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

Committee Room 2, 5th Floor, Fife House, North Street, Glenrothes

29 August 2024

10.00 am – 12.45 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Allan Knox (Convener), Alistair Bain, Lynn Ballantyne-Wardlaw, Auxi Barrera, Ian Cameron, Rod Cavanagh, Colin Davidson, Sean Dillon, Graeme Downie, Bailey-Lee Robb (substituting for Cllr Stefan Hoggan), Gary Holt, Robin Lawson, James Leslie, Gordon Pryde, Alistair Suttie and Ann Verner.

ATTENDING: Eileen Rowand, Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services); Pam Ewen, Head of Planning, Alan Blackie, Lead Officer, Development Management; Mary Stewart, Service Manager - Major Business and Customer Service, Planning Services; Michael O’Gorman, Service Manager - Estates and Asset Management, Property Services; Stevie Murray, HR Service Manager, Steven Michie, Lead Officer - Health and Safety, Health Safety and Wellbeing, Human Resources Service; Tracy Hirst, Finance Operations Manager, Jackie Johnstone, Accountant and Michelle Hyslop, Committee Officer, Legal and Democratic Services, Finance and Corporate Services.

111. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were submitted in terms of Standing Order No. 22.

112. MINUTE

The committee considered the minute of the Finance, Economy and Corporate Services Scrutiny committee of 13 June 2024.

Decision

The committee agreed to approve the minute.

113. ASSET AND ESTATES UPDATE

The committee considered a report by the Head of Property Services outlining some of the key activities undertaken by the teams responsible for property acquisition, disposal, property management, and strategic oversight of council assets over the past year.

Decision

The committee:

- (1) considered the information contained in the report; and

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- (2) noted the performance of the service in relation to: -
- Asset Strategy including asset utilisation;
 - vacant property and
 - capital receipts.

114. ANNUAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT 2023-24

The committee considered a report by the Head of Human Resources updating members on the annual Health and Safety activity for 2023-2024.

Decision

The committee: -

- (1) reviewed the performance activity for the 2023-2024 financial year;
- (2) noted the progress made regarding improving workforce practices and performance in the organisation; and
- (3) endorsed the continued focus on the identified priorities.

115. PLANNING SERVICES - ANNUAL SERVICE REVIEW REPORT 2023-2024

The committee considered a report by the Head of Planning Services providing an overview of the Service detail in relation to service planning, change and improvement works undertaken in 2023/24. The report focuses on the planning functions of the service and notes that the climate change functions would be reported to the Environment, Transportation and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee in November 2024.

Decision

The committee: -

- (1) reviewed the progress and performance of Planning Services for 2023/2024 and the activity undertaken to date in 2024/25;
- (2) noted the assessment and improvements identified through the National Planning Improvement Framework assessment (June 2024);
- (3) noted the service planning objections for 2024/25 and the three-year direction of travel; and
- (4) noted the remodelled 'annual service review' report format.

The meeting adjourned at 11.30 am and reconvened at 11.40 am.

Cllr Alistair Bain left the meeting prior to consideration of the following item.

116. MANAGEMENT OF DEVELOPER OBLIGATION FUNDS

The committee considered a report by the Head of Planning Services providing an update on the review of the process for management of Developer Obligation Funds, which was approved by the committee on 15 June 2024. At that meeting

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the scrutiny committee agreed that the Planning Services would lead a review of the process for management of Developer Obligation Funds and examine the options for utilising Historic Developer Obligation Funds.

Decision

The committee: -

- (1) noted the progress made in implementing the Planning Obligations Review Action Plan and the timescales identified for its completion; and
- (2) agreed that an update report on the management of developer obligations and Section 75 agreements would be presented in 1 years' time and annually thereafter.

117. 2023/24 - REVENUE MONITORING PROVISIONAL OUTTURN - PLANNING SERVICE, BUSINESS AND EMPLOYABILITY SERVICE

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) and Executive Director (Place) updating members on the provisional outturn financial position for the 2023/24 financial year for the areas in scope of the Finance, Economy and Corporate Services Scrutiny committee.

Decision

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

118. 2024/25 - REVENUE MONITORING PROJECTED OUTTURN - PLANNING SERVICE, BUSINESS AND EMPLOYABILITY SERVICE

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) and Executive Director (Place) updating members on the projected outturn financial position for the 2024/25 financial year for the areas in scope of the Finance, Economy and Corporate Services Scrutiny committee.

Decision

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

119. 2023/24 CAPITAL MONITORING PROVISIONAL OUTTURN - BUSINESS AND EMPLOYABILITY SERVICE

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) and Executive Director (Place) updating members on the Capital Investment Plan and advising on the provisional financial position for the 2023/24 financial year for the areas in scope of the Finance, Economy and Corporate Services Scrutiny committee.

Decision

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

120. 2024/25 - CAPITAL MONITORING PROJECTED OUTTURN - BUSINESS AND EMPLOYABILITY SERVICE

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) and Executive Director (Place) updating members on the Capital Investment Plan and advising on the projected financial position for the 2024/25 financial year for the areas in scope of the Finance, Economy and Corporate Services Scrutiny committee.

Decision

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

121. 2023/24 REVENUE MONITORING PROVISIONAL OUTTURN - FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) updating members on the provisional outturn financial position for the 2023/24 financial year for the Finance and Corporate Services Directorate.

Decision

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

122. 2024/25 REVENUE MONITORING PROJECTED OUTTURN – 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 the 2024/25 financial year for the Finance and Corporate Services Directorate.

Decision

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

123. 2023/24 CAPITAL MONITORING PROVISIONAL OUTTURN - FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) updating members on the Capital Investment Plan and advising on the provisional financial position for the 2023/24 financial year for the areas in scope of the Finance and Corporate Services Directorate.

Decision

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

124. 2024/25 CAPITAL MONITORING PROJECTED OUTTURN - FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) updating members on the Capital Investment Plan and advising on the projected financial position for the 2024/25 financial year for the areas in scope of the Finance and Corporate Services Directorate.

Decision

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

125. FINANCE, ECONOMY & CORPORATE SERVICES FORWARD WORK PLAN

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) outlining a draft workplan for future meetings of this committee.

Decision

The committee: -

- (1) noted the current Finance, Economy and Corporate Services Scrutiny Work Plan; and
- (2) agreed that a report on the developments in Artificial Intelligence within Fife Council to be brought to a future meeting of the committee in 2025.