Business and Employability and Planning Service's performance information presented in Section 2.0 and detailed in Appendices 1 and 2 of the report.

The meeting adjourned at 11.55am and reconvened at 12.05pm.

Councillors Davidson and Lawson left the meeting at this point.

73. ANNUAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT 2022-23

The committee considered a report by the Head of Human Resources updating members on the annual Health and Safety activity for 2022-2023.

Decision

The committee: -

- (1) noted the performance and activity for the 2022–2023 financial year;
- (2) noted the progress made regarding improving workforce practices and performance in the organisation; and
- (3) endorsed the continued focus on the priorities identified.

Councillor Cameron left the meeting during consideration of the above item.

74. 2023/24 REVENUE MONITORING PROJECTED OUTTURN – PLANNING SERVICE, BUSINESS AND EMPLOYABILITY SERVICE

The committee considered a report by the Chief Executive and the Executive Director - Finance and Corporate Services updating members on the projected outturn financial position for the 2023/24 financial year for the areas in scope of the Finance, Economy and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee.

Decision

The committee noted the current financial performance and activity as detailed in the report.

75. 2023/24 CAPITAL MONITORING PROJECTED OUTTURN – BUSINESS AND EMPLOYABILITY SERVICE

The committee considered a joint report by the Chief Executive and Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) updating members on the Capital Investment Plan and advised on the projected financial position for the 2023/24 financial year for the areas in scope of the Finance, Economy and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee.

Decision

The committee noted the current financial performance and activity as detailed in the report.

76. 2023/24 REVENUE MONITORING PROJECTED OUTTURN – FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) updating members on the projected outturn financial position for 2023/24 for the Finance and Corporate Services Directorate.

Decision

The committee noted the current financial performance and activity as detailed in the report.

77. 2023/24 CAPITAL MONITORING PROJECTED OUTTURN – FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTORATE

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) updating members on the Capital Investment Plan and advising on the projected financial position for the 2023/24 financial year for the Finance and Corporate Services Directorate.

Decision

The committee noted the current financial performance and activity as detailed in the report.

78. FINANCE, ECONOMY & CORPORATE SERVICES FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) outlining a draft workplan for future meetings of this committee.

Decision

The committee:

- (1) noted the current Finance, Economy and Corporate Services Scrutiny Work Plan;
- (2) agreed that a report on the Community Council elections would be added to the forward work plan to be brought to a future meeting of the committee;
- (3) agreed that the minutes of the budget scrutiny working group meeting would be brought back to the next meeting of the committee in January 2024; and
- (4) agreed that a presentation on the Forth Green Freeport would be brought back to the next meeting of the committee in January 2024.

The committee resolved, under Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, to exclude the public and press from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

79. COUNCIL'S PREPAREDNESS TO DEAL WITH ISSUES AROUND RANSOMWARE – PRIVATE REPORT

The committee considered a report by the Head of Business Technology Solutions advising members on the Council's preparedness to deal with issues surrounding ransomware.

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Decision

The committee agreed to defer the item for consideration at its next meeting in January 2024.