

# Lothian Valuation Joint Board

**6 November 2023**

Hybrid Meeting held in the Dean of Guild Court Room, City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh and virtually by Microsoft Teams

## **Present:**

**City of Edinburgh Council** – Councillors Beal (Vice-Convener), Caldwell, Pogson (substituting for Councillor Dalgleish), Fullerton, Glasgow, Cameron (substituting for Councillor Jenkinson) and Mitchell.

**East Lothian Council** – Councillor Carol McFarlane

**Midlothian Council** – Councillor Bowen

**West Lothian Council** – Councillors Adamson and Conn (Convener).

## **1 Minute**

### **Decision**

To approve the minute of the Lothian Valuation Joint Board of 18 September 2023 as a correct record.

## **2 Assessor's Progress Report to the Lothian Valuation Joint Board**

A progress update by the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer was presented to the Board. The report provided an overview of current service delivery, priorities, risks and future direction.

Key service priorities over the forthcoming year included:

- Maintenance of the electoral registration process
- Changes to postal votes and proxy votes provisions
- Electoral registration engagement
- Electoral registration voter authority certificates
- Canvass
- Maintenance of the Valuation Roll
- Valuation Roll appeals

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- 2023 Revaluation Update
- Council Tax appeals
- Governance Strategy Group – contribution awards, LEADS, digitalisation project
- Continual improvement programme
- HR Policy updates

**Decision**

- 1) To note the report.
- 2) To approve the recommendation in Appendix 2 to welcome a Modern Apprentice to the Lothian Valuation Joint Board workforce.

(Reference – report by the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer, submitted)

**3 Revenue Budget 2023-2027**

For 2023/24, it was forecast expenditure on Assessor's services will be £6.567m, with expenditure of £0.219m on Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) Reform. The forecast was an increase in cost of £19,000 from the position reported to the Board on 18th September 2023. The increase was a consequence of the most recent COSLA pay award offer to local government employees, partly offset by vacant posts.

**Decision**

To note:

- 1) The forecast of a reserve drawdown of £0.720m required to achieve a balanced Core Budget for 2023/24
- 2) The updated financial planning estimates for the period 2023/24 to 2026/27 included at Appendix 1
- 3) Board reserves are forecast to be fully utilised by 2024/25. It is anticipated an increase in constituent council requisition will be required from 2024/25.
- 4) Financial plan estimates will be the subject of further update at the Board meet of 6 February 2024.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted)

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