

Lothian Valuation Joint Board

1 February 2021 (reconvened on 15 February 2021)

Meeting held virtually by Teams

Present:

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

East Lothian Council – Councillors Findlay and Goodfellow.

Midlothian Council – Councillors Russell and Smail (substituting for Councillor Munro).

West Lothian Council – Councillors Dodds (substituting for Councillor King), Doran-Timson and McGuire (Vice-Convener).

1 Adjournment

In terms of Standing Order 5.2, the meeting of Monday 1 February 2021 was adjourned in consultation with the Convener. The meeting was reconvened at 10.00am on Monday 15 February 2021.

2 Minute

Decision

To approve the minute of the Lothian Valuation Joint Board of 9 November 2020 as a correct record.

3 Interim Assessor's Progress Report to the Lothian Valuation Joint Board

A progress report by the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) was presented to the Board. It provided information on the overview of current service delivery, priorities, risks and future direction.

An update was also provided on the activities of the organisation during the Covid-19 pandemic. The majority of staff continued to work from home with a limited number attending the office to work on tasks which could not be done from home, including the upcoming Scottish Parliamentary Election in May 2021.

Decision

To note the report.

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

4 Report on Short Term Lettings/Self Catering Units

The City of Edinburgh Council approved a motion at its meeting on 28 July 2020, following the publication of a report by Andy Wightman MSP on commercial short term lets. The motion included a request for the Board to investigate the finding of the report that three-quarters of the properties identified were not registered for non-domestic rates.

The Interim Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer presented a report which addressed the issues raised for consideration by the Board.

Decision

To note the report.

(References – The City of Edinburgh Council, 28 July 2020, item 9; report by the Interim Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer, submitted)

5 Revenue Budget 2021/22 and Indicative Financial Plan 2022/23 - 2024/25

Information was provided on the revenue budget which had been developed for 2021/22 in line with the Board's Transformation Programme, including a recommendation to approve a 'flat-cash' council requisition for 2021/22. It was noted that a further requisition would be issued to meet the additional costs of Non-Domestic Rates Reform in 2021/22, in line with funding allocated in the Local Government Finance Settlement.

Details were also provided on the indicative financial planning estimates for 2022/23 to 2024/25. These would be subject to ongoing review and development as the Transformation Programme progressed.

Decision

- 1) To approve the proposed core budget for 2021/22 and the issue of 'flat-cash' core budget requisition requests from the Treasurer to constituent councils as detailed at paragraph 4.16 of the report.
- 2) To recommend that funding included in the Local Government Finance Settlement for implementing the recommendations of the Non-Domestic Rates Review be fully passed onto the Board. This may mean a supplementary requisition during 2021/22, dependent on the timing of confirmation of funding.
- 3) To note the indicative financial planning estimates for the period 2022/23 to 2024/25 included at Appendix 1 to the report.

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- 4) To note the indicative financial planning estimates for 2022/23 to 2024/25 would be the subject of further updates to the Board during 2021/22 and beyond.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted)

6 Period 9 Financial Statement 2020/21

The Period 9 Financial Statement for the financial year 2020/21 was submitted.

The projected revenue budget outturn position was summarised to 31 March 2021, based on the position at 31 December 2020. The forecast was for net expenditure to be £141,000 less than budget.

Decision

- 1) To note the projected outturn position for 2020/21.
- 2) To note the final outturn would be reported to the Board, when the Annual Accounts were reported to the Board in June 2021.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted)

7 Annual Treasury Management Strategy

Approval was sought of the Annual Treasury Management Strategy for 2021/22. The Strategy was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

Decision

To approve the Annual Treasury Management Strategy attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted)

8 Future Meeting Arrangements June 2021 to June 2022

The proposed meeting dates for the period from June 2021 to June 2022 were presented for approval.

Decision

- 1) To approve the schedule of meetings as detailed for the period June 2021 to June 2022, subject to revised dates in January and April 2022 to be confirmed.
- 2) To agree that meetings of the Joint Consultative Group would be held on an “on request” basis.

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

9 Review of Procedural Standing Orders

In terms of Standing Order 4.4, the Convener ruled that the following item, notice of which had been given at the start of the meeting, be considered as a matter of urgency to allow the Board to give early consideration to this matter.

A report was presented which set out proposed amendments to the Board's Procedural Standing Orders.

Decision

- 1) To repeal the existing Lothian Valuation Joint Board Procedural Standing Orders, as set out in Appendix 1, such repeal and approval to take effect from 16 February 2021.
- 2) To delegate authority to the Chief Executive and Clerk to take such actions and make such minor adjustments to the documents set out in Appendix 1 as may be necessary to implement the decision of the Board in relation to the report.

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