

Lothian Valuation Joint Board

Edinburgh, 21 August 2017

Present:

City of Edinburgh Council – Councillors Key (Convener), Booth, Doggart, Doran, Gordon, Gloyer, Ricky Henderson, Rust and Work.

East Lothian Council – Councillors Goodfellow and Jane Henderson.

Midlothian Council – Councillor Winchester.

West Lothian Council – Councillors King, McGuire and Timson.

1 Appointment of Convener

Decision

To appoint Councillor Key (City of Edinburgh Council) as Convener of the Lothian Valuation Joint Board.

2 Appointment of Vice-Convener

Decision

To appoint Councillor McGuire (West Lothian Council) as Vice-Convener of the Lothian Valuation Joint Board.

3 Minute

Decision

To approve the minute of the Lothian Valuation Joint Board of 10 April 2017 as a correct record.

4 Appointments to Committees and the Joint Consultative Group

The Joint Board had previously established an Appointment Committee to undertake recruitment and appointment of senior staff and an Appeal Committee to deal with disciplinary and grievance issues. The Board had also set up a Joint Consultative Group to provide a means of regular consultation between the Board and employees' representatives on a range of issues.

The Board was invited to re-establish the Committees and the Joint Consultative Group, approve their remits and appoint their memberships and Conveners.

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Decision

- 1) To re-establish the Appointment Committee, the Appeal Committee and the Joint Consultative Group (JCG).
- 2) To approve the remits of the Committees and the Joint Consultative Group as detailed in Appendices 1 to 3 of the report by the Chief Executive and Clerk.
- 3) To appoint the following members to the Appointment Committee:
Councillor Key (City of Edinburgh Council) (Convener)
Councillor Work (City of Edinburgh Council)
1 member from East Lothian Council (to be confirmed)
Councillor Winchester (Midlothian Council)
Councillor McGuire (West Lothian Council)
- 4) To appoint the following members to the Appeal Committee:
Councillor Key (City of Edinburgh Council) (Convener)
1 member from City of Edinburgh Council
1 member from East Lothian Council
1 member from Midlothian Council
Councillor McGuire (West Lothian Council)
- 5) To appoint the following members to the Joint Consultative Group:
Councillor Key (City of Edinburgh Council) (Convener)
1 member from City of Edinburgh Council
1 member from East Lothian Council
1 member from Midlothian Council
Councillor McGuire (West Lothian Council)

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

5 Internal Audit Annual Report**Decision**

To note that the Internal Audit Annual Report would be presented to the next meeting of the Joint Board on 18 September 2017.

6 Unaudited Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March 2017

The Board's unaudited accounts for the year ended 31 March 2017 were submitted.

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The outturn for the year showed an underspend of £0.262m. On completion of the audit of the accounts, the Board would be required to consider whether it wished to retain the underspend or add to the Board's general reserve.

Decision

- 1) To note the report and that the accounts would be re-submitted to the Board on completion of the external audit.
- 2) To note that a decision on the retention or refund of requisition would be required by the Board at that time.
- 3) To include in the report background contextual information around the retention of reserves together with details of what other Boards have done in this regard.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted)

7 Performance Report 2016/17

The Assessor presented a summary of performance during 2016/17. This addressed Electoral Registration, including publicity and engagement, the Valuation Roll; Council Tax and management, staff and best value. A good overall performance had been maintained, despite budgetary and staffing pressures.

Decision

To note the performance report for 2016/17.

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

8 Period 3 Financial Statement 2017/2018

A summary was provided of the projected revenue budget outturn position to 31 March 2018 based on the position at period 3 end 30 June 2017. The forecast variance was an underspend of £0.062m.

Decision

To note the projected outturn position for 2017/2018 and that a further budget would be presented to the Board in November 2017.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted).

9 Treasury Management Annual Report 2016/2017

The treasury management annual report for 2016/2017 was presented.

Decision

To note the annual report for 2016/2017.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted)

10 Transformation and Cultural Change Programme - Update

The Board had previously noted a report by the Assessor highlighting the intention to undertake a programme of investigation within the organisation aimed at sustaining a financially sustainable position for the medium to longer term while maintaining service standards.

An update was provided on the transformation and cultural change programme which had commenced on 8 May 2017.

Consultation had taken place with the trade union and terms of reference for the review had been agreed.

Initial meetings with staff and managers and progress to date had indicated an acknowledgement of the need for change and a willingness to participate.

Decision

To note the update and that further reports would be presented to the Board as the transformation programme progressed.

(References – minute of Lothian Valuation Joint Board 6 February 2017 (item 3); report by the Interim Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer, submitted)

11 Review of Arrangements for Corporate Governance

A review had been undertaken of the arrangements within the Interim Assessor's organisation to support the Code of Corporate Governance. The Local Code reflected the key components set out in the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework "Corporate Governance in Local Government".

The outcome of the review had determined that the current arrangements were satisfactory. However, the Interim Assessor proposed to establish an internal governance group. This group would review, maintain and amend key governance, service delivery and control policies and procedures while also ensuring compliance with duties relating to freedom of information, data protection, records management and equalities.

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Decision

- 1) To note the establishment of a Governance, Risk and Best Value Group within the Assessor's organisation.
- 2) To otherwise note the updates contained in the report.

(References – minute of Lothian Valuation Joint Board 5 September 2016 (item 2); report by the Interim Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer, submitted)

12 Role and Duties of the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer

The Interim Assessor and ERO provided a brief overview of the role and duties aligned with the post including background information on the formation of the Joint Board in 1996 following local government re-organisation.

Decision

To note the information.

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

13 Recruitment of Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer

The Board had previously agreed with the recommendation of its Appointment Committee not to make a permanent appointment to the post of Assessor and ERO at that time but instead to appoint the Deputy Assessor and ERO on an interim basis from 1 January 2017.

Proposed next steps in the recruitment process were submitted.

Decision

To note the update and approve the next steps to be taken in the recruitment process as set out in paragraph 5 of the report.

(References – minute of Lothian Valuation Joint Board 28 November 2016 (item 6); report by the Chief Executive and Clerk, submitted)

14 Date and Venue of Next Meeting

Decision

To agree that the next meeting of the Board scheduled for Monday 18 September 2017 would be held at the offices of the Interim Assessor and ERO, 17A South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh, EH12 9FL.