

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of HYBRID MEETING of the **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Tuesday 5 December 2023 at 2.00pm.

Present: Councillors BETH WHITESIDE, KENNY BRAES, CHRIS BEATTIE, JULIE BELL, DAVID CHEAPE, SERENA COWDY, BILL DUFF, BRENDA DURNO, DAVID FAIRWEATHER, IAIN GALL, ROSS GREIG, IAN McLAREN, GAVIN NICOL, MARTIN SHEPHERD, LOIS SPEED and DEREK WANN.

Councillor WHITESIDE, Convener, in the Chair.

1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor Brian Boyd with Councillor David Cheape substituting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/STATEMENTS OF TRANSPARENCY

There were no declarations of interest or statements of transparency made.

3. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minute of meeting of this Committee of 24 October 2023 was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

4. CAPITAL MONITORING – GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME – 2023/24

With reference to Article 4 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 24 October 2023, there was submitted Report No 336/23 by the Director of Finance apprising members of the capital expenditure incurred for the period from 1 April to 31 October 2023 and measuring projected capital expenditure for the year against budgeted provision.

The Report indicated that with seven months (58.33 per cent) of the financial year gone the actual spend levels presented in Tables 1 and 2 in the Report were low, at 39.1 per cent on a gross basis and 51.6 per cent on a net basis respectively. Up to 10 per cent of annual capital spend could come through as accruals at the year end. The value of work completed up to 31 March 2024 would be assessed as part of the year end process and expenditure accrued accordingly, hence the reason why spend could increase significantly in the final month of the year. The Report also indicated that work was ongoing on a number of significant projects for which no payment had yet been made by virtue of the phasing of such projects. For information purposes, the 2022/23 actual spend outturn was 74.7 per cent (gross) and 73.3 per cent (net). The projected net expenditure of £25.992 million (reflected in Table 2 in the Report) would be indicatively funded from the sources detailed in Table 3 in the Report.

Following questions, and having heard from the Director of Finance in relation to Storm Babet, Arbroath Places for Everyone project and the urgent works required at Orchardbank Industrial Estate, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the expenditure to date and projected outturn position on the General Fund capital programme as per Tables 1 and 2 in the Report and the accompanying capital monitoring statement (Appendix 1 to the Report);
- (ii) to approve a revision of the 2023/24 budget for the Arbroath Places for Everyone project (Project 65 detailed in Appendix 1 to the Report) from the original budget for 2023/24 of £7,881,000 (gross) to a revised budget of £2,174,000 (gross). The change to the project phasing reflected a revised spend profile from the contractor following approval for the project to go ahead at the Special Council meeting of 19 October 2023, with the proposed revision reflected in Appendix 1 to the Report; and
- (iii) to approve the allocation of £20,000 from the capital contingency budget to allow urgent works to be undertaken at the Orchardbank Industrial Estate, Forfar as described in Section 8 of the Report.

5. REVENUE MONITORING 2023/24 AND RENEWAL & REPAIR FUND POSITION 2023/24

With reference to Article 5 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 24 October 2023, there was submitted Report No 337/23 by the Director of Finance, providing revenue performance information for the Committee to consider.

The Report detailed the latest projected year-end position for each main Council service area, gave a brief explanation of significant variances and provided an update on expenditure funded through the Council's Renewal and Repair Funds. The position within the Report was based upon actual spend and income information as at 31 October 2023.

Following questions and comments, and having heard from the Director of Finance, the Committee agreed: -

- (i) to note the contents of the Report, in particular the comment on the Financial Implications section regarding the projected year end position;
- (ii) to note that officers were reviewing options to try and reduce the scale of the projected year end deficit; and
- (iii) to note the Renewal and Repair fund position as set out in Section 4.18 of the Report.

6. GENERAL FUND REVENUE & CAPITAL BUDGETS 2024/25 – UPDATE ON PLANS, BUDGET PREPARATION AND PROGRESS

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 29 August 2023, there was submitted Report 338/23 by the Director of Finance providing members with a high level update on plans, budget preparation and progress in relation to the 2024/25 General Fund Revenue & Capital Budget preparation process.

Overall, the budget preparation process and timetable were on track to allow the Council to set its budget in late February or early March 2024. However, the task of identifying savings on the scale required to achieve a balanced budget remained a significant concern at this time. A more detailed update on the position would be provided in the Council's Medium Term Budget Strategy due to be reported to Angus Council on 14 December 2023.

Having heard from Councillor Wann in relation to a balanced budget not being achieved, and from the Director of Finance in response, the Committee agreed: -

- (i) to note the progress being made on the 2024/25 Revenue and Capital Budget preparation as detailed in Section 4 of the Report; and
- (ii) to note the updated budget timeline as detailed in Appendix A to the Report.

7. COMMON GOOD REGISTER - BRECHIN

With reference to Article 12 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 24 October 2023, there was submitted Report No 339/23 by the Director of Legal, Governance & Change providing an update on progress with compiling a publicly available Register of Common Good property assets for the former Royal Burgh of Brechin, and seeking approval for the Council to go out to consult on a draft Register of the relevant Brechin Properties in implement of Section 102 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 as amplified by Statutory Guidance subsequently issued by the Scottish Government in July 2018.

The Report also provided an update on the progress made in relation to preparation of lists of Common Good properties held by the other Angus burghs of Forfar, Montrose and Kirriemuir.

The Committee agreed: -

- (i) to note the content of the Consultative draft List of Land and Buildings for the former burgh of Brechin as detailed in Appendix 1 to the Report;
- (ii) that the Consultative draft List be publicly consulted upon and duly published as required by the legislation;

- (iii) to note that following completion of the period for consultation and publicity the Director of Legal, Governance and Change would bring a report back to Committee on the representations received and the responses to them and inviting the Committee to approve for publication the final List of Land and Buildings of the Common Good Register for the former burgh of Brechin; and
- (iv) to note progress with the compilation of, and consultation on, a publicly accessible register of Common Good property assets for the remaining Angus burghs of Forfar, Montrose and Kirriemuir.

8. CHARGING – INTERNAL ANGUS COUNCIL CARE HOMES

With reference to Article 5 of the minute of Special meeting of Angus Council of 2 March 2023, there was submitted Report No 340/23 by the Chief Executive providing an update regarding proposed changes to internal care home fees for services provided by Angus Health and Social Care Partnership through Angus Council owned care homes with effect from April 2024.

The Report indicated that during 2023/24 a consultation exercise took place regarding the potential changes which sought the views of all impacted service users within internal care homes, including respite users who had accessed a service within the last 6 months. Surveys were issued to 44 service users, with a total of eight responses received. Six individuals opted for an incremental increase over two years and two opted for a full increase in April 2024. The majority of the comments received were accepting of the proposed change and it had been made clear that the driver for the change was the legislative requirement.

Following questions, the Committee agreed: -

- (i) to note the background, legislative requirements and the outcome of the consultation exercise; and
- (ii) to approve the proposed internal care home charges for Angus Council owned Care Homes as set out in Section at 5.1 of the Report with effect from April 2024, noting that the rates would be subject to change due to inflation.

9. POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

The Committee agreed, in terms of Standing Order 28(2), that the public and press be excluded during consideration of the following items so as to avoid the disclosure of information which was exempt in terms of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, Paragraphs 1, 8 and 9, and confidential in terms of Section 50A(2) and (3)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

10. ANGUS CRIMINAL JUSTICE SOCIAL WORK SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 2022/2023

There was submitted Report No 341/23 by the Director of Children, Families & Justice presenting the Angus Criminal Justice Social Work Service Annual Report 2022/2023 which provided a detailed overview of the Council's statutory Criminal Justice Social Work service provision during 2022/2023, highlighted volume, trend and performance information across the range of interventions being delivered to young people and adults, together with the Tayside Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements annual report for the same period 2022/2023.

The Committee agreed to approve the recommendations as detailed in the Report.

11. PROCUREMENT AUTHORITY REPORT – INDEPENDENT INTERMEDIATE CARE (SOUTH ANGUS)

There was submitted Report No 342/23 by the Chief Executive seeking approval for an extension to the existing Independent Intermediate Care South Angus contract for a period of one year.

The Committee agreed to approve the recommendations as detailed in the Report.

12. PROCUREMENT AUTHORITY APPROVAL REQUEST – SHARED COST ADDITIONAL VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

There was submitted Report No 343/23 by the Director of HR, OD, Digital Enablement, IT & Business Support seeking approval to make an appointment to provide a fully managed service for Shared Cost AVCs through a directly awarded contract.

The Committee agreed to approve the recommendations as detailed in the Report.

13. DIGITAL REPROGRAPHICS UNIT – PROCUREMENT OF AN OUTSOURCED MAIL SERVICE

There was submitted Joint Report No 344/23 by the Director of HR, OD, Digital Enablement, IT & Business Support and the Director of Legal, Governance & Change seeking procurement authority for an external hybrid mail and print service provider.

The Committee agreed to approve the recommendations as detailed in the Report.