

Lothian Valuation Joint Board

Edinburgh, 7 December 2009

Present: -

City of Edinburgh Council – Councillors McIvor (Convener), Beckett, Burns, Dundas (substituting for Councillor Wheeler), Edie, Perry and Rust.

East Lothian Council – Councillors Bell and Knox.

Midlothian Council – Councillor Beattie (Vice Convener).

West Lothian Council – Councillors Anderson, Johnston and King.

1 Minute

Decision

To approve the minute of the Lothian Valuation Joint Board of 7 September 2009 as a correct record.

2 Appointments

Decision

- 1) To note the appointment of Councillor Peter Johnston, West Lothian Council to the Lothian Valuation Joint Board.
- 2) To appoint Councillor Anderson, West Lothian Council to serve on the Appointment Committee.

(Reference – report by the Chief Executive and Clerk, submitted)

3 Appointment of Solicitor to the Board

The City of Edinburgh Council had appointed Alastair Maclean as Head of Legal and Administrative Services whose responsibilities would include those of Council Solicitor. Historically, the Council Solicitor had acted as Solicitor to the Board.

Decision

- 1) To appoint the Head of Legal and Administrative Services, City of Edinburgh Council as Solicitor to the Lothian Valuation Joint Board with effect from 1 December 2009.
- 2) To note that the Chief Executive and Clerk would make any consequential adjustments to the Board's Standing Orders and Scheme of Delegation.

(Reference – report by the Chief Executive and Clerk, submitted)

4 Audited Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March 2009 and Auditor's Report

The Audited Report and Accounts for the financial year 2008/09 were submitted together with the External Auditor's Report and related ISA 260 letter (Report to Those Charged with Governance).

There were no qualifications to the Auditor's opinion in the Audit Certificate and it was concluded that the financial statements presented fairly the Board's position and they had been properly prepared and recorded in accordance with relevant legislation and accounting requirements.

Key risk areas and planned management action were outlined in the Action Plan appended to the Auditor's report.

Members were concerned about the implications for constituent authorities which could arise in the future from the accrual of pension liabilities.

Decision

- 1) To note the audited report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 2009.
- 2) To note the External Auditor's report for 2008/09.
- 3) To note the related ISA 260 letter (Report to Those Charged with Governance).
- 4) To note that the Treasurer would provide an update on future pension liabilities to the next meeting of the Board on 5 February 2010.

- 5) To note that the Chief Executive and Clerk would report on maintaining a register of interests for members to the meeting of the Board on 29 March 2010 as detailed in Action Point 2 of the Action Plan.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted)

5 Financial Statement 2009/10

A summary was provided of the revenue position for the period ending 31 October 2009, together with projections of likely expenditure to the year end.

Performance at the seven month stage showed a net underspend of £105,000, 2.7% below the net approved budget.

The projected outturn indicated a potential net expenditure of £6,309,000 which would result in a net projected underspend of £119,000.

Decision

To note the financial statement for the seven month period to 31 October 2009 and the year end projections.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, 2009, submitted)

6 Quarterly Progress Report to the Joint Board

The Board considered a progress report by the Assessor updating members on the service overview and priorities, current issues and the future direction of the Joint Board.

The 2009 canvass had been concluded on time and the register published. The increase in the number of absent voters continued to be of concern and members asked the Assessor to look at ways in which this could be addressed.

Decision

- 1) To note the quarterly progress report.
- 2) To note that UNISON had requested a meeting of the Joint Consultative Group to consider the Board's proposed revenue budget for 2010/11 prior to the full Board meeting on 5 February 2010.

(Reference – report by the Assessor 7 December 2009, submitted)

7 2010 Revaluation Report to the Joint Board

Information was provided on the 2010 Revaluation of non-domestic properties carried out by the Assessor within the City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian and West Lothian.

The draft Roll would be published on the Scottish Assessors' Association website as detailed in the Appendix to the Assessor's report.

Decision

To note the report.

(Reference – report by the Assessor 7 December 2009, submitted)

8 Revised Policy on Leave for Family Care

The Board's Policy on Leave for Family Care had been revised, in consultation with the Trade Union, to take account of changes in legislation relating to maternity and adoption leave.

Decision

To approve the revised Policy on Leave for Family Care as a local collective agreement.

(Reference – report by the Assessor 7 December 2009, submitted)

9 Disability Equality Scheme

The Board's Disability Equality Scheme had been revised to bring it into line with other local authority organisations in Scotland. The scheme had been updated and reviewed to take account of changes in the objectives and actions since its introduction.

Decision

To approve the Revised Disability Equality Scheme.

(Reference – report by the Assessor 7 December 2009, submitted)

10 Health and Safety Policy Statement

The Board's Policy on Health and Safety had been revised to ensure that the risks to health and safety of workers were properly controlled.

Decision

To approve the revised Health and Safety Policy Statement.

(Reference – report by the Assessor 7 December 2009, submitted)

11 Review of Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation

The Board's Standing Orders had been reviewed to reflect developments in areas such as the prudential code, risk management, asset management and e-procurement. The revised documents were presented.

Decision

To approve, subject to a minor adjustment, the revised Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation.

(Reference – report by the Chief Executive and Clerk, submitted.)