

MINUTE of MEETING of CENTRAL SCOTLAND VALUATION JOINT BOARD held within HILLSIDE HOUSE, STIRLING on FRIDAY 21 JUNE 2013 at 10.00a.m.

COUNCILLORS:

Margaret Brisley
Jim Blackwood (substituting for Rosie Murray)
Gordon Hughes
Charles MacDonald (Convener)
Cecil Meiklejohn
Jim Thomson (substituting for Corrie McChord)

OFFICERS:

Brian Byrne, Assessor
Brian Pirie, Assistant to Clerk
Liz Shaw, Assistant to Treasurer
Douglas Smith, Internal Audit
Peter Wildman, Depute Assessor

VJB11. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Depute Provost Donald Balsillie; Councillors Adrian Mahoney, Corrie McChord, Rosie Murray, Alan Nimmo, Steven Paterson and Sandy Turner.

VJB12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations made.

VJB13. MINUTES

There was submitted (circulated) and **APPROVED:-**

- (a) Minute of Meeting of Central Scotland Valuation Joint Board held on 5 April 2013, and
- (b) Minute of reconvened Meeting of Central Scotland Valuation Joint Board held on 16 April 2013.

VJB14. DRAFT FINAL ACCOUNTS AS AT 31 MARCH 2013

The Board considered a report by the Treasurer on the arrangements for preparing and auditing the draft final accounts for 2012/13.

The Board was required by law to prepare a Statement of Accounts setting out its financial position at the end of the financial year. Draft accounts must be submitted by 30 June to the Controller of Audit who will audit their accuracy and completeness. The 2012/13 draft accounts had been drawn up in accordance with the local authority Code of Practice (which reflected International Financial Reporting Standards) and showed a draft surplus of £187k. This meant that the Board now had a usable reserve of £619k.

The Board **AGREED** the submission of the draft Statement of Accounts to the Controller of Audit.

VJB15. INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT

The Board considered the Internal Auditor's report for 2012/13.

The Board's Internal Auditors were required by the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards to provide opinion on the overall effectiveness of the governance framework, risk management and control. The 2012/13 report found significant assurance in terms of the governance, risk management and control frameworks and set out areas for development.

The Board noted the report.

VJB16. BEST VALUE REPORT 2013

The Board considered a report by the Depute Assessor on the performance of the Assessor's Service in 2012-13 as measured against key performance indicators.

Indicators had been set in regard to the Valuation Roll – amendments to the Valuation Roll as a % of all changes – and the valuation list – new entries on the Valuation List as a % of all new entries. Performance against set targets was highlighted and targets for 2013/14 proposed.

The Board noted the report.

VJB17. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY

The Board considered a report by the Depute Assessor setting out a revised Information Technology Strategy.

The Board had agreed its current Information Technology Strategy in 2005 – a revised strategy for the period 2013-2017 setting out key high level aims together with objectives was presented.

The Board agreed the Information Technology Strategy 2013-2017.

VJB18. RISK ASSESSMENT REPORT

The Board considered a report by the Assessor/Electoral Registration Officer which provided a review of the Board's Risk Management Strategy.

The Board had agreed its Risk Management Strategy in 2012. The Strategy had now been reviewed and a revised Strategy was presented. A revised risk assessment for the service was also presented.

The Board agreed the Risk Management Strategy and noted the current general risk assessment analysis for all functions.



AGENDA ITEM 5

CENTRAL SCOTLAND VALUATION JOINT BOARD

Subject: INDIVIDUAL ELECTORAL REGISTRATION REPORT
Meeting: CENTRAL SCOTLAND VALUATION JOINT BOARD
Date: 20 SEPTEMBER 2013
Author: PETER WILDMAN, DEPUTE ASSESSOR

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report is to update the Valuation Joint Board on the current progress towards the introduction of Individual Electoral Registration. The UK Parliament passed the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 in January 2013. This Act sets out the framework for the introduction of Individual Electoral Registration (IER) in Great Britain in 2014
- 1.2 The legislation provided for a Confirmation Dry Run to be carried out during the summer of 2013 to test the processes ahead of the introduction of IER in 2014. Secondary legislation which is currently with the UK Parliament for approval is proposing that IER is introduced in England and Wales on 01 July 2014 and in Scotland on 19 September 2014. IER is already in force in Northern Ireland.

2. CONFIRMATION DRY RUN

- 2.1 The aim of the Confirmation Dry Run was to test that the IT systems worked and to provide an estimate of the numbers of electors likely to match or fail in 2014 and the consequent number of forms to be issued in 2014. It is intended that if electors fully match against DWP records in 2014 then they will automatically be confirmed on the new IER Register. These electors will receive a letter confirming that they have been registered. Those who fail to match and cannot subsequently be matched against local databases will be invited to apply to register under IER. All empty properties and properties where the electors have been temporarily "carried forward" at the last canvass due to no satisfactory direct or indirect response will receive a "Household Enquiry Form" asking them to confirm who is resident at the property so that individual "Invitations to Register" may be sent out if appropriate. The

secondary legislation will require us to have visited every property where a form has not been returned after two reminders.

- 2.2 All the Electoral Registration Officers in Great Britain had to send their Electoral Registers to the Government Digital Service for onward transmission to the Department of Work and Pensions for matching against their databases. Electors were marked according to the accuracy of the match. The data for Clackmannanshire, Falkirk and Stirling Councils was sent and matched during August. The results were good and better than anticipated
- 2.3 Connecting the Board's Electoral Management System to the Government's Digital Service involved meeting stringent Cabinet Office Terms of Use. This meant amongst other things improving the physical security of the building through increased protection for the Server Room, and by the introduction of a Door Entry System, and internal Electronic Door Locks. There have been several changes to office procedures comprising new Visitor Access Procedures, Security Incident Reporting Procedures and a soon to be implemented Clear Desk Policy. This has been done in consultation with all employees to find workable solutions. One outstanding item is enhanced checking as part of our recruitment processes, it is looking likely that we will have to extend the Board's Disclosure Policy to all staff and to check the last three years employment history of all new recruits. We are awaiting confirmation from the Cabinet Office of the level of Disclosure necessary. We will consult with staff and unions on this as soon as we have more detail. Any revised Recruitment Policy will be submitted for Board approval in due course
- 2.4 There have been costs associated with this work and the Cabinet Office have agreed to fund items such as the Penetration Test on our IT Systems, the formal Risk Assessment, and extra cabinets to facilitate the Clear Desk policy. We also received an initial funding allocation to cover staff time and expenses but the costs to the Board were higher than for many EROs as we were not connected to the GSX system. In this context we were in the same situation as Grampian, Lothian, and Tayside Valuation Joint Boards. We have therefore submitted an additional funding bid to the Cabinet Office to cover the shortfall. We will know if we have been successful by October 2013, if not it may be necessary to use some of the reserves set aside for IER work

3. FUTURE WORK

- 3.1 The next stages are for us to analyse the results of the Confirmation Dry Run with a view to ascertain if we can increase the match rates even further by Local Data Matching against databases such as Council Tax and by looking at any property address issues that could be fixed. We will also use the results to develop a Public Engagement Strategy and finally to plan workload and resources for 2014/15. We will be advised of our funding allocation in October 2014 and we have until January 2015 to bid for extra funds if we believe that is necessary

- 3.2 To facilitate this work we have set up a small project team with me as Project Manager. The team comprises Russell Taylor, the Depute ERO, three members of the Electoral Team and two members of the IT Team. As the project moves forward we will be looking to work with communications staff at the three constituent councils to develop the public engagement strategy.
- 3.3 There will be an ongoing requirement to have a Penetration Test of our IT systems every year to ensure that our system is still compliant with the Terms of Use, this will not be funded by the Cabinet Office. We will also require an annual audit to ensure that we are following the security procedures that have been introduced. It has been agreed that Internal Audit at Clackmannanshire Council will carry out this work in the last quarter of this financial year. To facilitate the initial security audit the planned audit of Council Tax procedures will now take place in 2014/15
- 3.4 This is a busy period for the Electoral Team with a write out currently ongoing to postal voters whose signatures will be more than five years old by January 2015 asking for fresh signatures to be supplied. The annual canvass has been postponed this year to ensure the Register is as up to date as possible prior to the introduction of IER. It will now commence on 1 October 2013 with the new Register being published on 10 March 2014. The three Councils will be conducting statutory polling district reviews and any changes arising from these will need to be reflected in the Register of Electors. Next year will bring the European Elections on 22 May 2014, the Independence Referendum on 18 September 2014, swiftly followed by the introduction of IER the following day.
- 3.5 The Project Team's role is crucial as is the expert knowledge of senior managers and the Electoral Team to ensure that these events are delivered efficiently and professionally

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 It is recommended that the Valuation Joint Board note the ongoing work to facilitate the introduction of Individual Electoral Registration**

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Depute Assessor
12 September 2013

AGENDA ITEM 6

CENTRAL SCOTLAND VALUATION JOINT BOARD

Subject: FINAL ACCOUNTS as at 31 MARCH 2013
Meeting: CENTRAL SCOTLAND VALUATION JOINT BOARD
Date: 20th September 2013
Author: TREASURER

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Board is required by law to prepare a statement of accounts in accordance with 'proper practices' which set out its financial position at the end of each financial year. This is defined as meaning compliance with the terms of the Code of Practice in Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom prepared by CIPFA/ LASAAC Joint Committee.
- 1.2 The Code specifies the principles of accounting required to give a 'true and fair' view of the financial position and transactions of the Board, following completion of the audit.
- 1.3 The Board is legally obliged to complete the draft accounts and submit them by 30th June 2013 to the Controller of Audit so that they can be scrutinised by the appointed external auditor for accuracy and completeness.
- 1.4 The Audit of the Accounts is required to be completed and approved by the Board prior to their final submission to the Controller of Audit by the 30th September 2013.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At the Board meeting on the 21st June 2013 the submission of the draft Accounts to the Controller of Audit was approved by the Board. It was noted in the report that a final audited set of accounts, and the auditors report, would be presented to the Board at the next appropriate meeting.
- 2.2 This report now ensures that the Board formally approve the Audited Accounts prior to their submission to the Controller of Audit.
- 2.3 The main financial statements comprise a :
 - Movement in Reserves Statement
 - Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account
 - Balance Sheet
 - Cash Flow Statement

- 2.4 Included for the first time in the Statement of Accounts is an Annual Governance Statement. This statement reports on the fact that proper governance arrangements have been put in place by the Board and the Assessor to ensure that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for.
- 2.5 The surplus on the provision of services reported in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account is £75k. However this includes £112k of accounting adjustments which require to be reversed out in the Movement in Reserves Statement to create a surplus of £187k for the year.
- 2.6 The useable surplus brought forward from previous years is £432k. The surplus achieved in the year is £187k. The surplus carried forward to future years is therefore £619K. There is £359K set-aside for approved earmarked projects. This leaves a useable general reserves balance of £260K. The reserves strategy is to maintain a minimum level of useable general reserves of 3% (£77K). This will be reviewed as part of the budget setting process.
- 2.7 As a result of the Audit process there have been no material adjustments made to the draft accounts. Minor adjustments have been made to the presentation of the Accounts which did not result in any changes to the figures but improved the look of the Accounts.

3. CONCLUSIONS

- 3.1 The Valuation Joint Board has outturned a surplus of £187k which when added to previous surpluses results in a net surplus of £619k now being held.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The Joint Board is asked to note the 2012/13 Statement of Accounts and agree to their submission to the Controller of Audit.**

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Treasurer
20th September 2013

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Annual Year End Working Papers.

Any person wishing to inspect the above background papers should contact the Treasurer, Nikki Bridle, on Alloa (01259) 452030.

AGENDA ITEM 7

CENTRAL SCOTLAND VALUATION JOINT BOARD

Subject: REVENUE BUDGET 2013/14 – REVIEW AS AT 31.07.13
Meeting: CENTRAL SCOTLAND VALUATION JOINT BOARD
Date: 20th September 2013
Author: TREASURER

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Joint Board of the forecast outturn for the financial year ending 31 March 2014.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The budget for the financial year 2013/14 is £2.549 million. The projected outturn against the budget shows an underspend of £112K (see Appendix A).
- 2.2 The main reason for the reported figure relates to a reduction in salary costs due to the ongoing restructuring and proactive vacancy management and the reduced property rental charges.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Joint Board is asked to note the contents of this report.

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Treasurer

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Various working papers associated with the production of the outturns.

Any person wishing to inspect the above background papers should contact Clackmannanshire Council, Finance Services, on Alloa (01259) 452072.

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Useable Reserves at 1st April 2013	(£618,358)
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Earmarked	£359,000
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Useable Reserves	(£259,358)
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July 2013 outturns**Analysis of Outturn Variation to Budget**

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Employee

On going restructuring together with vacancy management underspend £(70,000)

Increased canvassers in line with last year £5,000 overspend

Increased expenditure on staff training associated with restructuring £3,000

Reduced superannuation annual charges and other small variances £(5,500)

Underspend	(£67,520)
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Property costs

Underspend achieved by the re-negotiation of the Lease Rental for Hillside House

Underspend	(£39,450)
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Transport Costs

Anticipated underspend on Staff Travelling Expenses

Underspend	(£2,560)
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Supplies and Services

Minor variances

Overspend	£290
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Administration

On Budget	£0
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Computer Equipment

Anticipated overspend on the purchase of computer hardware

Overspend	£3,000
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Third Party Payments

Expenditure forecast in line with last years actual on Other Council Accounts

Underspend	(£6,000)
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Support Services

On Budget	£0
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Income

On budget

On Budget	£0
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Estimated outturn position at 31st March 2014

Underspend	<u>(£112,240)</u>
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Estimated Useable Reserves at 31st March 2014

(£371,598)

Minimum level of General Reserves

(£76,477)

VJB - Summary
July outturns

	Annual Budget 2013/14	Budget to 31/07/13	Actual 31/07/13	Projected Outturn to 31/03/2014	Variance Outturn v Budget
Employee Related Expenditure					
APT & C General - Salaries	1,398,170	466,010	440,048	1,350,079	(48,090)
APT & C General - Employers Supn	256,790	85,588	78,202	238,566	(18,220)
APT & C General - Employers NIC	109,660	36,550	33,198	101,678	(7,980)
APT & C General - Overtime	1,000	333	331	1,000	0
Management of Vacancies	(4,410)	(1,470)	0	0	4,410
Manual Relief - Gross Wages	10,000	3,333	267	15,000	5,000
Long Service Award	0	0	0	1,000	1,000
Superannuation Annual Charges	32,140	10,712	4,230	25,500	(6,640)
Advertising Expenses - Recruitment	500	167	99	500	0
Staff Training	18,000	5,999	1,999	21,000	3,000
Conference Expenses - Officials	2,000	667	674	2,000	0
Other Staff Costs	2,000	667	0	2,000	0
Employee Related Expenditure	1,825,850	608,556	559,048	1,758,323	(67,520)
Premises Related					(67,520)
Repairs and Maintenance	14,000	4,666	3,611	14,000	0
Energy Costs- Gas	3,870	1,290	1,729	3,870	0
Energy Costs - Electricity	10,620	3,540	3,591	10,620	0
Rents	125,000	51,250	21,787	85,540	(39,460)
Service Charge	12,530	4,260	7,609	12,530	0
Rates	66,360	66,360	65,940	65,940	(420)
Water Meter Charges	7,440	1,860	1,149	7,440	0
Cleaning & Hygiene Materials	1,500	500	958	1,500	0
Cleaning Services DSO	14,440	3,610	2,432	14,600	160
Window Cleaning	0	0	90	270	270
Property Insurance	2,680	0	0	2,680	0
Premises Related	258,440	137,336	108,896	218,990	(39,450)

Transport Related Expenditure						
Staff Travelling Expenses	23,850	7,949	9,266	21,700	(2,150)	0
Staff Travelling Expenses - Home to Work	0	0	0	0	0	0
Car Allowance	3,700	1,233	0	3,290	(410)	0
Transport Related Expenditure	27,550	9,182	9,266	24,990	(2,560)	(2,560)
Supplies and Services						
Purchase of Equipment	0	0	0	0	0	0
Furniture - Purchase	500	100	0	500	0	0
Removal Charges	0	0	0	0	0	0
Equipment Maintenance	1,000	333	(363)	1,000	0	0
Equipment Insurance	500	500	490	490	(10)	300
Bottled Water	1,200	400	702	1,500	0	0
Hospitality	2,000	667	206	2,000	0	0
Clothing and Uniforms	300	100	0	300	0	0
Supplies & Services	5,500	2,100	1,035	5,790	290	290
Administration Costs						
Office Equipment - Rental	5,000	1,667	978	5,000	0	0
Office Equipment - Maintenance	7,000	2,333	3,226	7,000	0	0
Printing - Outside Contractors	11,000	3,666	0	11,000	0	0
Photocopying	3,500	1,167	1,158	3,500	0	0
Stationery	11,000	3,666	3,273	11,000	0	0
Publications	5,000	1,667	971	5,000	0	0
Advertising - Publicity	5,000	1,667	(334)	5,000	0	0
Insurance	13,600	13,600	10,247	13,600	0	0
Postages	99,110	33,033	14,301	99,110	0	0
Telecommunications	9,000	3,000	2,231	9,000	0	0
Legal Expenses	12,000	4,000	4,705	12,000	0	0
Miscellaneous Expenses	500	167	880	500	0	0
Administration Costs	181,710	69,631	41,636	181,710	0	0

Centralised IT									
Computer Hardware Purchase	22,000	5,500	3,107	25,000	3,000				
Disaster Recovery	23,140	5,785	9,238	23,140	0				
Computer Hardware Maintenance & Support	6,820	1,705	6,487	6,820	0				
Computer Software Purchase	1,500	375	264	1,500	0				
Computer Software Maintenance & Support	62,020	20,671	45,584	62,020	0				
Computer Peripherals	1,000	250	0	1,000	0				
Computer Consumables	0	0	0	0	0				
Computer Services	49,210	16,402	32,888	49,210	0				
Centralised IT	165,690	50,688	97,569	168,690	3,000				
					3,000				
Total Supplies & Services	352,900	122,419	140,239	356,190	3,290				
Third Party Payments									
Other Council Accounts	0	0	0	0	0				
Payments to Other Local Authorities	8,000	0	(323)	2,000	(6,000)				
Payments to Contractors	1,000	0	532	1,000	0				
Audit Scotland	8,250	0	(2,426)	8,250	0				
Third Party Payments	17,250	0	(2,217)	11,250	(6,000)				
					(6,000)				
Transfer Payments									
Transfer Payments	0	0	0	0	0				
Support Services									
Legal Services	14,340	0	0	14,340	0				
Human Resources	21,500	0	0	21,500	0				
Finance Service	29,480	0	0	29,480	0				
Corporate and Democratic Core	5,920	0	0	5,920	0				
Support Services	71,240	0	0	71,240	0				
Capital Financing Costs									
Capital Financing Costs	0	0	0	0	0				
TOTAL GROSS EXPENDITURE	2,553,230	877,493	815,233	2,440,983	(112,240)				
					(112,240)				
Income									
Sales - Electoral Roll	0	0	(30)	0	0				
Sales	(1,000)	0	0	(1,000)	0				
Other Income	(3,000)	(1,000)	(176)	(3,000)	0				
Costs Retained	0	0	(11,504)	0	0				
Powercards Income	0	0	0	0	0				
Income	(4,000)	(1,000)	(11,710)	(4,000)	0				
NET EXPENDITURE	2,549,230	876,493	803,522	2,436,983	(112,240)				
					(112,240)				