

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

**Committee Room 2, 5th Floor, Fife House, North Street, Glenrothes**

**21 November 2024**

**10.00 am – 12.45 pm**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Allan Knox (Convener), Alistair Bain, Auxil Barrera, Lynn Ballantyne-Wardlaw, Patrick Browne, Ian Cameron, Rod Cavanagh, Colin Davidson, Sean Dillon, Stefan Hoggan, Kathleen Leslie (substitute for Cllr Robin Lawson), James Leslie, Gordon Pryde, Alistair Suttie and Ann Verner.

**ATTENDING:** Eileen Rowand, Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services), Kerry Davie, BMIU Business Change Manager, Business Management Innovation Unit, Les Robertson, Head of Revenue and Commercial Services, Donna Grieve, Accountant and Jackie Johnstone, Accountant, Finance and Corporate Services; Pamela Stevenson, Service Manager - Economic Development, Kirsty Martin, Service Manager, Morag Millar, Service Manager - Place Programmes and Policies and Adam Dunkerley, Opportunities Fife Partnership Manager, Programmes and Policies, Business and Employability Services; Charlie Anderson, Head of Business Technology Solutions; Fiona Allan, Service Manager, HR Workforce Strategy and Organisational Development and Kirsty McElroy, Service Manager, Human Resource Services; Heather Honeyman, Assessor; Lindsay Thomson, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Helena Couperwhite, Committee Services Manager and Michelle Hyslop, Committee Officer, Legal and Democratic Services.

**126. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Auxil Barrera declared an interest in para 131 – Opportunities Fife Partnership (OFP) Employability Pathway 2023-24 – Annual Performance Update and para 132 – Opportunities Fife Partnership (OFP) – ESF Employability Programme 2015-2022 final position report - as she was employed by Opportunities Fife Partnership.

**127. MINUTE**

The committee considered the minute of the Finance, Economy and Corporate Services Scrutiny committee meeting of 29 August 2024.

**Decision**

The committee agreed to approve the minute.

**128. CHANGE IN MEMBERSHIP**

The committee noted that Councillor Patrick Browne had replaced former Councillor Graeme Downie as a member of the Finance, Economy and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee.

**129. FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT.**

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) presenting an overview of the Finance and Corporate services Directorate. The report outlined the service planning, change and improvement work undertaken in 2023/24 and provided an assessment of the performance to inform scrutiny of future service planning.

**Decision**

The committee: -

- (1) reviewed the progress and performance of the Finance and Corporate Services Directorate for 2023/24 and the activity undertaken in 2024/25 to date;
- (2) noted the service planning objectives for 2024/25 and the three-year direction of travel; and
- (3) noted the remodeled annual service review report format.

**130. BAD DEBTS 2023-2024**

The committee considered a joint 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 2023/24 by the Finance and Corporate Services Directorate and Housing Services.

**Decision**

The committee noted the content of the report.

*Having earlier declared an interest in the following items (paras. 131 and 132), Councillor Auxi Barrerra left the meeting at this stage.*

**131. OPPORTUNITIES FIFE PARTNERSHIP (OFP) EMPLOYABILITY PATHWAY 2023-24 – ANNUAL PERFORMANCE UPDATE.**

The committee considered a report by the Service Manager, Place, Programmes and Policies providing an update on the performance and delivery of the Opportunities Fife Partnership (OFP) and the Fife Employability Pathway during 2023/24.

**Decision**

The committee: -

- (1) reviewed the progress and performance of the Opportunities Fife Partnership (OFP) Employability Pathway during 2023/24; and
- (2) noted the priorities ahead.

*The meeting adjourned at 11.35 am and reconvened at 11.45 am.*

**132. OPPORTUNITIES FIFE PARTNERSHIP (OFF) – ESF EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMME 2015-2022 FINAL POSITION**

The committee considered a report by the Service Manager, Place, Programmes and Policies providing an update on the final performance of Fife's Employability Pathway, funded by the European Social and Investment Funds (ESIF) 2015-2022.

**Decision**

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

*Councillor Auxi Barrera re-joined the meeting following consideration of the above items.*

**133. BUSINESS GATEWAY FIFE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE**

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director (Place) providing an annual overview of the performance of Business Gateway Fife Ltd in delivering services during the period April 2023 to March 2024 including the council's financial assistance to businesses scheme. The report outlined information on performance and highlighted areas of service adjustments to support the delivery of the UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF).

**Decision**

The committee noted: -

- (1) the performance, expenditure and activity for Business Gateway Fife in 2023/24 as detailed in the report; and
- (2) the risk posed by the uncertainty over UKSPF funding beyond 31 March 2025.

**134. BUSINESS & EMPLOYABILITY SERVICES – ANNUAL SERVICE REVIEW REPORT 2023/2024**

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director (Place) presenting an overview of the Business and Employability service. The report outlined the service planning, change and improvement work undertaken in 2023/24 and provided an assessment of the performance to inform scrutiny of future service planning.

**Decision**

The committee: -

- (1) noted the remodeled annual service review report format;
- (2) reviewed the progress and performance of the Business and Employability Service for 2023/2024 and the activity undertaken to date in 2024/25; and
- (3) noted the service planning objectives for 2024/25 and the three-year direction of travel.

*Councillor Katheen Leslie left the meeting following consideration of the above item.*

**135. 2024/25 REVENUE MONITORING PROJECTED OUTTURN - PLANNING SERVICE, BUSINESS AND EMPLOYABILITY SERVICE**

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) and Executive Director (Place) providing an update on the projected outturn financial position for the 2024/25 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.

**136. 2024/25 CAPITAL MONITORING PROJECTED OUTTURN - BUSINESS AND EMPLOYABILITY SERVICE**

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) and Executive Director (Place) updating members on the Capital Investment Plan and advised on the projected financial position for the 2024/25 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.

**137. 2024/25 REVENUE MONITORING PROJECTED OUTTURN – FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES**

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) providing an update on the projected outturn financial position for the 2024/25 financial year for the Finance and Corporate Services Directorate.

**Decision**

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

**138. 2024/25 CAPITAL MONITORING PROJECTED OUTTURN - FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES**

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) providing an update on the Capital Investment Plan and advised on the projected financial position for the 2024/25 financial year for the areas in scope of the Finance and Corporate Services Directorate.

**Decision**

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

**139. FINANCE, ECONOMY & CORPORATE SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
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 Committee Forward Work Plan; and
- (2) agreed that a short life working group would be set up to look at support services for elected members with disabilities and a report on the findings would be brought back to a future meeting of this committee.