



**COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR: 20 FEBRUARY 2024**

**COMMITTEE DECISION REPORT**

**POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE: 20 FEBRUARY 2024 at 3.00PM**

At its meeting on 20 February 2024 at 3.00pm, the Policy and Resources Committee considered the business referred to below. The Committee has approved the recommendations detailed for approval by the Comhairle. Where the Committee has exercised delegated powers or used the conditional delegation provisions for any item, this is stated.

Items marked with an asterisk\* were considered with the press and public excluded from the Meeting.

<i><b>Item Title</b></i>	<i><b>Agenda Number</b></i>	<i><b>Committee's Decision</b></i>
Declaration of Interest	1	There were no declarations of interest.
Budget and Council Tax Setting 2024/25 Recommendations from Service Committees	2	<p>It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(1) agree to accept the 2024/25 Settlement from the Scottish Government as set out in the Finance Circular in Appendix A to the Report;</li><li>(2) approve the Budget Strategy for 2024/25 as set out in Sections 5, 6 and 7 of the Report;</li><li>(3) approve the draft Budgets for 2024/25 at Budget Item B of the Agenda, including:  the following recommendations from the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee:  (a) to continue the Broadbay and Westside evening bus services funded from Crown Estate Funding, subject to the approval of the distribution of Crown Estate Revenues for 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27;</li><li>(b) that the Broadbay and Westside evening bus services be considered as part of the next round of tendering for the School and Public Bus Contracts as a distinct priced item;</li><li>(c) the Head of Municipal Services consults with passengers and operators to design a peak passenger evening service for Broadbay and Westside; and</li><li>(d) the Head of Municipal Services continues to explore alternative funding sources for the provision of evening bus services.</li></ul> <p>the following recommendation from the Sustainable Development Committee:</p>

to fund the exit strategy for creative industries through Crown Estate Funding, subject to the approval of the disbursement of Crown Estate Revenues for 2024/25 and 2025/26.

- (4) agree the delegated Budget for Cùram is Slàinte nan Eilean Siar as detailed in Section 10 of the Report;
- (5) agree to freeze Council Tax at 2023/24 levels (£1290.75 for Band D properties);
- (6) agree to allocate additional funding to the provision of the Winter Maintenance contract, in the event of any increases to General Revenue Grant;
- (7) note the capital allocation for 2024/25 and that progress with the Capital Programme will continue to be monitored quarterly through the Policy and Resources Committee;
- (8) note the financial risks in Appendix C to the Report and agree to maintain the level of uncommitted reserves at £3.5m;
- (9) agree that the Budget and Strategy Board monitor progress with the implementation of Savings Plans;
- (10) note that the preparation of a medium-term financial plan is in progress;
- (11) note the draft Budget Book;
- (12) agree that a Budget Strategy update be provided to the June 2024 meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee;
- (13) agree to a flat rate increase of 12.5% across all sections of the Harbour Rates and Dues;
- (14) agree to a 6.6% increase to Harbour Dues levied on CalMac Ferries Ltd;
- (15) agree that the mark up of the fuel at fishery pier service be increased by 2 pence per litre to 11 pence per litre from 1 April 2024;
- (16) the Chief Officer, Assets and Infrastructure, retains authorisation, in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer, to make further future adjustments to the markup as required, providing at all times that it is sustainable and Prudential Borrowing can be adequately supported; and
- (17) agree to the Municipal Services Fees and Charges as detailed in Appendix 1 to the Municipal Services Fees and Charges Report.