

Minutes

Finance and Resources Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 30 March, 2023

Present

Councillors Watt (Convener) Bruce, Doggart, Griffiths, Macinnes, McVey (substituting for Councillor Hyslop), Mumford, Nicolson, Ross, Staniforth and Younie.

1. Revenue Budget 2023-24 Update

The City of Edinburgh Council referred a report on the revenue budget and delegated authority to the Committee to set revised fees and charges.

Motion

- 1) To note the Revenue Budget 2023-24 report by the Executive Director of Corporate Services referred by Full Council on 16 March 2023 in order for the Finance and Resources Committee to set the Fees and Charges for 2023-24.
- 2) To agree to freeze the fees and charges as highlighted by the Poverty Commission recommendations that would have a detrimental impact on people affected by poverty, namely;
 - 2.1) Burial Charges.
 - 2.2) Garden Aid.
 - 2.3) Day Care for Older People / Those with Physical Disabilities.
- 3) To therefore agree – to meet the funding requirement for freezing the poverty-related fees and charges – an additional 4% is added to the proposed Parking Charges, giving an overall 16% increase for 2023-24.
- 4) To otherwise agree the Fees and Charges as proposed in the report.

- moved by Councillor Watt, seconded by Councillor Griffiths

Amendment 1

Alleviating impact of poverty through management of Fees & Charges, 2023

- 1) To note the briefing from officers following the agreement of the Liberal Democrat Group Budget at Full Council on the 23 February 2023 and the

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following discussion at Full Council on 16 March 2023 which indicated clearly the need to raise an additional £1.150 million, as outlined in the report by the Executive Director of Corporate Services.

- 2) To recognise that further actions that help relieve the impact of poverty on our fellow residents were of vital importance and that, where possible, we should raise additional income and spend it on those actions.
- 3) To agree the following actions on Fees and Charges for 2023-24:
 - 3.1) To raise on-street parking charges by 20% across the various charge levels, excluding resident permits and town centres. This is designed to raise approximately £0.8 million relative to the level of income assumed in the budget baseline (ie a 12% increase) and to better reflect the true cost of driving in our city. It is also designed to support and advance the Council's transport ambitions, as outlined in the City Mobility Plan and in the agreed aim of reducing car kms by 30%, reducing transport emissions and costly congestion over time. This is also likely to benefit our public transport providers as more residents and visitors make decisions to move to public transport or other means to move round the city, particularly for short journeys.
 - 3.2) To use the additional monies raised by increased parking charges to reduce the impact of other charges in the Council's remit, particularly on low income and older households. Specifically:
 - 3.2.1) Freeze the proposed increase in Adult Burial Fee Charges (noting that Burial Fees are not applied where the burial is for a child under 18 years of age).
 - 3.2.2) Freeze the fees for Garden Aid, designed to assist the elderly and disabled in maintenance of their homes.
 - 3.2.3) Freeze the fees and remove any price increases for Day Care for Older People.
 - 3.2.4) Freeze the fees and remove any price increases for Day Care Services for Adults with learning or physical disabilities.
 - 3.2.5) Freeze the costs of Community Alarms and Telecare Services.
 - 3.2.6) Freeze the costs of audio, film rentals, photocopying etc, which form part of the library services.
 - 3.2.7) Create a Library Fine Amnesty period to dismantle potential barriers to continued access for adults and children.

3.2.8) Create an additional fund for community-led cultural projects to help sustain local cultural organisations working in our neighbourhoods).

4) To note these measures will assist, and reduce the worries of, families and individuals, particularly those with low incomes, at times of crisis and vulnerability. The required revenue and spend figures, as agreed with Finance officers ahead of submitting this amendment, are as follows:

- 4.1) Additional Income from parking charge increases (800,000)
- 4.2) Less Reductions in income Burial Charges - frozen (340,000)
- 4.3) Garden Aid - frozen (50,000)
- 4.4) Day Care for Older People/ those with Physical Disabilities - frozen (5,000)
- 4.5) Community Alarms and Telecare - frozen (194,000)
- 4.6) Library Charges excluding Fines - frozen (40,000)
- 4.7) Creation of Library Fine Amnesty Period (71,000)
- 4.8) Creation of Community-led Cultural fund (100,000)

- moved by Councillor Macinnes, seconded by Councillor Mumford

Amendment 2

- 1) To note that, following the Scottish Budget's Parliamentary consideration, the Council's core grant funding allocation did not change and as such the Council's budget remains balanced, based on approved savings and investments.
- 2) To approve, following agreement of the revenue budget motion, the revised proposed fees and charges set out in Appendix 1 to the report by the Executive Director of Corporate Services.

- moved by Councillor Doggart, seconded by Councillor Bruce

Voting

First Vote

The voting was as follows:

For the motion	-	4 votes
For Amendment 1	-	5 votes
For Amendment 2	-	2 votes

(For the motion: Councillors Griffiths, Ross, Watt and Younie.

For Amendment 1: Councillors Macinnes, McVey, Mumford, Nicolson and Staniforth.

For Amendment 2: Councillors Bruce and Doggart.)

There being no overall majority, the Amendment 2 fell and a second vote was taken between the motion and Amendment 1.

Second Vote

The voting was as follows:

For the motion	-	4 votes
For Amendment 1	-	5 votes

(For the motion: Councillors Griffiths, Ross, Watt and Younie.

For amendment 1: Councillors Macinnes, McVey, Mumford, Nicolson and Staniforth.

Abstentions: Councillors Bruce and Doggart.)

Decision

To approve Amendment 1 by Councillor Macinnes.

(References – Act of Council No. 13 of 16 March 2023; report by the Executive Director of Corporate Services, submitted.)

2. Resource Provision for Medium-Term Financial Plan

A report detailed an urgent requirement for the Council to continue to develop and deliver a Medium-Term Financial Plan to address the current projected budget gap over the next four years.

Decision

- 1) To note the requirement for the Council to develop and deliver a Medium-Term Financial Plan to respond to the financial challenge now facing it.
- 2) To note the resources required to continue to lead the work for a further period, at pace so momentum was not lost, while longer-term arrangements were put in place.
- 3) To note that most of the resource required to support the development and delivery of a plan had been secured through the redeployment or recruitment of existing internal staff.
- 4) To approve the waiver and extension of the contract for expert services to GatenbySanderson Ltd to provide specific capacity to lead this work for a further 6 months.

(Reference – report by the Executive Director of Corporate Services, submitted.)

3. Digital Transformation for Health and Social Care

Details were provided on the need for the Council to update its current IT systems in Health and Social Care. A full business case outlining the digital transformation required to support the transformation of Health and Social Care, including the replacement for the Swift system would be presented to the Committee in June 2023.

Motion

- 1) To note the report by the Executive Director of Corporate Services and associated background papers.
- 2) To support in principle a programme of digital transformation for Health and Social Care.
- 3) To request officers brought forward in draft a full business case for Digital transformation across Health and Social Care to the 20 June 2023 Finance and Resources Committee meeting.
- 4) To note the likely need for reprofiling the Capital programme and make appropriate revenue provision should the business case be approved.
- 5) To request the full business case includes consideration of:
 - The savings the project could generate in terms of revenue spend
 - Justification for the prioritisation of this project in the context of required savings
 - Whether a SWIFT renewal would be funded from CEC corporate budgets or if there would also be a call on HSCP budgets
 - When it became apparent that the system was no longer compatible and if issues with other systems showed a need to upgrade this system earlier
 - Funding implications for the IJB and CEC capital programmes
 - Whether SWIFT, Track and other systems could be integrated to improve efficiency and information sharing as part of this project.
- 6) To engage with the Midlothian Partnership and COSLA Digital Office on the Digital Transformation for Health and Social Care
- 7) To request officers from EHSCP attend future meetings on this item to respond to questions.

- 8) To request future business cases set out how the council can ensure full utilisation of the systems we already have and how investment in new systems supports the medium-term financial plan.

- moved by Councillor Watt, seconded by Councillor Griffiths

Amendment

- 1) To note the content of the report by the Executive Director of Corporate Services and associated background papers
- 2) To support in principle a programme of digital transformation for Health and Social Care.
- 3) To request officers brought forward in draft a full business case for Digital transformation across Health and Social Care to the 20 June 2023 Finance and Resources Committee meeting.
- 4) To regret that the report was not presented to Council as part of the potential Budget options in February 2023.
- 5) To note that the Budget decision will have to be amended in terms of reprofiling the Capital programme and making additional Revenue progression.
- 6) To regret the decision taken by officers in 2019, and in all subsequent years, not to bring forward an option for the replacement of Swift.
- 7) To note that decision had been a key contributor to the concerns set out in paragraph 2.5 of the report and the conclusions of the Care Inspectorate Report published on 21 March 2023.

- moved by Councillor Doggart, seconded by Councillor Bruce

In accordance with Standing Order 22(12), the amendment was accepted as an addendum to the motion by Councillor Watt.

Decision

To approve the following adjusted motion by Councillor Watt:

- 1) To note the content of the report by the Executive Director of Corporate Services and associated background papers
- 2) To support in principle a programme of digital transformation for Health and Social Care.
- 3) To request officers brought forward in draft a full business case for Digital transformation across Health and Social Care to 20 June 2023 Finance and Resources Committee meeting.

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- 4) To regret that the report was not presented to Council as part of the potential Budget options in February 2023.
- 5) To note that the Budget decision will have to be amended in terms of reprofiling the Capital programme and making additional Revenue progression.
- 6) To regret the decision taken by officers in 2019, and in all subsequent years, not to bring forward an option for the replacement of Swift.
- 7) To note that decision had been a key contributor to the concerns set out in paragraph 2.5 of the report and the conclusions of the Care Inspectorate Report published on 21 March 2023.
- 8) To request the full business case includes consideration of:
 - The savings the project could generate in terms of revenue spend
 - Justification for the prioritisation of this project in the context of required savings
 - Whether a SWIFT renewal would be funded from CEC corporate budgets or if there would also be a call on HSCP budgets
 - When it became apparent that the system was no longer compatible and if issues with other systems showed a need to upgrade this system earlier
 - Funding implications for the IJB and CEC capital programmes
 - Whether SWIFT, Track and other systems could be integrated to improve efficiency and information sharing as part of this project.
- 9) To engage with the Midlothian Partnership and COSLA Digital Office on the Digital Transformation for Health and Social Care.
- 10) To request officers from the Health and Social Care Partnership attended future meetings on this item to respond to questions.
- 11) To request future business cases set out how the council can ensure full utilisation of the systems we already have and how investment in new systems supports the medium-term financial plan.

(Reference – report by the Executive Director of Corporate Services, submitted.)

4. Extension of Waiver – Trams to Newhaven Project

Approval was sought to extend the contract with Anturas Consulting Limited to continue to provide support to the Trams to Newhaven Project, via a waiver of the Council's Contract Standing Orders (CSOs). The overall cost to the Council of this waiver was anticipated to be £121,495.

Decision

- 1) To approve an extension, via a waiver of the Council's Contract Standing Orders (CSOs), of the contract with Anturas Consulting Limited to support the delivery of the Trams to Newhaven project.
- 2) To note the overall cost to the Council of this waiver was anticipated to be £121,495. This cost was contained within the financial forecast to the completion of the project.
- 3) To include timeframes in future reports seeking approval for waiver extensions.

(Reference – report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)