

Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee

13 March 2019

Enquiries from Elected Members

Item 1 – Q&A from February

Question 1

Bailie MacLeod requested further information with regard to the Parking Pound and the uplift vehicles in particular over how many years has the reduction from 7 vehicles and 8 drivers to 4 vehicles and 4 drivers taken place. He also requested a cost benefit analysis on how much another vehicle would cost. He also wanted to know what the cost of opening 7 days a week and requested the figures for the number of vehicles lifted in 2017/18 and 2018/19.

Answer

1.Movement of Trucks/Drivers

14/15 : Reduction 2 drivers

15/16 : Reduction 2 drivers and 3 removal trucks

2. Cost Benefit Analysis of cost of another vehicle

An estimated annual cost for a new removal truck, together with required drivers (2), to cover a seven day operation is £95,000. This equates to approximately 635 full removals. A full risk analysis would be required to justify additional resources.

3. Cost of Opening 7 days a week.

The Vehicle Pound is already in full operation 7 days a week with staff (including drivers) operating a shift pattern of 5/7 days.

The full cost of the vehicle pound operation includes all 7 days site costs, therefore no additional costs would be noted.

4.Number of Vehicles lifted

2017/18 : 1,363

2018/19 (to 28.2.19) : 1,949

It should be noted that in July 2017 (17/18) the location of the vehicle pound changed from Avenue St to Polmadie Depot due to the Council terminating its lease with the private landlord. This resulted in an impact on the pound operations for a period of approx. 3/4 months due to the disruption around the construction of new, purpose-built vehicle pound at Polmadie

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| Question 2 | Bailie MacLeod referred to the response to the filling of vacant posts with in LES and asked why the average time to fill a post was not readily available and would like an answer on that. |
| Answer | Analysing a sample of 41 positions the average time to recruit is 103 days. The calculation is based on the date the advert was placed until the individual commenced in the post. |
| Question 3 | Cllr Cunning referred to the response to Bailie Kane's question on the Glasgow Settlement reduction as per the Accounts Commission overview and queried that the answer provided referred to cash terms and he wanted to know did we have access to real terms. |
| Answer | The movement in the settlement to Glasgow between 2013-14 and 2017-18 is -1.48% in cash terms. In real terms this is equivalent to -7.44%. |
| <u>Item 2 – Best Value Assurance Report</u> | |
| Question 4 | Bailie Kane referred to page 19 of the report and sought clarity on what committees reports from Cordia and CSG would go to going forward. |
| Answer | Updates will be included in Services' annual reports to the Operational Performance and Delivery Scrutiny Committee. |
| Question 5 | Councillor Wisely referred to page 17 of the report and requested further information with regard to the Thriving Places evaluation framework. |
| Answer | On 26 March 2019, the GCPP Strategic Board approved the GCPP 2019 Performance Management Framework - http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/councillorsandcommittees/submissionsdocuments.asp?submissionid=92244 This includes the initial GCPP Evaluation programme which will take place during 2019 - 2021 (Community/Locality Plan years 3/4). The programme elements for the initial evaluation programme are: Locality Planning Participatory Evaluation Framework; Inclusive Growth Diagnostic Model as applied to Community Plan Priority Action Areas; and Community Plan/Locality Plan Progress Evaluation. |
| <u>Item 5(c) – DRS Regeneration Capital Grant Fund</u> | |
| Question 6 | Councillor Millar sought clarity in how frequently these audits took place. |
| Answer | We review different external grant funds each year e.g. Scottish Government Development Funds, Private Sector Housing Grants. This is the first audit of RCGF specifically |

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| Question 7 | Councillor Cunning referred to lack of audit trail and asked for some context with reference to recent audits on European Funding. Duncan Black advised he would come back with more detail to supplement report. |
| Answer | <p>RCGF is a Scottish Government fund, administered by GCC. While there are no rules to the same extent as the EU Structural Funds managed by the Scot Govt., the Council signs a grant agreement with the Scot Govt for each successful project, and then passes the funding down to the project lead, often a public sector or third sector organisation. The grant agreement between GCC and a project lead organisation broadly mirrors that between the Council and Govt.</p> <p>The grant agreement stipulates that “the grant shall only be used for the purposes of the project and for no other purpose whatsoever.”</p> |
| Question 8 | Bailie MacLeod referred to page 72 of the report and in particular the error rate observation 1 and requested the total claim value for year to 31 March 2019 for context. |
| Answer | The project referred to in observation 1 is a 2017/18 award. Since December 2017, £2.5m has been claimed from the Scottish Government by GCC, and £1.09m of this was disbursed to the project. |
| <u>Item 5(d) – FS – Assessors Appeals</u> | |
| Question 9 | Bailie Braat referred to Council Tax appeals and asked if they could only take place in the first 6 months. |
| Answer | <p>For council tax appeals, appellants must submit their appeals within 6 months of becoming the tax payer in order for it to be legally considered as a valid appeal. The actual appeal committee itself does not need to take place within 6 months as the legislative procedures do not state a timescale.</p> <p>For appeals submitted out-with the 6 months, they are still looked at by the Assessor however they cannot be legally classed as valid and are therefore known as invalid appeals, same as valid appeals the appeal committee does not need to take place within 6 months.</p> |

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| <u>Item 7 – Developer Contributions</u> | |
| Question 10 | Councillor Wisely requested information in relation to any money lost to the Council to expiry dates. |
| Answer | <p>With regard to Fastlink, 1 repayment was made totalling £9,358 but this was due to the developers planning permission expiring and therefore they no longer had planning permission to proceed with their development.</p> <p>With regard to any other schemes, no refunds of contributions relating to Community Growth Funds or ENV2 funds have been made via the ledger.</p> |
| Question 11 | Bailie Macleod requested confirmation that Bailie Ballantyne had been allocated sufficient support and information from DRS on this topic, as promised. Martin Booth agreed to check this with DRS and confirm. |
| Answer | The senior officer allocated to support Baillie Ballantyne is Forbes Barron (Head of Planning and Building Standards). |

This paper will be considered at the start of the committee agenda however requests for clarification on the answers can be made via the committee clerk in advance of the committee meeting.