

Lothian Valuation Joint Board

5 February 2024

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, Councillor Dalgleish, Dixon, Glasgow, Jenkinson and Mitchell and Staniforth.

East Lothian Council – Councillor McFarlane and McMillan

Midlothian Council – None

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

1 Minute

Decision

To approve the minute of the Lothian Valuation Joint Board of 6 November 2023 as a correct record.

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

An overview of current service delivery, priorities, risks, and future direction was provided with reference being made to Electoral Registration, Postal and Proxy votes, Electoral Registration, Canvass, the UK General Election, the Valuation Role, Council tax appeals. Council tax maintenance, the revenue budget 2023-27, the Governance Strategy group. the Continual improvement programme and the Corporate Service Plan.

Decision

- 1) To note the report; and
- 2) To approve the recommendation in Appendix 2

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

3 Appointment of Depute Electoral Registration Officer

The purpose of the report was to seek the boards approval for the appointment of Niall MacGalloway as Depute Electoral Registration Officer with immediate effect.

Decision

To agree the appointment of Niall MacGalloway as Depute ERO with immediate effect.

(Reference – report by the Assessor and ERO, submitted)

4 Revenue Budget 2024/25 and Indicative Financial Plan 2025/26 - 2026/27

A revenue budget has been developed for 2024/25 with a recommendation to approve an increase of £0.426m in core council requisition for 2024/25. This represented the first increase in core Council requisition since 2009/10.

A separate requisition to meet additional costs of £0.385m for Non-Domestic Rates Reform fully reflects funding included in the Local Government Finance Settlement.

Indicative financial planning estimates were provided for 2025/26 to 2026/27. These will be the subject of ongoing review and development during 2024/25 as the Board's Continual Improvement Programme is progressed.

Decision

- 1) To agree the proposed core budget for 2024/25 and the issue of the core budget requisitions detailed at paragraph 4.28 to constituent councils;
- 2) To agree the requisition of funding of £0.385m included in the Local Government Finance Settlement as detailed at paragraph 4.28 to implement the recommendations of the Non-Domestic Rates Review;
- 3) To note the indicative financial planning estimates for the period 2025/26 to 2026/27 included at Appendix 1 and;
- 4) To note the indicative financial planning estimates for 2025/26 to 2026/27 will be the subject of further update to the Board during 2024/25, as the Board's Continual Improvement Programme is progressed.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted)

5 Period 9 Financial Statement 2023/24

The forecast for a Reserve drawdown of £0.765m based on the position at 31st December 2023 was outlined. This represented an increase of £0.187m from the drawdown approved for the 2023/24 revenue budget and reflected the increased cost of the Local Government pay award for 2023/24.

Decision

- 1) To note the projected outturn position for 2023/24;
- 2) To note the forecast of a reserve drawdown of £0.765m required to achieve a balanced Core budget for 2023/24; and
- 3) To note the final outturn will be reported when the Annual Accounts are reported to the Board during 2024.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted)

6 Annual Treasury Management Strategy

The proposed Treasury Management Strategy for 2024/25 was presented.

Decision

To agree the Annual Treasury Management Strategy in Appendix 1 of the report.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted)

7 Future Meeting Arrangements August 2024 to June 2025

Members were advised of the proposed schedule of meetings for the Lothian Valuation Joint Board for the period from August 2024 to June 2025 and arrangements for meetings of the Joint Consultative Group.

Decision

- 1) To agree the schedule of meetings as detailed for the period August 2023 to June 2024.
- 2) To agree that meetings of the Joint Consultative Group would be held on an “on request” basis.

(Reference - report by Chief Executive and Clerk, Submitted)