

**MINUTES of MEETING of ARGYLL AND BUTE HSCP FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE  
held BY SKYPE  
on FRIDAY, 26 FEBRUARY 2021**

**Present:** Councillor Kieron Green (Chair)

Sarah Compton-Bishop

**Attending:** Joanna MacDonald, Chief Officer, Argyll and Bute HSCP  
Judy Orr, Head of Finance and Transformation, Argyll and Bute HSCP  
Caroline Cherry, Head of Adult Services, Argyll and Bute HSCP  
Charlotte Craig, Business Improvement Manager, Argyll and Bute HSCP  
David Forshaw, Principal Accountant, Argyll and Bute Council  
Brian Reid, Senior Manager Operations, Argyll and Bute HSCP  
Lynsey Innis, Senior Committee Assistant, Argyll and Bute Council  
Jim Littlejohn, Locality Manager, Argyll and Bute HSCP (On behalf of Julie Lusk)  
Kevin McIntosh, Staffside, Argyll and Bute Council

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of:-

George Morrison, Depute Chief Officer, Argyll and Bute HSCP  
Fiona Broderick, Staffside, Argyll and Bute HSCP  
Elizabeth Higgins, Professional Advisory Group Representative  
Jane Fowler, Head of Customer Support Services, Argyll and Bute Council  
Julie Lusk, Head of Adult Services, Argyll and Bute HSCP  
Brian Reid, Acting Head of Adult Services, Argyll and Bute HSCP  
Councillor Sandy Taylor  
Councillor Gary Mulvaney

In the absence of a third voting member, the Chair sought advice from the Business Improvement Manager on the quorum. The Business Improvement Manager confirmed that as Caroline Cherry was in attendance and with the agreement of the Chair she would be in a position to deputise for Liz Higgins as the Professional Advisory Group Representative which would consequently provide for a quorum. On this basis the Chair progressed with the agenda.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

### **3. MINUTES**

The Minute of the previous meeting of the Finance and Policy Committee, held on 22 January 2021, was approved as a correct record.

### **4. BUDGET MONITORING AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2020**

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing a summary of the financial position of the Health and Social Care Partnership as at 31 December 2020. The report noted the ongoing uncertainty around the financial impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

#### **Decision**

The Finance and Policy Committee –

1. Noted the forecast outturn position for 2020-21 is a forecast overspend of £1.660m as at 31 December 2020 and that there is a year to date underspend of £254k as at the same date.
2. Noted the above position excludes any provision for Scottish Government assistance with non-delivery of savings due to Covid-19 which is now looking likely. It includes the Covid funding via NHS Highland announced at end of September and November.

(Reference: Report by Head of Finance and Transformation, dated 26 February 2021, submitted)

### **5. BUDGET MONITORING AS AT 31 JANUARY 2021**

Consideration was given to a report providing a summary of the financial position of the Health and Social Care Partnership as at 31 January 2021. The report noted the considerable uncertainty around the financial impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and advised that final funding was announced on 5 February – which was after the January ledger had closed for Social Work, but was in time to be processed for Health in the January allocations.

#### **Decision**

The Finance and Policy Committee –

1. Noted the forecast outturn position for 2020-21 is a forecast underspend of £456k as at 31 January 2021 and that there is a year to date underspend of £1.516m as at the same date.
2. Noted the above position includes provision for Scottish Government assistance with non-delivery of savings due to Covid-19 for Health which is now confirmed, but the assistance for Social Work of £2.228m is not yet included as it was announced after the month end close.

(Reference: Report by Head of Finance and Transformation, dated 26 February 2021, submitted)

## **6. COVID-19 RESPONSE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Consideration was given to a report providing an overview of the HSCP's Covid-19 mobilisation readiness and its future planning for living and operating with Covid-19. The report provided a snapshot of the financial estimates of the costs of dealing with the Covid-19 response and noted that the cost estimates were updated on a regular basis and subject to considerable uncertainties. Discussion was had in relation to the use of additional monies, identified from the vacancy savings, to offset some of the costs associated with covid.

### **Decision**

The Finance and Policy Committee –

1. Noted the details provided in relation to the Covid-19 response and associated mobilisation plan costing.
2. Acknowledged the uncertainties in the cost elements submitted.
3. Noted that the Scottish Government has in principle approved all mobilisation plans, but that approval for individual cost lines has not yet been received.
4. Noted that any excess funding received must be carried forward as an earmarked reserve at the year end to be used against Covid costs next year.

(Reference: Report by Head of Finance and Transformation, dated 26 February 2021, submitted)

## **7. BUDGET CONSULTATION INTERIM FINDINGS**

The Committee considered a report summarising the 501 online budget consultation responses received as at 9 February 2021. It was noted that the consultation continued to run until 19 February 2021 and that the report would be updated before being presented to the Integration Joint Board.

### **Decision**

The Finance and Policy Committee noted the interim findings from the Budget Consultation and agreed to ensure that these are fed into considerations when discussing the separate report on the agenda detailing savings options to deliver a balanced budget in 2021-22.

(Reference: Report by Head of Finance and Transformation, dated 26 February 2021, submitted)

## **8. BUDGET SAVINGS 2021/22: ASSESSING EQUALITY AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT**

Consideration was given to a report outlining the work undertaken to ensure that due regard is given to equalities, islands and the Fairer Scotland Duty in the decision-making process relating to budget savings. The report presented a strategic EQIA for the savings programme to advise on overall impact. Discussion was had in

relation to the impact on service users in respect of care home and learning disability proposals.

### **Decision**

The Finance and Policy Committee –

1. Noted the findings from the summary Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessment (EQIA) and agreed to ensure that these are considered when discussing the savings options to deliver a balanced budget in 2021-22.
2. Agreed to recommend to the IJB that savings options 2122-6; 2122-7 and 2122-13 be removed from consideration as part of the budget process from 2021/22.
3. Approved publication of the individual EQIAs to go on Council and NHS Highland websites.

(Reference: Report by Head of Finance and Transformation, dated 26 February 2021, submitted)

### **9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting was noted as Friday, 19 March 2021 at 1:30pm.