2022 FECSS 6

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

3rd November, 2022 **10.00 a.m. – 12.35 p.m.**

PRESENT: Councillors Allan Knox (Convener), Alistair Bain, Lynn Ballantyne-Wardlaw, Ian Cameron, Rod Cavanagh, Eugene Clarke, Colin Davidson, Sean Dillon, Graeme Downie, Stefan Hoggan-Radu, Robin Lawson, James Leslie, Gordon Pryde, Alistair Suttie and Ann Verner.

ATTENDING: Eileen Rowand, Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services), Charlie Anderson, Head of Business Technology Solutions, Elaine Muir, Head of Finance, Les Robertson, Head of Revenue and Commercial Services, Caroline Macdonald, Service Manager (Category Management), Derek Hamilton, Category Manager (Procurement), Donna Grieve, Accountant, Jackie Johnstone, Accountant, Heather Honeyman, Assessor, Sharon McKenzie, Head of Human Resources, Barbara Cooper, Service Manager (Human Resources), Susan Harris, Health and Safety Lead Officer, Human Resources Service, Kerry Davie, BMIU Business Change Manager, BMIU Business Management Innovation Unit, Lindsay Thomson, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Helena Couperwhite, Manager (Committee Services) and Wendy MacGregor, Committee Officer, Legal and Democratic Services, Finance and Corporate Services; Pam Ewen, Head of Planning, Gordon Mole, Head of Business and Employability Services, Pamela Stevenson, Service Manager (Economic Development) and Morag Millar, Programme Manager (Economy Tourism and Town Centre), Business and Employability Services.

14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were submitted in terms of Standing Order 7.1.

15. MINUTE

The Committee considered the minute of the meeting of the Finance, Economy and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee of 8th September, 2022.

Decision

The Committee agreed

(1) to approve the minute; and

(2) that the amended report on the Local Government Benchmarking Framework Performance, detailed at paragraph 8 on the minute, would be circulated to members.

16./

16. BUDGET WORKING GROUP - NOTE OF MEETING - 13TH OCTOBER, 2022

The Committee considered the Budget Working Group note of meeting of 13th October, 2022, outlining areas of potential interest raised by members for scrutiny. The General Fund Revenue Budget 2023-24 Draft Timetable was also included in the report to assist in informing the future work of the Working Group.

Decision

The Committee noted the Budget Working Group meeting note and the General Fund Revenue Budget 2023-23 Draft Timetable.

17. ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE EDINBURGH AND SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND CITY REGION DEAL

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director (Enterprise and Environment) providing the Annual Report for the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal, including the Fife Industrial Innovation Investment (i3) Programme, funded through the Deal.

Decision

The Committee:-

(1) noted the Annual Report for the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal, which included the Fife Industrial Innovation Investment (i3) Programme, detailed in Appendix 1 to the report; and

(2) requested a report on the Benefits Realisation Plan be submitted to the meeting of the Committee on 15th June, 2023.

18. BAD DEBTS 2021-22

The Committee considered a joint report by the Head of Revenue and Commercial Services and the Head of Housing Services which summarised the irrecoverable bad debts that were written off during 2021-22 by the Finance and Corporate Services Directorate and Housing Services.

Decision

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

19. FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) presenting the 2021/22 performance scorecard for the Finance and Corporate Services Directorate.

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;

(2)/

(2) noted the Finance and Corporate Services Directorate performance information detailed in Appendix 1 to the report; and

(3) requested that a report detailing staff absence and the management of staff absence/workforce planning across the Council be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee, in spring 2023.

20. BUSINESS GATEWAY FIFE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Business and Employability Services providing an annual overview of the performance of Business Gateway Fife Ltd in delivering services during the period April 2021 to March 2022, including Fife Council's financial assistance to businesses scheme. The report provided information on performance and highlighted areas of ongoing service adjustments that had taken place to support business grant funding across Fife, during the latter phases of COVID impact.

Decision

The Committee noted :-

(1) the performance, expenditure and activity information on Business Gateway Fife for 2021/22;

(2) the repositioned delivery focus to support Fife businesses during the latter phases of COVID impact; and

(3) the transition of ERDF Programme to UK Shared Prosperity Funding from 1st April, 2023.

The Committee adjourned at 11.35 a.m. and reconvened at 11.45 a.m.

21. ENTERPRISE AND ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE: PLANNING SERVICES PERFORMANCE REPORTING

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director (Enterprise and Environment) presenting the 2021/22 performance scorecard for Enterprise and Environment Directorate, Planning Services.

Decision

The Committee noted:-

(1) the arrangements set out in Section 1.0 to fulfil the Council's obligation to comply with Audit Scotland's 2021 SPI Direction;

(2) the Enterprise and Environment Directorate, Planning Service's performance information presented in Section 2.0 and detailed in Appendix 1 to the report; and

(3) that a report on Planning Performance Framework would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

22. ANNUAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT 2021-22

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Human Resources updating members on Health and Safety activity since the report to Assets and Corporate Services Sub-Committee on 4th November, 2021. The report provided high level information and a headline summary was detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

Decision

The Committee:-

(1) noted the performance and activity for the 2021–2022 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.

23. ANNUAL PROCUREMENT REPORT

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Revenue and Commercial Services providing a summary of Procurement activity and its impact during the financial year 2021/2022.

Decision

The Committee noted the Annual Procurement Report, detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, which would be published online and notified to Scottish Ministers.

24. REVENUE MONITORING PROJECTED OUTTURN 2022/23

The Committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) and the Executive Director (Enterprise and Environment) updating members on the projected outturn financial position for the 2022/23 financial year, at August 2022, for the areas in scope of the Finance, Economy and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee.

Decision

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

25. CAPITAL MONITORING PROJECTED OUTTURN 2022/23

The Committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) and the Executive Director (Enterprise and Environment) updating members on the Capital Investment Plan and advising on the projected financial position for the 2022/23 financial year at August 2022, for the areas in scope of the Finance, Economy and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee.

Decision

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

26./

26. REVENUE MONITORING PROJECTED OUTTURN 2022/23 - 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 2022/23 for the Finance and Corporate Services Directorate.

Decision

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

Councillor Colin Davidson left the meeting during consideration of the above item.

27. CAPITAL MONITORING PROJECTED OUTTURN 2022/23 - FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director (Enterprise and Environment) updating members on the Capital Investment Plan and advising on the projected financial position for the 2022/23 financial year for the Finance and Corporate Services Directorate.

Decision

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

28. FINANCE, ECONOMY AND CORPORATE SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the Finance, Economy and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee Workplan.

Decision

The Committee:-

(1) noted the Finance, Economy and Corporate Services Work Plan and members were encouraged to contact the Convener with any relevant topics suitable for scrutiny within the remit of the Committee; and

(2) agreed to add the following reports to the Forward Work Programme with future Committee meeting dates to be advised:-

- Benefits Realisation Plan, including Fife Innovation Investment (i3) Programme
- Staff absence and workforce planning/management of staff absence across Fife Council, expected Spring 2023; and
- Planning Performance Framework.