

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

Town House,  
ABERDEEN, 1 March 2023

MINUTE OF MEETING OF ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

Sederunt:

Lord Provost David Cameron, Chairperson;  
Depute Provost Steve Delaney; and

COUNCILLORS

GILLIAN AL-SAMARAI  
NURUL HOQUE ALI  
CHRISTIAN ALLARD  
ALISON ALPHONSE  
KATE BLAKE  
JENNIFER BONSELL  
MARIE BOULTON  
DESMOND BOUSE  
RICHARD BROOKS  
HAZEL CAMERON  
DONNA CLARK  
JOHN COOKE  
NEIL COPLAND  
WILLIAM CORMIE  
BARNEY CROCKETT  
DEREK DAVIDSON  
LEE FAIRFULL  
EMMA FARQUHAR  
GORDON GRAHAM  
ROSS GRANT  
MARTIN GREIG

DELL HENRICKSON  
RYAN HOUGHTON  
MICHAEL HUTCHISON  
MICHAEL KUSZNIR  
GRAEME LAWRENCE  
SANDRA MACDONALD  
NEIL MacGREGOR  
ALEXANDER McLELLAN  
KEN McLEOD  
CIARAN McRAE  
M. TAUQEER MALIK  
DUNCAN MASSEY  
JESSICA MENNIE  
ALEX NICOLL  
MIRANDA RADLEY  
KAIRIN VAN SWEEDEN  
LYNN THOMSON  
DEENA TISSERA  
SIMON WATSON  
and  
IAN YUILL

Lord Provost David Cameron, in the Chair.

The agenda and reports associated with this minute can be found [here](#).

Please note that if any changes are made to this minute at the point of approval, these will be outlined in the subsequent minute and this document will not be retrospectively altered.

Council Meeting, Wednesday, 1 March 2023

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

1. (A) The Lord Provost welcomed Councillor Lawrence back to the Council following the Dyce/Bucksburn/Danestone by-election on 23 February 2023 and congratulated him on his election.

(B) The Lord Provost expressed his warm wishes to Councillor Kuznir and his wife on the birth of their son at the weekend.

(C) The Lord Provost noted that Mike Middleton, former area Convener of the GMB trade union, had sadly passed away and expressed his condolences to Mike's family friends on behalf of the Council.

### **The Council resolved:-**

to concur with the Lord Provost's remarks.

## **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS**

2. The Interim Chief Officer - Governance acknowledged that Members would have a large number of connections in relation to the business before them, however, on this occasion, they were not required to make transparency statements, only declarations of interest. No interests were declared.

## **DEPUTATIONS**

3. Councillor Malik moved as a procedural motion, seconded by Councillor Tissera:-

That the Council suspend Standing Order 14.5.3 in order to hear deputations.

On a division, there voted:-

For the procedural motion (18) - Councillors Ali, Blake, Bonsell, Boulton, Brooks, Crockett, Farquhar, Graham, Grant, Houghton, Kuznir, Lawrence, Macdonald, McLeod, Malik, Thomson, Tissera and Watson.

Against the procedural motion (24) - Lord Provost; Depute Provost; and Councillors Al-Samarai, Allard, Alphonse, Bouse, Hazel Cameron, Clark, Cooke, Copland, Cormie, Davidson, Fairfull, Greig, Henrickson, Hutchison, MacGregor, McLellan, McRae, Mennie, Nicoll, Radley, van Sweeden and Yuill.

Absent from the division (1) - Councillor Massey.

### **The Council resolved:-**

to reject the procedural motion.

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#### **COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2023/24 - COM/23/074**

4. The Council had before it a report by the Director of Commissioning which presented the Council Delivery Plan for 2023/24.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Council -

- (a) note the content of the Council Delivery Plan 2023/24; and
- (b) instruct the Chief Executive to realign any of the delivery commitments set out in the Plan that may be required, as a result of any potential Council budget decisions, to meet Council's instructions.

**The Council resolved:-**

- (i) to approve the recommendations; and
- (ii) to note that Tier 1 Prevention on page 22 of the Delivery Plan should read 152 and 54% and this would be corrected prior to the Delivery Plan being published.

#### **PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION - CUS/23/064**

5. The Council had before it a report by the Director of Commissioning which advised of the approach taken to embed prevention and early intervention into the commissioning cycle and shape budget decisions to positively deliver on outcomes for Aberdeen.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Council -

- (a) note the development to date of the Council's approach to resource allocation in aid of supporting the deliberate shift to prevention as advocated by the Council's Target Operating Model and agree to further develop it by instructing the following corporate wide developments:
  - 1) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance in consultation with the Chief Officer - Early Intervention and Community Empowerment to develop a new financial reporting template to capture the prevention and early intervention tiered resource allocation model, and to include this in the annual budget process, with effect from the 2024/25 budget cycle, to demonstrate the proposed allocation of resources per tier;
  - 2) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance, in consultation with the Chief Officer - Governance and Chief Officer - Commercial and Procurement to work with the Group entities and Tier 1 ALEOs to prepare a statement of tiered resource allocation across the Aberdeen City Council family group, and to include this in the annual budget process with effect from the 2024/25 budget cycle;
  - 3) instruct the Chief Officer - People and Organisational Development in consultation with the Chief Officer - Early Intervention and Community and Empowerment and Chief Officer - Finance to develop a training programme for staff and elected members on early intervention and prevention and report on delivery progress to the Staff Governance Committee;

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- 4) instruct the Chief Officer - Governance to amend the committee reporting template to include commentary on tiered resource allocation on prevention, early intervention and response services; and
  - 5) instruct the Chief Officer - Data & Insights to work through the Aberdeen Health Determinants Research Collaborative to ensure that the Council's approach to resource allocation and the continued shift to prevention is supported by appropriate evidence, research and evaluation.
- (b) as part of the next stage of the development of the resource allocation approach to underpin the shift to prevention, agree to instruct the following on-going spend analysis using the three tier intervention framework:
1. instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning to include a tiered analysis of resource requirements in the refreshed Local Housing Strategy to be presented for approval to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee noting the significance of housing as one of the key determinants of population health;
  - 2) instruct the Chief Education Officer and Chief Officer - Integrated Children's and Family Services to undertake tiered analysis of the resource requirements to support the refreshed Integrated Children's Services Plan (2023-2026) and present the Integrated Children's Services Plan to the Education and Children's Services Committee for approval noting the significance of early years interventions in population health;
- (c) note the approved IJB Strategic Plan (2022-2025) and request the Chief Officer of Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership to include tiered analysis on annual reporting against the Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan 2022-25 as part of evidencing the shift to a preventative approach rather than a medical approach to ageing well; and
- (d) as part of demonstrating how the Council's expenditure was driving achievement of better outcomes through co-ordination and collaborative working:
1. note the commitments contained in the Council Delivery Plan COM/23/074 which are aligned to the Local Outcome Improvement Plan outcomes;
  2. note the assessment of the Council Delivery Plan commitments using the tiered analysis detailed in this report; and
  3. instruct the Director of Commissioning, as Chair of the Community Planning Partnership Management Board, to encourage Community Planning Partners to adopt this approach to tiered analysis of organisational spend to support the development of a citywide perspective on resource allocation.

Councillor Nicoll moved, seconded by Councillor Yuill:-

That the Council approve the recommendations contained within the report.

Councillor Tissera moved as an amendment, seconded by Councillor Watson:-

That the Council approve the recommendations contained within the report subject to the following changes:-

- (d) 3. advise the Chair of the Community Planning Partnership Board, to encourage Community Planning Partners to adopt this approach to tiered analysis of organisational spend to support the development of a citywide perspective on resource allocation; and

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(e) agree the Council's approach to resource allocation in aid of supporting the deliberate shift to prevention as advocated by the Council's Target Operating Model should not include a Review of Statutory Functions which could lead to outsourcing or privatisation of Statutory Functions.

On a division, there voted:-

For the motion (30) - Lord Provost; Depute Provost; and Councillors Al-Samarai, Allard, Alphonse, Boulton, Bouse, Brooks, Hazel Cameron, Clark, Cooke, Copland, Cormie, Davidson, Fairfull, Farquhar, Greig, Henrickson, Houghton, Hutchison, Kuszniir, MacGregor, McLellan, McLeod, McRae, Mennie, Nicoll, Radley, van Sweeden and Yuill.

For the amendment (12) - Councillors Ali, Blake, Bonsell, Crockett, Graham, Grant, Lawrence, Macdonald, Malik, Thomson, Tissera and Watson.

Absent from the division (1) - Councillor Massey.

**The Council resolved:-**

to adopt the motion.

**At this juncture, the Council was advised that the General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme and Common Good Budget items would be taken together as one item**

**GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME - 2023/24 TO 2027/28 - RES/23/085; AND COMMON GOOD BUDGET 2023/24 - RES/23/082**

6. (A) The Council had before it a report by the Director of Resources which provided information on both the revenue budget for 2023/24 and capital programme for the period 2023/24 to 2027/28 in order that approved budgets and Council Tax value could be set by the Council for the year commencing 1 April 2023.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Council -

2.1 Balance Sheet Recommendations

- 2.1.1 note the projected balance sheet position including the reserves as at 31 March 2023, shown at Appendix 1;
- 2.1.2 consider the Council's Financial Resilience Framework measures, included at Appendix 2, and Prudential Indicators, at Appendix 3, providing current and forward-looking data and insight to aid understanding of the implications of capital investment prior to setting Council Tax and the Revenue and Capital budgets;
- 2.1.3 approve the Prudential Indicators as attached at Appendix 3;
- 2.1.4 approve the General Fund Capital Programme as attached at Appendix 4;
- 2.1.5 consider the capital projects described in Appendix 5, which were referred to the General Fund Capital Programme;

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- 2.1.6 approve the Revenue and Capital Reserves Statement for 2023/24 as detailed in Appendix 6;
  - 2.1.7 approve the implementation of the guidance on Service Concessions flexibility that is detailed in Appendix 7;
  - 2.1.8 agree as part of the implementation of the Service Concession flexibility that the costs accounted for in years beyond the contract term would be met from the 3Rs schools and Lochside unitary charge budgets released at the end of their respective contracts;
  - 2.1.9 approve the use of the retrospective funds released by the Service Concession flexibility for voluntary severance/early retirement payments from 2022/23 onwards (c.£33m), based on the commitment to no compulsory redundancies, the approved Medium Term Financial Strategy and TOM1.2 setting out the need for recurring staff savings over the next five years of £40m; and note that the cost of accessing the retrospective reserve would incur financing costs of c.£2m, which would be incorporated into the Council's treasury management arrangements;
- 2.2 Medium-Term Financial Projections
- 2.2.1 note the forecast medium-term financial projection for the period ending 31 March 2028 as shown in paragraph 3.18;
  - 2.2.2 note that the Scottish Government published its Resource Spending Review in May 2022 that stated that Local Government should expect to receive a 'flat cash' settlement for the period 2023/24 to 2025/26, and that following the publication of the Local Government Financial Settlement for 2023/24, on a like for like basis, this position was borne out with a 0.2% increase to revenue funding being awarded for financial year 2023/24;
  - 2.2.3 note that the Local Government financial settlement annually had to be supplemented by allocations from other Scottish Government portfolios, and Ministers had guaranteed £1bn out of the current £1.4bn received by Local Government;
  - 2.2.4 instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to refresh the Medium Term Financial Strategy and report to the Council by the end of December 2023;
  - 2.2.5 instruct the Chief Executive to review the existing organisational structure, in light of the approved budget and to report back to Council by December 2023 on any suggested amendments to ensure the sustainability of Council operations;
  - 2.2.6 instruct the Chief Executive to engage with the workforce seeking their input and feedback on shaping any amendments to the structure;
  - 2.2.7 instruct the Chief Executive to align instructions 2.2.5 and 2.2.6 with the previous instruction given regarding Interim Organisational Structure (Council, 13 October 2022, CUS/22/216).

Risks

- 2.3.1 consider the risks set out in Section 7 and note the ongoing exceptional operating environment, a legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic, but more significantly this year created by pay and price inflation set against a poor financial settlement for Local Government, and an increase in the known and unknown risks that arise as described in the report;
- 2.3.2 note that pay negotiations for the current financial year, 2022/23, were not concluded creating risk of further financial exposure this and next year, pay

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- being the largest single element of the Council budget even small changes to this could have material impact on Council finances;
- 2.3.3 note that the Scotland Excel Supply Chain Bulletin, January 2023, highlighted the exposure that the local Government sector had to inflation, in particular the emphasis on 'very high' exposure applying to a large number of procurement frameworks relevant to the Council;
- 2.3.4 note that future borrowing costs were higher than they had been since 2011;
- 2.3.5 note that the Risk Appetite Statement stated that the Council was averse to risks associated with impairing financial stewardship, internal controls, and financial sustainability;
- 2.3.6 instruct the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chief Officer - Finance, to monitor delivery of budget savings and our planning assumptions on pay award and supply chain risk and to advise Council of any in year changes required;
- 2.3.7 instruct the Chief Officer - Capital, in consultation with the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord and Chief Officer - Finance, to keep the Capital Programme under review from a value for money perspective and to advise the Finance and Resources Committee, as part of the Financial Performance Quarter 1 report, on any action required;
- 2.4 Revenue Budget Recommendations
- 2.4.1 note that the conditions outlined by the Scottish Government within the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2023/24 were met by the proposals set out in the report;
- 2.4.2 note that the General Fund budget had £5m of in-year contingencies included to provide for the known and unknown risks that may arise during the year, this represented only 0.9% of the net budget;
- 2.4.3 approve the savings and redesign of Council services to address demand, in line with the commissioning led approach described in the report, and to set at least a balanced budget for financial year 2023/24, having due regard to:
- a) the Budget Model as contained in paragraph 3.18 that identified a funding shortfall of £46.6m for 2023/24;
  - b) the impact of service redesign on services and fees and charges described in Appendix 8;
  - c) the Revenue and Capital Reserves Statement, that set out the Council should maintain uncommitted General Fund balances of between a minimum of £12m and £34m;
  - d) the Financial Resilience Framework data shown in Appendix 2;
  - e) the Prudential Indicators and impact of the General Fund Capital Programme on revenue expenditure, Appendix 3;
  - f) the savings options and cost of implementation put forward in Appendix 9 and Fees and Charges proposals in Appendix 10, noting that a decision had already been taken by Council (14 December 2022, RES/22/294) on parking charges with effect from 1 April 2023 and the impact of this decision had been included in the updated financial model for 2023/24;
  - g) the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (Cosla) commitment to 1% of the budget being subject to participatory budgeting;
  - h) the revenue items referred to the budget process, as shown in Appendix 11;
  - i) the Council's Risk Appetite Statement; and

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- j) Integrated impact assessments and screening results provided in the background papers;
- 2.4.4 approve the Commissioning Intentions and Service Standards as described in Appendices 12 and 13 respectively, subject to any amendments approved as per 2.3.3 above, noting that the Chief Officer - Finance had confirmed, as far as possible, that the Commissioning Intentions and Service Standards being implemented were consistent with the draft budget for 2023/24 and Medium Term Financial Strategy;
- 2.4.5 instruct the Chief Officer - Customer Experience to embed the revised Service Standards in the handling of service requests, enquiries and complaints;
- 2.4.6 approve the level of funding for the Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership IJB 2023/24 to meet the conditions of the Scottish Government Financial Settlement, described in paragraphs 3.124 and 3.129 to 3.134, and to note that it would be for the IJB itself to determine how it would balance its budget;
- 2.4.7 approve the fees and charges for the Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership IJB, as shown in Appendix 10;
- 2.4.8 approve the level of funding for the Council's other group entities and Arm's Length External Organisations (ALEOs), in 2023/24 with reference to paragraphs 3.119 to 3.139;
- 2.4.9 approve the continued delegation of authority to the Chief Officer - Finance to approve the allocation of Covid19 related funding retained as an earmarked General Fund reserve at 31 March 2023, and any further sums distributed to the Council, to meet need and demand or to cover for lost income where it arises during 2023/24, reporting the use of funds to the Finance and Resources Committee in the quarterly financial performance;
- 2.4.10 note the Council's approach towards meeting the target of 1% of revenue funding being available for Participatory Budgeting;
- 2.4.11 instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to give notice to the Board of Directors of NYOP Education (Aberdeen) Ltd to disburse £663,000 to Sport Aberdeen and £221,934 to VSA, being nominated charities of NYOP;
- 2.4.12 instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to recover the full costs associated with being the Administering Authority of the North East Scotland Pension Fund from the Pension Fund.
- 2.5 Taxation Recommendations
- 2.5.1 approve a Band D equivalent Council Tax rate of £1,560.48 (10% increase), with effect from 1 April 2023;
- 2.5.2 note that there were expected to be short term proposals forthcoming on Council Tax reliefs for long term empty properties and second homes, Cosla Leaders were due to discuss these at their February meeting and instruct the Chief Officer - Customer Experience to implement as required;
- 2.5.3 impose and levy Council Tax assessments for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 on all chargeable dwellings in Aberdeen City to be paid by the persons liable therefor under the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994;
- 2.5.4 note that the Council implemented revisions to the national Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) scheme as defined by the Scottish Government within the relevant legislation and Finance Circulars, with effect from 1 April 2023;

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- 2.5.5 following the devolution of the NDR Empty Property Relief to Local Government approve the Empty Property Relief Scheme for Aberdeen City with effect from 1 April 2023, as set out in paragraphs 3.85 to 3.88;
- 2.5.6 note that the Council intends to review the NDR Empty Property Relief scheme on an annual basis, and this would be done in the context of work instructed on the Union Street Empty Shops Action Plan (COM/22/287);
- 2.5.7 impose and levy Non-Domestic Rates assessments for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 on all occupiers in Aberdeen City to be paid by those liable;

## 2.6 Carbon Budget Recommendations

- 2.6.1 agree a Carbon Budget of 26,474 tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO<sub>2</sub>e) and an annual savings target of 2,482 tCO<sub>2</sub>e for 2023/24, as Table 2 in Appendix 14;
- 2.6.2 note the progress in implementing phase one actions of the Council's agreed approach to carbon budgeting;
- 2.6.3 instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning, to implement phase 2 actions, as set out in Appendix 14; and
- 2.6.4 instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning, in consultation with the Chief Officer - Finance to submit provisional quarterly carbon budget monitoring reports to the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee.

(B) The Council also had before it a report by the Director of Resources which provided details of the draft Common Good budget for 2023/24, to enable the Council to approve a final budget that would take effect on 1 April 2023.

### **The report recommended:-**

that the Committee -

- (a) approve the Common Good budget for 2023/24 as detailed in Appendix 1; and
- (b) consider and decide on each of the new requests for funding detailed in Appendix 3 to the report, taking account of the affordable funding available for 2023/24.

Councillor McLellan moved, seconded by Councillor Yuill:-

That the Council -

### **Working in Partnership for Aberdeen**

#### **1. Supporting People with the cost of living**

- 1.1 instruct the Chief Officer - Early Intervention and Community Empowerment to increase investment in the Financial Inclusion team to provide outreach money advice (benefits/debt) within community-based settings and upskill community workers to support communities in the longer term;
- 1.2 instruct the Chief Officer - Early Intervention and Community Empowerment to provide through a grant funding arrangement £500,000 for the administration of and investment in food procurement, development of food pantries through increased membership and additional support through Support, Advice, Finance and Education (SAFE) team support;
- 1.3 instruct the Chief Officer - Early Intervention and Community Empowerment to allocate £400,000 to the Scottish Welfare Fund provision for the 2023/24 financial year;
- 1.4 allocate £50,000 to the Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee for the provision of Citizen Assemblies and poverty mitigation measures;

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**2. A City of Opportunity**

- 2.1 instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to progress the new Hazlehead/Countesswells Secondary School to an Outline Business Case and to report back to the Finance and Resources Committee by the end of the financial year 2023/24;
- 2.2 note the ABZ Campus was officially launched with secondary school staff in November 2022 with a wider range of course available from June 2023;
- 2.3 note the Aberdeen Computing Collaborative launched in September 2022 to help develop computer science skills in children, young people and staff to ensure our young people are well equipped for the world of work;
- 2.4 note the Partnership commitment to build on the success of the Summer of Play and have delivered nearly 5,000 activities and almost 2,500 free meals over the October break alone;
- 2.5 note the delivery of a mental health collaborative and young person taskforce has been established to oversee work on mental health and wellbeing;

**3. A Vibrant City**

- 3.1. note that Aberdeen City Council's bid for Levelling Up Funding 2 was unsuccessful; reaffirm our commitment to progress the Beach and City Centre Masterplan and note the £98 million investment within the capital programme to fund phase one of the beach and city centre transformation;
- 3.2 note the approval of a draft consultation Masterplan for George Street and the wider scope of the Beach Masterplan at Council in December 2022;
- 3.3. instruct the Chief Officer - Early Intervention and Community Empowerment to bring a report to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee, during financial year 2023/24, outlining options for, the design of a 21<sup>st</sup> Century library provision that can then be shared for consultation;

**4. Building a Greener and Sustainable City**

- 4.1 note and welcome the inclusion of a Carbon Budget alongside the Council's annual revenue budget for 2023/24, including a target reduction and the declaration of a Climate Emergency last week;
- 4.2 note the approval of climate governance arrangements to ensure the Council works with partners to make Aberdeen a net zero city;
- 4.3 recognising the developing policy and legal framework affecting domestic and commercial waste collection and disposal and the Council's commitments to both increase recycling rates and abolish the Garden Waste Permit charge, instruct the Chief Officer - Operations and Protective Services to report to the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee on opportunities and options to improve recycling rates and domestic green waste composting levels in Aberdeen before the end of the financial year 2023/24;

**5. Greener Transport, Safer Streets, Real Choices**

- 5.1 agree the investment in Electric Vehicle charging points within the Capital Programme; and instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning to progress the installation of charging points, in agreement with the Convener and Vice Convener of the Net Zero, Environment Transport Committee;
- 5.2 in parallel to the approved EV Strategy, instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning to progress a pilot project for on-street EV charging points in

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- outer city centre areas, where demand is likely to be highest, in agreement with the Convener and Vice Convener of the Net Zero, Environment Transport Committee;
- 5.2 instruct the Chief Officer - Operations and Protective Services to procure a peak time (Monday to Friday 07:00-10:00 and 16:00-19:00) only bus service for Kingswells within a funding envelope of up to £110,000;
- 5.3 instruct Chief Officer - Early Intervention and Community Empowerment, based on the revised national guidance issued by Transport Scotland on 17 February 2023, to increase the enforcement fee for Penalty Charge Notices to the 'Higher' level (£50/£100/£150) for Aberdeen, effective from 1 April 2023;
- 6. An Active City**
- 6.1 instruct the Director of Commissioning in conjunction with the Director of Resources to begin discussions with Sport Aberdeen to review their assets and their business delivery model, with a view to Sport Aberdeen becoming financially independent from the Council and to report back to Council before the end of the financial year 2023/24;
- 6.2 instruct the Chief Officer - City Growth, in consultation with partner organisations, such as Aberdeen Performing Arts (APA), to bring back a report on how best to allocate funding to cultural organisations from both the General Fund and Common Good budgets and to report back to Council before the end of the financial year 2023/24;
- 7. A Prosperous City**
- 7.1 note the intention to provide £100,000 over the next 3 years to support the regeneration of Union Street; and instruct the Chief Officer - City Growth to utilise £33,333 in 2023/24;
- 8. Empowering Aberdeen's Communities**
- 8.1 instruct the Chief Officer - Early Intervention and Community Empowerment to increase the grant paid to Leased Community Centres by 30% for 2023/24;
- 8.2 instruct the Chief Officer - Capital, in consultation with the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord, to complete the business case process for the extension of Inchgarth Community Centre and complete the delivery thereof;
- 9. Caring for Each Other**
- 9.1 instruct the Director of Commissioning to undertake a review of all grants awarded by the Council in order to ensure alignment to the 3 Tier Prevention Approach, which includes the Family Support Model, as per the Prevention Report and to report back to the Finance and Resources Committee before the end of the financial year 2023/24;
- 10. A Safer Aberdeen**
- 10.1 note the funding being provided by the Common Good to support the work of the Street Pastors; note that funding for the taxi marshals continues in 2023/24; both of which make a positive contribution to retaining purple flag accreditation;
- 11. A Transparent, Accessible and Accountable City**

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- 11.1 instruct the Communications Manager to bring back a report to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee outlining a scheme of public engagement, ahead of the 2024/25 budget setting process;
- 11.2 instruct the Chief Officer - City Growth to undertake a review of the Business Charter and report back to the Finance and Resources Committee before the end of the financial year 2023/24;

## 1 Balance Sheet Recommendations

- 1.1 approve the General Fund Capital Programme as attached at Appendix 1 of the motion;
- 1.2 approve the Prudential Indicators as attached at Appendix 2 of the motion;
- 1.3 approve the Revenue and Capital Reserves for 2023/24 as detailed in Appendix 6 of the Council report;
- 1.4 approve the implementation of the guidance on Service Concessions flexibility that is detailed in Appendix 7 of the Council report;
- 1.5 agree as part of the implementation of the Service Concession flexibility that the costs accounted for in years beyond the contract term will be met from the 3Rs schools and Lochside unitary charge budgets released at the end of their respective contracts;
- 1.6 approve the use of the retrospective funds released by the Service Concession flexibility for voluntary severance/early retirement payments from 2022/23 onwards (c.£33m), based on the commitment to no compulsory redundancies and the approved Medium Term Financial Strategy and TOM1.2 setting out the need for recurring staff savings over the next five years of £40m; and note that the cost of accessing the retrospective reserve will incur financing costs of c.£2m, which will be incorporated into the Council's treasury management arrangements;
- 1.7 approve a capital grant for the OpenSpace Trust (Scottish Charity: SC036920) of £358,000 for the Mither Kirk Project, to be funded from the City Centre and Beach Masterplan Capital Budget;
- 1.8 approve a capital grant in principle of £250,000 for the Great Western Community Trust SCIO to purchase and upgrade Holburn West Church, subject to funds not being paid until the Trust solicitors confirm the sufficient funds have been raised to purchase the Church and conditional missives have been concluded;

## 2 Medium-Term Financial Projections

- 2.1 instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to refresh the Medium Term Financial Strategy and report to the Council by the end of December 2023;
- 2.2 instruct the Chief Executive to review the existing organisational structure, in light of the approved budget and to report back to Council by December 2023 on any suggested amendments to ensure the sustainability of council operations;
- 2.3 instruct the Chief Executive to engage with the workforce seeking their input and feedback on shaping any amendments to the structure;
- 2.4 instruct the Chief Executive to align recommendation 2.2 and 2.3 above with the previous instruction given regarding Interim Organisational Structure (Council 13 October 2022, CUS/22/216);

## 3 Risks

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- 3.1 instruct the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chief Officer - Finance, to monitor delivery of budget savings and our planning assumptions on pay award and supply chain risk and to advise Council of any in year changes required;
  - 3.2 instruct the Chief Officer - Capital, in consultation with the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord and Chief Officer - Finance, to keep the Capital Programme under review from a value for money perspective and to advise the Finance and Resources Committee, as part of the Financial Performance Quarter 1 report, on any action required;
- 4 Revenue Budget Recommendations
- 4.1 having due regard to the contents of the report and appendices and taken advice from the Chief Officer - Finance in relation to the use of non-recurring funding, specifically in respect of Fiscal Flexibilities and use of Reserves; and had due regard to protected characteristics and how the authority could reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage in terms of the Equality Act 2010, approve the use of various savings options to set at least a balanced budget for financial year 2023/24 as detailed in Appendix 3 of the motion and the schedule of fees and charges in Appendix 5 of the motion;
  - 4.2 approve the Commissioning Intentions and Service Standards as described in Appendices 12 and 13 of the Council report, subject to any amendments approved, noting that the Chief Officer - Finance has confirmed, as far as possible, that the Commissioning Intentions and Service Standards being implemented are consistent with the draft budget for 2023/24 and Medium Term Financial Strategy;
  - 4.3 instruct the Chief Officer - Customer Experience to embed the revised Service Standards in the handling of service requests, enquiries, and complaints;
  - 4.4 approve the level of funding for the Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership IJB 2023/24 to meet the conditions of the Scottish Government Financial Settlement, described in paragraphs 3.124 and 3.129 to 3.134 of the Council report, and as shown in Appendix 4 of the motion noting that it will be for the IJB itself to determine how it will balance its budget;
  - 4.5 approve the fees and charges for the Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership IJB, as shown in Appendix 5 of the motion;
  - 4.6 approve the level of funding for the Council's other group entities and Arm's Length External Organisations (ALEOs), in 2023/24 as shown in Appendix 4 of the motion;
  - 4.7 approve the continued delegation of authority to the Chief Officer - Finance to approve the allocation of Covid19 related funding retained as an earmarked General Fund reserve at 31 March 2023, and any further sums distributed to the Council, to meet need and demand or to cover for lost income where it arises during 2023/24, reporting the use of funds to the Finance and Resources Committee in the quarterly financial performance reports;
  - 4.8 instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to give notice to the Board of Directors of NYOP Education (Aberdeen) Ltd to disburse £663,000 to Sport Aberdeen and £221,934 to VSA, being nominated charities of NYOP;
  - 4.9 instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to recover the full costs associated with being the Administering Authority of the North East Scotland Pension Fund from the Pension Fund;

## Council Meeting, 1 March 2023

- 4.10 instruct the Chief Officer - Education to report options to the Education and Children's Services Committee on rationalising ELC settings to match the Scottish Government Grant;
  - 4.11 instruct the Chief Officer - Education to deliver holiday programmes with a budget of £100,000;
  - 4.12 instruct the Chief Officer - City Growth to inform the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions and the North Sea Commission of the decision to withdraw membership;
  - 4.13 instruct the Chief Officer - Commercial and Procurement, in consultation with Chief Officer - Early Intervention and Community Empowerment, to terminate the agreement with SISTEMA Scotland to deliver the Big Noise Torry programme;
  - 4.14 instruct the Chief Officer - Early Intervention and Community Empowerment to cease revenue grant funding for the Workers Education Association from the 31 March 2023;
  - 4.15 instruct the Chief Officer - Early Intervention and Community Empowerment in consultation with the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to decommission the following libraries in Quarter 1 2023/24 - Cornhill, Cults, Northfield, Ferryhill, Woodside & Kaimhill;
  - 4.16 instruct the Chief Officer - Operations and Protective Services in consultation with the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to decommission the following public toilets in Quarter 1 2023/24 - Spa Street and Peterculter;
  - 4.17 instruct the Chief Officer - Operations and Protective Services to reduce the number of litter bins following a survey to establish the under used bins;
  - 4.18 instruct the Chief Officer - Operations and Protective Services to apply a 10% reduction in cleaning input hours in all operational properties other than schools and other educational establishments;
  - 4.19 instruct the Chief Officer - Operations and Protective Services to remove funding for discretionary school transport, supported bus services 21A (Cove) and 22A/B (Torry/Balnagask) to Lochside Academy, also supported bus services 52 Mannofield to Hazlehead Academy, via Springfield Road;
  - 4.20 instruct the Chief Officer - Operations and Protective Services to remove funding for supported bus service 14, Kingswells - City Centre (Mon to Fri, all day service) and service 15a, Craigiebuckler/Airyhall - City Centre (Mon to Fri, evening service);
  - 4.21 note that school meal charges will be limited to an increase of 15p per meal for primary school and 20p for secondary school meals;
  - 4.22 instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to review the commercial estate with a view to disinvesting in assets where significant investment is required, management costs are high in relation to rental levels or there is low demand, to declare sites surplus to council requirement and thereafter manage each through the asset disposal process, reporting any future sales above delegated levels to the Finance and Resources Committee;
  - 4.23 instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to consider and implement options to reduce energy consumption across the asset estates, and with the support of the Chief Officer - Education consider ways to engage with young people within our school estate to achieve this;
- 5 Taxation Recommendations
- 5.1 approve a Band D equivalent Council Tax rate of £1,489.55 (5% increase), with effect from 1 April 2023;

## Council Meeting, 1 March 2023

- 5.2 impose and levy Council Tax assessments for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 on all chargeable dwellings in Aberdeen City to be paid by the persons liable therefor under the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994;
  - 5.3 following the devolution of the NDR Empty Property Relief to Local Government, approve the Empty Property Relief Scheme for Aberdeen City with effect from 1 April 2023, as set out in Appendix 3 of the motion;
  - 5.4 impose and levy Non-Domestic Rates assessments for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 on all occupiers in Aberdeen City to be paid by those liable;
- 6 Carbon Budget Recommendations
- 6.1 agree a Carbon Budget of 26,474 tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO<sub>2</sub>e) and an annual savings target of 2,482 tCO<sub>2</sub>e for 2023/24 as per Table 2 in Appendix 14 of the Council report;
  - 6.2 instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning to implement phase 2 actions, as set out in Appendix 14 of the Council report;
  - 6.3 instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning, in consultation with the Chief Officer - Finance, to submit provisional quarterly carbon budget monitoring reports to the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee;

It is further recommended that Council:

- 7.1 note the projected balance sheet position including the reserves as at 31 March 2023, shown at Appendix 1 of the Council report;
- 7.2 note the forecast medium-term financial projection for the period ending 31 March 2028 as shown in paragraph 3.36 of the Council report;
- 7.3 note that the Scottish Government published its Resource Spending Review in May 2022 that stated that Local Government should expect to receive a 'flat cash' settlement for the period 2023/24 to 2025/26, and that following the publication of the Local Government Financial Settlement for 2023/24, on a like for like basis, this position is borne out with a 0.2% increase to revenue funding being awarded for financial year 2023/24;
- 7.4 note that the Local Government financial settlement annually has to be supplemented by allocations from other Scottish Government portfolios, and Ministers have guaranteed £1bn out of the current £1.4bn received by Local Government;
- 7.5 note that pay negotiations for the current financial year, 2022/23, are not concluded creating risk of further financial exposure this and next year, pay being the largest single element of the Council budget even small changes to this can have material impact on Council finances;
- 7.6 note the Scotland Excel Supply Chain Bulletin, January 2023, highlighted the exposure that the local Government sector has to inflation, in particular the emphasis on 'very high' exposure applying to a large number of procurement frameworks on which the Council relies;
- 7.7 note that future borrowing costs are higher than they have been since 2011;
- 7.8 note that the Risk Appetite Statement states that the Council is averse to risks associated with impairing financial stewardship, internal controls, and financial sustainability;
- 7.9 note that the conditions outlined by the Scottish Government within the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2023/24 are met by the proposals set out in the report;

## Council Meeting, 1 March 2023

- 7.10 note that the General Fund budget has £4m of in-year contingencies included to provide for the known and unknown risks that may arise during the year, this represents 0.7% of the net budget;
  - 7.11 note the Council's approach towards meeting the target of 1% of revenue funding being available for Participatory Budgeting;
  - 7.12 note that there are expected to be short term proposals forthcoming on Council Tax reliefs for long term empty properties and second homes and this was discussed by Cosla Leaders on 24 February and noted that any changes to powers would be for use from April 2024, and not before;
  - 7.13 note that the Council implements revisions to the national Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) scheme as defined by the Scottish Government within the relevant legislation and Finance Circulars, with effect from 1 April 2023;
  - 7.14 note that the Council intends to review the NDR Empty Property Relief scheme on an annual basis, and this will be done in the context of work instructed on the Union Street Empty Shops Action Plan (COM/22/287);
  - 7.15 note the progress in implementing phase one actions of the Council's agreed approach to carbon budgeting.
8. Common Good
- 8.1 approve the Common Good budget for 2023/24 as detailed in the Common Good budget report, modified as detailed in Appendix 6 of the motion; and
  - 8.2 note that in making grant funding available to external organisations, all payments of such funding are subject to the Chief Officer - Finance being satisfied that any necessary planning or other consents have been obtained and that such grant awards are managed in accordance with the Following the Public Pound guidance.

**Appendices to the Motion:**

Appendix 1 - General Fund Capital Programme 2023/24 - 2027/28

Appendix 2 - Prudential Indicators

Appendix 3 - Budget Options to balance the 2023/24 Revenue Budget and NDR Empty Property Relief Scheme

Appendix 4 - Schedule of Funding for ALEOs

Appendix 5 - Schedule of Fees and Charges to apply to 2023/24

Appendix 6 - Common Good Decisions

(Budgets associated with Councillor McLellan's motion are available [here](#))

Councillor Crockett moved as an amendment, seconded by Councillor Blake:-  
That the Council -

- i. notes the residents of Aberdeen are finding things tough thanks to SNP austerity and the Cost of Living crisis, therefore, it is incumbent upon all Aberdeen City Council Councillors to reflect the impact of SNP austerity and the Cost of Living crisis is having on Aberdeen City residents in their proposed budgets;
- ii. notes that Councillors are the custodians of the people's money and in a cost of living crisis it is not in the people's interest for their Council administration to squirrel their money into reserves whilst citizens cannot afford to heat their homes feed their children and pay excessive Council tax;

## Council Meeting, 1 March 2023

- iii. notes the COSLA budget reality Local Government Settlement 23/24 which shows the pressures Local government are under when it comes to funding which is also highlighted in the Council report at 2.3.1 regarding risks where the Council report notes a poor financial settlement for local government;
  - iv. notes the Council report regarding the use of one-off funding within the 2022/23 budget noting all those who did a budget in 2022/23 chose to use £19.4m to balance their budget. Agree that whilst the Chief Officer - Finance is correct to point out the challenges faced by Council, it is clear that thanks to the Scottish Government's inadequate financial settlement this year the Council will receive little more than no additional funding for 2023/24, compared with 2022/23 as noted at 3.75 of the report;
  - v. notes paragraph 3.45 of the Council report where the Chief Officer - Finance indicates that the Council was in a strong position going into the financial year 2021/22 with indicators showing Council maintained that strong position whilst improving or maintaining positive trends. Noting paragraph 3.47 of the Council report indicating the Council has maintained strong financial performance into 2022/23;
  - vi. notes that the Council recognised the need to give greater attention to financial resilience by instructing the Chief Officer - Finance to produce a Financial Resilience Framework for Aberdeen City Council in 2021. Noting Appendix 2, the Financial Resilience Framework, attached to the Council report where the Council acknowledged, in the reports to the Urgent Business Committee and City Growth and Resources Committee in 2020 that financial resilience was a crucial aspect of financial management. Agrees this has led to the Council being firmly in control of its finances;
  - vii. notes 3.12 of the Council report regarding limits placed on the funding local government receives, means, that local authorities must turn to the fiscal levers they have, to exercise control and to maximise and influence the level of income they have, to pay for services, therefore instructs the Chief Executive to bring forward a report to the Council by December 2023 on the implication of introducing a Workplace Parking Levy (WPL). This would allow the Council to start negotiations with the bus companies on the introduction of a £2 fixed fare for every journey for Aberdeen citizens;
  - viii. overturns the decision made on the 14 December 2022 regarding Parking charges restoring them to their current levels and instructs the Chief Officer - Operations and Protective Services to cancel the implementation and actions taken to increase on-street and off-street parking charges and parking permits from 1 April 2023, approved by Council;
- 1 Balance Sheet Recommendations
- 1.1 approve the General Fund Capital Programme as attached at Appendix 1 of the amendment;
  - 1.2 approve the Prudential Indicators as attached at Appendix 2 of the amendment;
  - 1.3 approve the Revenue and Capital Reserves for 2023/24 as detailed in Appendix 6 of the Council report;
  - 1.4 approve the implementation of the guidance on Service Concessions flexibility that is detailed in Appendix 7 of the Council report;
  - 1.5 agree as part of the implementation of the Service Concession flexibility that the costs accounted for in years beyond the contract term will be met from the 3Rs

## Council Meeting, 1 March 2023

- schools and Lochside unitary charge budgets released at the end of their respective contracts;
- 1.6 approve the use of the retrospective funds released by the Service Concession flexibility for voluntary severance/early retirement payments from 2022/23 onwards (c.£29.6m), based on the commitment to no compulsory redundancies and the approved Medium Term Financial Strategy and TOM1.2 setting out the need for recurring staff savings over the next five years of £40m; and approve a one-off contribution to balancing the revenue budget, £3.4m in 2023/24; and note that the cost of accessing the retrospective reserve will incur financing costs of c.£2m, which will be incorporated into the Councils treasury management arrangements;
  - 1.7 note that the Capital Programme at Appendix 1 of the amendment includes investment in the expansion of the Heat Network over the next five years, investing £35m;
  - 1.8 agree that Northfield Academy is past its sell by date and as a regeneration area deserves a new purpose built secondary academy including community facilities therefore instruct the Chief Executive to bring forward a report to the Council on the best way to bring forward proposals to build a school starting in 2024/25, including indicative funding in the capital programme to deliver this;
- 2 Medium-Term Financial Projections
- 2.1 instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to refresh the Medium Term Financial Strategy and report to the Council by the end of December 2023;
  - 2.2 note the statutory powers of the Head of Paid Service under s4 local government and housing Act 1989 as amended and instruct the Chief Executive to use those powers and to report back to Council by December 2023 on any proposals to ensure the sustainability of council operations;
  - 2.3 instruct the Chief Executive to engage with the Trade Unions seeking their input and feedback on shaping any amendments to the structure;
  - 2.4 instruct the Chief Executive to align recommendations 2.2 and 2.3 above with the previous instruction given regarding Interim Organisational Structure (Council 13 October 2022, CUS/22/216);
- 3 Risks
- 3.1 instruct the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chief Officer - Finance, to monitor delivery of budget savings and our planning assumptions on pay award and supply chain risk and to advise Council of any in year changes required;
  - 3.2 instruct the Chief Officer - Capital, in consultation with the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord and Chief Officer - Finance, to keep the Capital Programme under review from a value for money perspective and to advise the Finance and Resources Committee, as part of the Financial Performance Quarter 1 report, on any action required;
- 4 Revenue Budget Recommendations
- 4.1 having due regard to the contents of the report and appendices and taken advice from the Chief Officer - Finance in relation to the use of non-recurring funding, specifically in respect of Fiscal Flexibilities and use of Reserves; and had due regard to protected characteristics and how the authority could reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage in terms of the Equality Act 2010, approve the use of various savings options to set at least a

## Council Meeting, 1 March 2023

- balanced budget for financial year 2023/24 as detailed in Appendix 3 of the amendment and the schedule of fees and charges in Appendix 5 of the amendment;
- 4.2 approve the Commissioning Intentions and Service Standards as described in Appendices 12 and 13 of the Council report, subject to any amendments approved, noting that the Chief Officer - Finance has confirmed, as far as possible, that the Commissioning Intentions and Service Standards being implemented are consistent with the draft budget for 2023/24 and Medium Term Financial Strategy;
  - 4.3 instruct the Chief Officer - Customer Experience to embed the revised Service Standards in the handling of service requests, enquiries and complaints;
  - 4.4 approve the level of funding for the Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership IJB 2023/24 to meet the conditions of the Scottish Government Financial Settlement, described in paragraphs 3.124 and 3.129 to 3.134 of the Council report, and as shown in Appendix 4 of the amendment noting that it will be for the IJB itself to determine how it will balance its budget;
  - 4.5 approve the fees and charges for the Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership IJB, as shown in Appendix 5 of the amendment;
  - 4.6 approve the level of funding for the Council's other group entities and Arm's Length External Organisations (ALEOs), in 2023/24 as shown in Appendix 4 of the amendment;
  - 4.7 approve the continued delegation of authority to the Chief Officer - Finance to approve the allocation of Covid19 related funding retained as an earmarked General Fund reserve at 31 March 2023, and any further sums distributed to the Council, to meet need and demand or to cover for lost income where it arises during 2023/24, reporting the use of funds to the Finance and Resources Committee in the quarterly financial performance reports;
  - 4.8 instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to give notice to the Board of Directors of NYOP Education (Aberdeen) Ltd to disburse £663,000 to Sport Aberdeen and £221,934 to VSA, being nominated charities of NYOP;
  - 4.9 instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to recover the full costs associated with being the Administering Authority of the North East Scotland Pension Fund from the Pension Fund;
  - 4.10 instruct the Chief Officer - Commercial and Procurement, in consultation with Chief Officer - City Growth, to terminate the agreement with Visit Aberdeenshire;
  - 4.11 instruct the Chief Officer - Commercial and Procurement, in consultation with Chief Officer - Early Intervention and Community Empowerment, to reduce the maximum funding commitment by 20% to SISTEMA Scotland, for the delivery the Big Noise Torry programme;
  - 4.12 instruct the Chief Officer - Operations and Protective Services to increase the charge for the Garden Waste Collection permit by £10, to £40, per annum with effect from 1 September 2023;
  - 4.13 instruct the Chief Officer - Operations and Protective Services to remove funding for discretionary school transport, supported bus services 52 Mannofield to Hazlehead Academy, via Springfield Road;
  - 4.14 instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to review the commercial estate with a view to disinvesting in assets where significant investment is required, management costs are high in relation to rental levels or there is low demand, to declare sites surplus to council requirement and thereafter manage each through

## Council Meeting, 1 March 2023

- the asset disposal process, reporting any future sales above delegated levels to the Finance and Resources Committee;
- 4.15 instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to consider and implement options to reduce energy consumption across the asset estates, and with the support of the Chief Officer - Education consider ways to engage with young people within our school estate to achieve this;
- 4.16 instruct Chief Officer - Early Intervention and Community Empowerment, based on the revised national guidance issued by Transport Scotland on 17 February 2023, to increase the enforcement fee for Penalty Charge Notices to the 'Higher' level (£50/£100/£150) for Aberdeen, effective from 1 April 2023;
- 4.17 agree the Aberdeen Labour budget will:
- NOT STOP THE EASTER/SUMMER OF PLAY FOR OUR CHILDREN
  - NOT REMOVE RECYCLING AND ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES IN SCHOOLS
  - NOT REMOVE THE MUSIC SERVICE
  - NOT INTRODUCE OUT OF SCHOOL CHARGES
  - NOT REDUCE LEVEL OF FUNDING TO PARENT COUNCILS
  - NOT REDUCE EDUCATION PROVISION FOR OUR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
  - NOT STOP FUNDING PERFORMANCE SWIMMING
  - NOT COMMERCIALISE OUR BELOVED BEACH BALLROOM
  - NOT CUT CULTURAL GRANTS
  - CONTINUE TO BANG THE DRUM FOR ABERDEEN
  - NOT REPLACE SISTEMA
  - NOT STOP FAIRER ABERDEEN FUND
  - NOT CLOSE LIBRARIES
  - NOT REMOVE ENVIRONMENTAL HIT SQUADS
  - NOT REVIEW PETS CORNER
  - NOT CLOSE PUBLIC TOILETS
  - NOT REDUCE LITTER BIN COLLECTIONS
  - CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN WORK IN OUR AWARD-WINNING PARKS AND GARDENS
  - CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN GRASS CUTTING, SHRUB AND CEMENTERIES MAINTENANCE
  - NOT STOP FREE CATERING IN OUR SCHOOLS
  - NOT STOP OR REDUCE CLEANING OF OUR SCHOOLS
  - NOT INCREASE SCHOOL MEAL CHARGES
  - NOT REDUCE TRADE UNION FACILITY TIME
  - NOT INCREASE CHARGES BY 10% ACROSS OUR SERVICES
- 5 Taxation Recommendations
- 5.1 approve a Band D equivalent Council Tax rate of £1,489.55 (5% increase), with effect from 1 April 2023;
- 5.2 impose and levy Council Tax assessments for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 on all chargeable dwellings in Aberdeen City to be paid by the persons liable therefor under the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994;
- 5.3 following the devolution of the NDR Empty Property Relief to Local Government, approve the Empty Property Relief Scheme for Aberdeen City with effect from 1

## Council Meeting, 1 March 2023

April 2023, as set out in paragraphs 3.85 to 3.88 of the Council report and Appendix 3 of the amendment;

- 5.4 impose and levy Non-Domestic Rates assessments for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 on all occupiers in Aberdeen City to be paid by those liable;

6 Carbon Budget Recommendations

- 6.1 agree a Carbon Budget of 26,474 tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO<sub>2</sub>e) and an annual savings target of 2,482 tCO<sub>2</sub>e for 2023/24 as per Table 2 in Appendix 14 of the Council report;
- 6.2 instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning to implement phase 2 actions, as set out in Appendix 14 of the Council report;
- 6.3 instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning, in consultation with the Chief Officer - Finance, to submit provisional quarterly carbon budget monitoring reports to the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee;

It is further recommended that Council:

- 7.1 note the projected balance sheet position including the reserves as at 31 March 2023, shown at Appendix 1;
- 7.2 note the forecast medium-term financial projection for the period ending 31 March 2028 as shown in paragraph 3.36 of the Council report;
- 7.3 note that the Scottish Government published its Resource Spending Review in May 2022 that stated that Local Government should expect to receive a 'flat cash' settlement for the period 2023/24 to 2025/26, and that following the publication of the Local Government Financial Settlement for 2023/24, on a like for like basis, this position is borne out with a 0.2% increase to revenue funding being awarded for financial year 2023/24;
- 7.4 note that the Local Government financial settlement annually has to be supplemented by allocations from other Scottish Government portfolios, and Ministers have guaranteed £1bn out of the current £1.4bn received by Local Government;
- 7.5 note that pay negotiations for the current financial year, 2022/23, are not concluded creating risk of further financial exposure this and next year, pay being the largest single element of the Council budget even small changes to this can have material impact on Council finances;
- 7.6 note the Scotland Excel Supply Chain Bulletin, January 2023, highlighted the exposure that the local Government sector has to inflation, in particular the emphasis on 'very high' exposure applying to a large number of procurement frameworks on which the Council relies;
- 7.7 note that future borrowing costs are higher than they have been since 2011;
- 7.8 note that the Risk Appetite Statement states that the Council is averse to risks associated with impairing financial stewardship, internal controls, and financial sustainability;
- 7.9 note that the conditions outlined by the Scottish Government within the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2023/24 are met by the proposals set out in the report;
- 7.10 note that the General Fund budget has £4m of in-year contingencies included to provide for the known and unknown risks that may arise during the year, this represents 0.7% of the net budget;
- 7.11 note the Council's approach towards meeting the target of 1% of revenue funding being available for Participatory Budgeting;

## Council Meeting, 1 March 2023

- 7.12 note that there are expected to be short term proposals forthcoming on Council Tax reliefs for long term empty properties and second homes was discussed by Cosla Leaders on 24 February and noted that any changes to powers would be for use from April 2024, and not before;
  - 7.13 note that the Council implements revisions to the national Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) scheme as defined by the Scottish Government within the relevant legislation and Finance Circulars, with effect from 1 April 2023;
  - 7.14 note that the Council intends to review the NDR Empty Property Relief scheme on an annual basis, and this will be done in the context of work instructed on the Union Street Empty Shops Action Plan (COM/22/287);
  - 7.15 note the progress in implementing Phase one actions of the Council's agreed approach to carbon budgeting;
- 8 Common Good
- 8.1 note the decision of Council to approve the Aberdeen Local Development Plan in December 2022, note the decision of Council in February 2023 not to proceed with plans to develop Greenferns Landward. Therefore, instruct the Chief Executive to bring forward a report to the Council by December 2023 on selling Greenferns Landward, once it has received the appropriate planning approval in order to protect the Council's obligations under the Aberdeen Local Development Plan; and
  - 8.2 agree to move the Common Good Fund proposals to the next Finance and Resources Committee meeting.

**Appendices to the amendment:**

Appendix 1 - General Fund Capital Programme 2023/24 - 2027/28

Appendix 2 - Prudential Indicators

Appendix 3 - Budget Options to balance the 2023/24 Revenue Budget & NDR Empty Property Relief Scheme

Appendix 4 - Schedule of Funding for ALEOs

Appendix 5 - Schedule of Fees and Charges to apply to 2023/24

(Budgets associated with Councillor Crockett's amendment are available [here](#))

Councillor Houghton moved as a further amendment, seconded by Councillor Brooks:-  
That the Council -

1 Balance Sheet Recommendations

- 1.1 approve the General Fund Capital Programme as attached at Appendix 1 of the amendment;
- 1.2 approve the Prudential Indicators as attached at Appendix 2 of the amendment;
- 1.3 approve the Revenue and Capital Reserves for 2023/24 as detailed in Appendix 6 of the Council report;
- 1.4 approve the implementation of the guidance on Service Concessions flexibility that is detailed in Appendix 7 of the Council report;
- 1.5 agree as part of the implementation of the Service Concession flexibility that the costs accounted for in years beyond the contract term will be met from the 3Rs schools and Lochside unitary charge budgets released at the end of their respective contracts;

## Council Meeting, 1 March 2023

- 1.6 approve the use of the retrospective funds released by the Service Concession flexibility for voluntary severance/early retirement payments from 2022/23 onwards (c.£12m), and approve a one-off contribution to balancing the revenue budget, £20.4m in 2023/24; and note that the cost of accessing the retrospective reserve will incur financing costs of c.£2m, which will be incorporated into the Council's treasury management arrangements;
- 2 Medium-Term Financial Projections
  - 2.1 instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to refresh the Medium Term Financial Strategy and report to the Council by the end of December 2023;
  - 2.2 instruct the Chief Executive to review the existing organisational structure, in light of the approved budget and to report back to Council by December 2023 on any suggested amendments to ensure the sustainability of council operations;
  - 2.3 instruct the Chief Executive to engage with the workforce seeking their input and feedback on shaping any amendments to the structure;
  - 2.4 instruct the Chief Executive to align recommendation 2.2 and 2.3 above with the previous instruction given regarding Interim Organisational Structure (Council 13 October 2022, CUS/22/216);
- 3 Risks
  - 3.1 instruct the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chief Officer - Finance, to monitor delivery of budget savings and our planning assumptions on pay award and supply chain risk and to advise Council of any in year changes required;
  - 3.2 instruct the Chief Officer - Capital, in consultation with the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord and Chief Officer - Finance, to keep the Capital Programme under review from a value for money perspective and to advise the Finance and Resources Committee, as part of the Financial Performance Quarter 1 report, on any action required;
- 4 Revenue Budget Recommendations
  - 4.1 having due regard to the contents of the report and appendices and taken advice from the Chief Officer - Finance in relation to the use of non-recurring funding, specifically in respect of Fiscal Flexibilities and use of Reserves; and had due regard to protected characteristics and how the authority could reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage in terms of the Equality Act 2010, approve the use of various savings options to set at least a balanced budget for financial year 2023/24 as detailed in Appendix 3 of the amendment and the schedule of fees and charges in Appendix 5 of the amendment;
  - 4.2 approve the Commissioning Intentions and Service Standards as described in Appendices 12 and 13 of the Council report, subject to any amendments approved, noting that the Chief Officer - Finance has confirmed, as far as possible, that the Commissioning Intentions and Service Standards being implemented are consistent with the draft budget for 2023/24 and Medium Term Financial Strategy;
  - 4.3 instruct the Chief Officer - Customer Experience to embed the revised Service Standards in the handling of service requests, enquiries and complaints;
  - 4.4 approve the level of funding for the Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership IJB 2023/24 to meet the conditions of the Scottish Government Financial Settlement, described in paragraphs 3.124 and 3.129 to 3.134 of the

## Council Meeting, 1 March 2023

- Council report, and as shown in Appendix 4 of the amendment noting that it will be for the IJB itself to determine how it will balance its budget;
- 4.5 approve the fees and charges for the Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership IJB, as shown in Appendix 5 of the amendment;
  - 4.6 approve the level of funding for the Council's other group entities and Arm's Length External Organisations (ALEOs), in 2023/24 as shown in Appendix 4 of the amendment;
  - 4.7 approve the continued delegation of authority to the Chief Officer - Finance to approve the allocation of Covid19 related funding retained as an earmarked General Fund reserve at 31 March 2023, and any further sums distributed to the Council, to meet need and demand or to cover for lost income where it arises during 2023/24, reporting the use of funds to the Finance and Resources Committee in the quarterly financial performance reports;
  - 4.8 instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to give notice to the Board of Directors of NYOP Education (Aberdeen) Ltd to disburse £663,000 to Sport Aberdeen and £221,934 to VSA, being nominated charities of NYOP;
  - 4.9 instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to recover the full costs associated with being the Administering Authority of the North East Scotland Pension Fund from the Pension Fund;
  - 4.10 instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to review the commercial estate with a view to disinvesting in assets where significant investment is required, management costs are high in relation to rental levels or there is low demand, to declare sites surplus to council requirement and thereafter manage each through the asset disposal process, reporting any future sales above delegated levels to the Finance and Resources Committee;
  - 4.11 instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to consider and implement options to reduce energy consumption across the asset estates, and with the support of the Chief Officer - Education consider ways to engage with young people within our school estate to achieve this;
  - 4.12 note that fees and charges will rise, in general, by just 3% next year;
  - 4.13 instruct Chief Officer - Early Intervention and Community Empowerment, based on the revised national guidance issued by Transport Scotland on 17 February 2023, to increase the enforcement fee for Penalty Charge Notices to the 'Higher' level (£50/£100/£150) for Aberdeen, effective from 1 April 2023;
  - 4.14 instruct the Chief Officer - Operations and Protective Services to cancel the implementation and actions taken to increase on-street and off-street parking charges and parking permits from 1 April 2023, approved by Council, 14 December 2022;
- 5 Taxation Recommendations
- 5.1 approve a Band D equivalent Council Tax rate of £1,462.74 (3.11% increase), with effect from 1 April 2023;
  - 5.2 impose and levy Council Tax assessments for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 on all chargeable dwellings in Aberdeen City to be paid by the persons liable therefor under the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994;
  - 5.3 following the devolution of the NDR Empty Property Relief to Local Government, approve the Empty Property Relief Scheme for Aberdeen City with effect from 1 April 2023, as set out in paragraphs 3.85 to 3.88 of the Council report and Appendix 3 of the amendment;

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- 5.4 impose and levy Non-Domestic Rates assessments for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 on all occupiers in Aberdeen City to be paid by those liable;
- 5.5 instruct the Chief Officer - Customer Experience, under Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, to implement a Business Rates Exemption Zone with effect from 1 April 2023 for Union Street postcodes, offering 100% rates relief; noting this will be funded in year 1 by one-off funding through the Service Concession reserve; and thereafter instruct the Chief Officer - City Growth to review the Empty Property Relief Scheme during 2023/24 and report back by December 2023 on options to provide recurring funding for the Business Rates Exemption Zone;

## 6 Carbon Budget Recommendations

- 6.1 agree a Carbon Budget of 26,474 tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO<sub>2</sub>e) and an annual savings target of 2,482 tCO<sub>2</sub>e for 2023/24 as per Table 2 in Appendix 14 of the Council report;
- 6.2 instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning to implement phase 2 actions, as set out in Appendix 14 of the Council report;
- 6.3 instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning, in consultation with the Chief Officer - Finance, to submit provisional quarterly carbon budget monitoring reports to the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee;

It is further recommended that Council

- 7.1 note the projected balance sheet position including the reserves as at 31 March 2023, shown at Appendix 1;
- 7.2 note the forecast medium-term financial projection for the period ending 31 March 2028 as shown in paragraph 3.36 of the Council report;
- 7.3 note that the Scottish Government published its Resource Spending Review in May 2022 that stated that Local Government should expect to receive a 'flat cash' settlement for the period 2023/24 to 2025/26, and that following the publication of the Local Government Financial Settlement for 2023/24, on a like for like basis, this position is borne out with a 0.2% increase to revenue funding being awarded for financial year 2023/24;
- 7.4 note that the Local Government financial settlement annually has to be supplemented by allocations from other Scottish Government portfolios, and Ministers have guaranteed £1bn out of the current £1.4bn received by Local Government;
- 7.5 note that pay negotiations for the current financial year, 2022/23, are not concluded creating risk of further financial exposure this and next year, pay being the largest single element of the Council budget even small changes to this can have material impact on Council finances;
- 7.6 note the Scotland Excel Supply Chain Bulletin, January 2023, highlighted the exposure that the local Government sector has to inflation, in particular the emphasis on 'very high' exposure applying to a large number of procurement frameworks on which the Council relies;
- 7.7 note that future borrowing costs are higher than they have been since 2011;
- 7.8 note that the Risk Appetite Statement states that the Council is averse to risks associated with impairing financial stewardship, internal controls, and financial sustainability;

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- 7.9 note that the conditions outlined by the Scottish Government within the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2023/24 are met by the proposals set out in the report;
- 7.10 note that the General Fund budget has £5m of in-year contingencies included to provide for the known and unknown risks that may arise during the year, this represents 0.9% of the net budget;
- 7.11 note the Council's approach towards meeting the target of 1% of revenue funding being available for Participatory Budgeting;
- 7.12 note that there are expected to be short term proposals forthcoming on Council Tax reliefs for long term empty properties and second homes was discussed by Cosla Leaders on 24 February and noted that any changes to powers would be for use from April 2024, and not before;
- 7.13 note that the Council implements revisions to the national Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) scheme as defined by the Scottish Government within the relevant legislation and Finance Circulars, with effect from 1 April 2023;
- 7.14 note that the Council intends to review the NDR Empty Property Relief scheme on an annual basis, and this will be done in the context of work instructed on the Union Street Empty Shops Action Plan (COM/22/287);
- 7.15 note the progress in implementing phase one actions of the Council's agreed approach to carbon budgeting;
8. **Common Good**
- 8.1 approve the Common Good budget for 2023/24 as detailed in the Common Good budget report, modified as detailed in Appendix 6 of the amendment; and
- 8.2 note that in making grant funding available to external organisations, all payments of such funding are subject to the Chief Officer - Finance being satisfied that any necessary planning or other consents have been obtained and that such grant awards are managed in accordance with the Following the Public Pound guidance.

### **Appendices to the Amendment**

Appendix 1 - General Fund Capital Programme 2023/24 - 2027/28

Appendix 2 - Prudential Indicators

Appendix 3 - Budget Options to balance the 2023/24 Revenue Budget and NDR Empty Property Relief Scheme

Appendix 4 - Schedule of Funding for ALEOs

Appendix 5 - Schedule of Fees and Charges to apply to 2023/24

Appendix 6 - Common Good Decisions

(Budgets associated with Councillor Houghton's amendment are available [here](#))

There being a motion and two amendments, the Council first divided between the amendment by Councillor Crockett and the amendment by Councillor Houghton.

On a division, there voted:-

For the amendment by Councillor Crockett - (12) - Councillors Ali, Blake, Bonsell, Crockett, Graham, Grant, Lawrence, Macdonald, Malik, Thomson, Tissera and Watson.

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For the amendment by Councillor Houghton (7) - Councillors Boulton, Brooks, Farquhar, Houghton, Kuszniir, McLeod and Massey.

Declined to vote (24) - Lord Provost; Depute Provost; and Councillors Al-Samarai, Allard, Alphonse, Bouse, Hazel Cameron, Clark, Cooke, Copland, Cormie, Davidson, Fairfull, Greig, Henrickson, Hutchison, MacGregor, McLellan, McRae, Mennie, Nicoll, Radley, van Sweeden and Yuill.

The Council then divided between the motion and the amendment by Councillor Crockett.

On a division, there voted:-

For the motion (24) - Lord Provost; Depute Provost; and Councillors Al-Samarai, Allard, Alphonse, Bouse, Hazel Cameron, Clark, Cooke, Copland, Cormie, Davidson, Fairfull, Greig, Henrickson, Hutchison, MacGregor, McLellan, McRae, Mennie, Nicoll, Radley, van Sweeden and Yuill.

For the amendment by Councillor Crockett - (12) - Councillors Ali, Blake, Bonsell, Crockett, Graham, Grant, Lawrence, Macdonald, Malik, Thomson, Tissera and Watson.

Declined to vote (7) - Councillors Boulton, Brooks, Farquhar, Houghton, Kuszniir, McLeod and Massey.

**The Council resolved:-**  
to adopt the motion.

## **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET 2023/24 - RES/23/081**

7. The Council had before it a report by the Director of Resources which provided information to enable the Council to approve a revenue and capital budget for 2023/24, including setting of the rents and other charges on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the financial year.

**The report recommended:-**  
that the Council -

- (a) approve the budget as attached in Appendix 1, pages 2 to 3, of the report;
- (b) approve the setting of the weekly unrebated rents for municipal houses taking account of proposals outlined for a fixed rent policy, as detailed in Appendix 1, pages 2 to 8 of the report, to take effect from Monday 1 May 2023;
- (c) approve the level of revenue contribution to the Housing Capital budget for 2023/24 as well as note the provisional contribution for the subsequent four financial years as detailed in Appendix 1, pages 11 to 13;
- (d) agree to maintain the working balances at 10% to meet future operational requirements and risks, noting that if the Housing Revenue Account recorded a deficit and had no reserves then the Council's General Fund must make a contribution to balance the Account;

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- (e) approve the level of miscellaneous rents and service charges, including Heat with Rent as detailed in Appendix 1, pages 9 to 10 to take effect from Monday 1 May 2023;
- (f) approve, based on a rental increase of 4% the Base Capital Programme for the financial year 2023/24 Appendix 1, pages 11 to 13;
- (g) note the indicative level of the Base Capital Programme for the financial years 2024/25 to 2024/28 Appendix 1, pages 11 to 13;
- (h) delegate authority to the Chief Officer - Capital, following consultation with the Chief Officer - Commercial and Procurement, to procure the necessary professional services and construction works referred to in Appendix 1 entitled 'New Housing Capital Programme Budget' without the need for further approval from any other committee of the Council subject to due diligence, consistency with the financial model and affordability;
- (i) note that the delivery and programme management of the new build project was being delivered with the use of frameworks for professional services contracts which included, programme and project management, technical support and quality assurance all of which was being delivered with the normal fee scales for Housing Projects. These services would continue across the programme as new projects were identified;
- (j) note that the current long term Council house rent policy runs out on the 31 March 2023, and instruct the Chief Officer - Early Intervention and Community Empowerment to undertake a consultation on a further long term Council house rent policy for inclusion in the 2024/25 budget process;
- (k) note the recommendation in the Prevention and Early Intervention report also being considered at the Council meeting of 1 March 2023 to undertake tiered analysis of resource requirements in the refreshed Local Housing Strategy to be presented for approval to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee, noting the significance of housing as one of the key determinants of population health;
- (l) instruct the Chief Officer - Early Intervention and Community Empowerment, in consultation with the Chief Officer - Finance, to undertake a tiered trend analysis of the Housing Revenue Account Budget for inclusion in the 2024/25 budget process, ensuring an appropriate focus is placed on prevention and early intervention when investing tenant funds; and
- (m) in response to the instruction of the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee of 17 January 2023 to *(iv) instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord, as part of the 2023/24 budget setting process, to consider the balance between pro-active preventative maintenance and replacement works with a view to reporting a more robust planned maintenance programme as part of the HRA Capital and Revenue budgets, reflecting all other budget pressures;* agree that 10% of the HRA Repair and maintenance budget be ringfenced for planned maintenance works on the estate.

At this juncture, the Depute Provost advised that he had a connection in relation to the item by reason of being appointed by the Council to the Board of the Disabled Persons Housing Service, however having applied the objective test, he did not consider that he had an interest and would not be withdrawing from the meeting.

**The Council resolved:-**

- (i) to approve the budget as attached as Appendix 1;

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- (ii) to approve the setting of the weekly unrebated rents for municipal houses taking account of proposals outlined for a fixed rent policy, as detailed in Appendix 1, pages 2 to 8, to take effect from 1 May 2023;
- (iii) to approve the level of revenue contribution to the Housing Capital budget for 2023/24 as well as to note the provisional contribution for the subsequent four financial years as detailed in Appendix 1, pages 11 to 13;
- (iv) to agree to maintain the working balances at 10% to meet future operational requirements and risks, noting that if the Housing Revenue Account recorded a deficit and had no reserves, then the Council's General Fund must make a contribution to balance the Account;
- (v) to approve the level of miscellaneous rents and service charges, including Heat with Rent as detailed in Appendix 1, pages 9 to 10, to take effect from 1 May 2023;
- (vi) to approve, based on a rental increase of 4%, the Base Capital Programme for the financial year 2023/24, Appendix 1, pages 11 to 13;
- (vii) to note the indicative level of the Base Capital Programme for the financial years 2024/25 to 2027/28, Appendix 1, pages 11 to 13;
- (viii) to delegate authority to the Chief Officer - Capital, following consultation with the Chief Officer - Commercial and Procurement, to procure the necessary professional services and construction works referred to in Appendix 1 entitled 'New Housing Capital Programme Budget' without the need for further approval from any other committee of the Council subject to due diligence, consistency with the financial model and affordability;
- (ix) to note that the delivery and programme management of the new build project was being delivered with the use of frameworks for professional services contracts which included programme and project management, technical support and quality assurance, all of which was being delivered with the normal fee scales for Housing Projects. These services would continue across the programme as new projects were identified;
- (x) to note that the current long term Council house rent policy ran out on 31 March 2023, and to instruct the Chief Officer - Early Intervention and Community Empowerment to undertake a consultation on a further long term Council house rent policy for inclusion in the 2024/25 budget process;
- (xi) to note the recommendation in the Prevention and Early Intervention report also on the agenda, to undertake tiered analysis of resource requirements in the refreshed Local Housing Strategy to be presented for approval to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee, noting the significance of housing as one of the key determinants of population health;
- (xii) to instruct the Chief Officer - Early Intervention and Community Empowerment, in consultation with the Chief Officer - Finance, to undertake a tiered trend analysis of the Housing Revenue Account budget for inclusion in the 2024/25 budget process, ensuring an appropriate focus is placed on prevention and early intervention when investing in tenant funds; and
- (xiii) in response to the instruction of the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee of 17 January 2023, to *(iv) instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord, as part of the 2023/24 budget setting process, to consider the balance between pro-active preventative maintenance and replacement works with a view to reporting a more robust planned maintenance programme as part of the HRA Capital and Revenue budgets, reflecting all other budget pressures;* and to

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agree that 10% of the HRA repair and maintenance budget be ringfenced for planned maintenance works on the estate.

(The approved budget is available [here](#))

**VALEDICTORY**

8. The Lord Provost advised that this was likely to be the last Council meeting for Raymond Leiper, Town Sergeant, who was due to retire at the end of March after 48 years' service to the Council. The Lord Provost paid tribute to Raymond and wished him well for his retirement.

Councillors Grant, Yuill, Crockett, Nicoll, Houghton and Boulton each paid their own tributes to Raymond.

**The Council resolved:-**

to concur with the remarks of the Lord Provost and the various Councillors.

- **DAVID CAMERON, Lord Provost**.