

AYRSHIRE VALUATION JOINT BOARD

Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday, 18th March 2008 at 10.30 a.m. within
Cunninghame House, Irvine.

Item 1 - Sederunt.

Present:

North Ayrshire Councillors: Robert Barr, Andrew Chamberlain, Elisabeth Marshall and John Moffat.

South Ayrshire Councillors: Douglas Campbell (Chair) and Mike Peddie.

In Attendance: Alastair Kirkwood, Depute Assessor; William Brown, Principal Administrative Officer; Eileen Howat, Treasurer; Colin Hastings, East Ayrshire Council; Gwyneth McKinlay, North Ayrshire Council; Karen Briggs, Principal Solicitor, South Ayrshire Council (for Clerk); and Avril Gerrish, Committee Administrative Officer, South Ayrshire Council.

Apologies: Councillor Alan Brown, East Ayrshire Council;
Councillor Tom Cook, East Ayrshire Council;
Councillor William Crawford, East Ayrshire Council;
Councillor Andrew Filson, East Ayrshire Council;
Councillor William Menzies, East Ayrshire Council;
Councillor Ryan Oldfather, North Ayrshire Council;
Councillor Alan Munro, North Ayrshire Council;
Councillor Andy Campbell, South Ayrshire Council;
Councillor Ian Douglas, South Ayrshire Council; and
Councillor Ian Fitzsimmons, South Ayrshire Council.

Item 2 – Minutes of Meeting held on 15th January 2008.

The Minutes of meeting of 15th January 2008 were submitted and were approved as a correct record.

Item 3 – Matters Arising.

Date of September Meeting 2008.

The Board agreed to schedule the meeting for 16th September 2008 in County Buildings, Ayr.

Item 4 – Audit Scotland Charges 2007/08

There was submitted (circulated) a report dated 11th March 2008 by the Treasurer

- (1) advising she had discussed the “agreed fee” with the Joint Board’s appointed auditors (Audit Scotland) and had agreed that for 2007/08, it should be set at £6,300; and
- (2) reporting that total charges for the 2007/08 audit would be £7,500 compared to the budgeted figure of £7,718.

Decided: to approve the contents of the report.

Item 5 - Revenue Monitoring Report 2007/08 - Period to 29th February 2008.

There was submitted (circulated) a report dated 11th March 2008 by the Treasurer

- (1) advising that the Revenue Estimates for 2007/08 had been approved by the Board on 21st November 2006; and
- (2) detailing the income and expenditure for the period to 29th February 2008 compared to the approved Revenue Estimates and outlining an underspend of £84,811.

Decided:

- (a) to approve the contents of the report; and
- (b) to instruct the Treasurer to provide updated figures to the next meeting.

Item 6 – Revenue Budget 2009/10 and 2010/11.

There was submitted (circulated) a report dated 11th March 2008 by the Treasurer

- (1) advising of indicative budgets for the Joint Board for 2009/10 and 2010/11;
- (2) seeking approval of adoption thereof; and
- (3) reporting
 - (a) that draft budgets for 2009/10 and 2010/11 had been prepared allowing for adjustments as contained with 2.2 of the report; and
 - (b) that the requisition levels for the three constituent authorities for 2009/10 and 2010/11 would rise by 8.28 per cent and 2.04 percent respectively as detailed in Appendices 1 and 2 of the report.

Decided:

- (i) to note the projected increases in the revenue budgets; and
- (ii) to request that the Treasurer, in consultation with the Assessor, continued to refine budget assumptions.

Item 7 – Capital Programme 2007/08 and 2008/09.

There was submitted (circulated) a report dated 11th March 2008 by the Treasurer

- (1) advising on the Capital Expenditure for 2007/08 and 2008/09;
- (2) intimating that on 24th April 2007, the Joint Board had provided £22,300 for Capital Expenditure for 2007/08 to undertake a phased replacement of windows within the offices and to purchase recording and ICT equipment;

- (3) reporting
- (a) that work on the windows had been delayed due to the need for planning permission and the purchase of recording equipment had been delayed pending identification of a suitable system;
 - (b) that planned Capital Expenditure for the year to 31st March 2007 had totalled £2,630; and
 - (c) that proposed Capital Expenditure for 2008/09 would be as follows:-

Window replacement	£28,750
Recording Equipment	£ 4,000
ICT Equipment	£6,920
Total	£39,670

- (4) requesting that constituent authorities fund the remaining £20,000 shared on the following basis:-

East Ayrshire Council	30%	£6,000;
North Ayrshire Council	36%	£7,200; and
South Ayrshire Council	34%	£6,800; and

- (5) intimating that the Treasurer would submit a further report to a future meeting of this Joint Board on the total cost of window replacements highlighting that constituent authorities might be asked to provide a higher contribution in 2008/09 if there were significant cost savings in undertaking the replacement in one phase.

Decided:

- (i) to approve the contents of the report; and
- (ii) to request that constituent authorities fund their share of 2008/09 expenditure as outlined at (4) above.

Item 8 – Response to Efficient Government Agenda.

There was submitted (circulated) a report dated 11th March 2008 by the Treasurer

- (1) outlining the progress of the Joint Board's contribution to the Efficient Government Agenda; and
- (2) reporting
 - (a) that although the Joint Board had not been allocated specific efficiency targets as part of the Efficient Government Agenda, management had taken steps to ensure that available efficiencies had been identified and realised;
 - (b) that the Joint Board had consistently generated budget savings which had ensured that the requisition increased levied in local authorities had been minimised; and
 - (c) that it had been difficult to quantify the actual saving achieved through management action, although the requisition increases in recent years were outlined in the report.

Decided:

- (i) to note the efficiencies achieved since 2006/07; and
- (ii) to request that the Treasurer together with the Assessor submit a report to a future meeting of the Board detailing all efficiencies that were being made by the Joint Board in response to the Efficient Government Agenda.

Item 9 – Anti-Fraud and Corruption Arrangements.

There was submitted (circulated) a report dated 11th March 2008 by the Treasurer advising of a draft policy for the prevention and detection of fraud as contained in Appendix 1 of the report.

Decided:

- (1) to instruct the Assessor to consult with staff and Trade Unions on the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy; and
- (2) to approve the Policy on Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy as contained in Appendix 1 of the report with a minor adjustment to include the Registration of Elected Members Interests.

Item 10 – Non-Domestic Rating.

There was submitted (circulated) a report dated March 2008 by the Depute Assessor outlining the current position with reference to Non-Domestic Rating.

Decided: to note the contents of the report.

Item 11 – Council Tax.

There was submitted (circulated) a report dated March 2008 by the Depute Assessor

- (1) advising that the survey and banding of new houses was continuing with a view to achieving or improving on the performance targets; and
- (2) outlining the current position on clearing appeals as detailed in the report.

Decided: to note the position.

Item 12– Electoral Registration.

There was submitted (circulated) a report dated March 2008 by the Depute Assessor

- (1) advising
 - (a) that as a result of the Electoral Administration Act 2006, secondary legislation had been laid before the UK Parliament to require Electoral Registration Officers in Scotland to collect personal identifiers for all absent voters from 8th February 2008;
 - (b) that as from 8th August 2008, Returning Officers in Scotland would need to check identifiers on returned Postal Vote statements at UK, Scottish, European Parliamentary and Local Elections;

- (c) that in Ayrshire, approximately 33,000 challenge letters would be posted to existing absent voters requesting that they provide a signature and date of birth and failure to provide this information would result in the removal of the names from the absent voters list; and
 - (d) that from the annual canvass a further 20,000 people had asked to vote by post and the new style absent vote application form would be issued soon to everyone who had made this request;
- (2) reporting that Appendix 1 of the report detailed the results for this year's canvass for Electoral Registration Offices throughout Scotland; and
 - (3) outlining the number of monthly changes that had been actioned through the Rolling Registration process as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report.

Decided: to note the contents of the report.

Item 13 – Staffing.

There was submitted (circulated) a report dated March 2008 by the Depute Assessor outlining the current staffing position to date.

Decided: to note the contents of the report.

Item 14 – Single Status.

There was submitted (circulated) a report dated March 2008 by the Depute Assessor

- (1) outlining the current position concerning the implementation of Single Status within Ayrshire Valuation Joint Board; and
- (2) advising
 - (a) that when the review of the Joint Board's jobs had been completed and the South Ayrshire Council pay model finalised, consideration would be given to whether application of South Ayrshire's Council pay model met the requirement of the Board or whether it would be necessary to create a separate pay model specific to the needs of Ayrshire Valuation Joint Board; and
 - (b) that a further report would be submitted to a future meeting of the Joint Board when the review had been complete.

Decided: to note the contents of the report

Item 15 – Annual Disability Equality Report.

There was submitted (circulated) a report dated March 2008 by the Depute Assessor outlining the current position with regard to the Annual Disability Equality report as detailed in the Appendix of the report.

Decided: to note the contents of the report.

The meeting ended at 11.00 a.m.