

FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

7th January 2021

PRESENT:

Conservative Group

Councillor Watson (Chairman), Angliss (Vice-Chairman) and Councillors, Mrs. Bridgen (substituting for Councillor Pegg), Fitzpatrick, Ford, Mrs. Haines (substituting for Councillor Roberts), MacPherson and Dr Perry (substituting for Mrs. Brown).

Labour Group

Councillors Dr Pearson, Rhind, Richards, Southerd and Taylor.

In Attendance

Councillors Atkin, Dunn, Tilley and Mrs. Wheelton.

FM/100 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs. Brown, Pegg and Roberts.

FM/101 **TO RECEIVE THE OPEN MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETING**

The minutes of the Audit Sub-Committee meeting held on 13th July 2020 were read and approved as a true record.

FM/102 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Committee was informed that no declarations of interest received.

FM/103 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 10**

The Committee was informed no questions from members of the public had been received.

FM/104 **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 11**

The Committee was informed no questions had been received from Members of the Council.

FM/105 **REPORTS OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Committee was informed that no reports of Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been received.

MATTERS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEE

FM/106 **ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT 2019-20**

The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) presented the report to the Committee and gave the context regarding the late submission of the audited accounts and sought approval from the Committee for the Chairman to sign off the accounts.

RESOLVED:

The Council's Annual Statement of Accounts for 2019/20 (as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report) were approved by the Committee and signed by the Chairman of the Committee for publication.

FM/107 **SERVICE BASE BUDGETS 2021-22**

The Head of Finance delivered the Report to the Committee highlighting the recommendations, key points covered in the report and variants compared to previous budgets.

Members raised a queries regarding projected savings in relation to Members' expenses and the collection of debts and sought clarity regarding contributions to Parish Councils. The Head of Finance agreed to share information regarding Members' expenses before the next Committee Meeting and confirmed that due to the economic impact of Covid-19 actions to recover debts were reduced. It was also noted that the Head of Finance would add further detail regarding the contributions for Parish Councils. The Service Director (Corporate Resources) clarified that Parish Councils were asked to demonstrate how funding is spent in accordance with the Council's Corporate Plan.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 The Committee considered the Committee's proposed revenue income and expenditure for 2021/22 as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report and approved that they be included in the consolidated proposals for the General Fund.***
- 1.2 The Committee considered and approved the proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report.***
- 1.3 The Committee considered the level of any increase in contributions to Parish Councils in 2021/22 for Concurrent Functions and agreed that a 2% increase be implemented for 2021/22.***

FM/108 **COUNCIL TAX PREMIUM ON LONG-TERM EMPTY PROPERTIES**

The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) presented the report to the Committee and sought approval for the increase of Council Tax for long term empty properties.

RESOLVED:

The Committee agreed to increase the Council Tax Premium to 300% on properties empty beyond 10 years from 1 April 2021.

FM/109 **DISCRETIONARY BUSINESS RATES RELIEF**

The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) addressed the Committee regarding the key points within the report and highlighted the continued request for Active Nation to demonstrate how the discretionary relief was to be reinvested to benefit local facilities. Members were asked to consider and approve the recommendations within the report.

Councillor Pearson proposed that Active Nation regularly reported to the Housing and Community Services Committee regarding performance at Greenbank Leisure Centre

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 The Committee agreed granting Discretionary Relief for Charitable and Rural organisations for a period of two years to cover the financial years 2021/22 and 2022/23 to those organisations detailed in Appendix 1 of the report.***
- 1.2 The Committee recommended that Active Nation provides Housing and Community Services Committee with a regular update regarding overall performance at Greenbank Leisure Centre and demonstrate how the 20% discretionary relief will be reinvested back into the facilities.***

FM/110 **REFUSE COLLECTION ROUTE OPTIMISATION**

The Head of Operational Services presented the Report to the Committee and sought approval to commence a transformation project to optimise refuse collection routes and highlighted the benefits of route optimisation for the service. Members were informed that all Trade Unions had been made aware of the project and that an outline of the proposals had been shared with the refuse workforce.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 The Committee endorsed the Business Case as per Appendix 1 of the report, which set out the basis for the requirement to***

implement a route optimisation project and purchase the necessary consultancy and software.

1.2 *The Committee approved a contribution of £65,000 from the Growth provision for the implementation.*

1.3 *The Committee approved the additional £7,000 per annum annual licence costs to be offset by reductions in the fuel budget.*

1.4 *The Committee approved procurement through the most appropriate technology framework currently available.*

FM/111 **COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) presented the report to the Committee and confirmed that other reports were to be added and that a Consolidated Budget report and a report concerning the Council Tax Reduction Scheme would be brought to the Committee in February.

RESOLVED:

The Committee considered and approved the updated work programme noting that it be updated for the February and March meetings.

FM/112 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT [ACCESS TO INFORMATION] ACT 1985)**

RESOLVED:-

That, in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the Meeting as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that there would be disclosed exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Act indicated in brackets after each item.

TO RECEIVE THE EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETING

The Committee approved the exempt minutes.

TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 11

The Committee was informed no questions had been received.

COLLECTION RATES, DEBT RECOVERY AND WRITE OFFS

The Committee approved the recommendation in the report.

The meeting terminated at 19:02 hours.

COUNCILLOR P WATSON

CHAIRMAN