

HIGHLAND AND WESTERN ISLES VALUATION JOINT BOARD

22 November 2019

Agenda Item	5
Report No	VAL/17/19

Revenue Monitoring Report Period to 31 October 2019

Report by the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer

Summary

This report sets out the revenue monitoring position of the Board for the period to 31 October 2019 and the projected year end position.

1. Current Position

The attached monitoring statement shows the position for the period to 31 October 2019. Net expenditure to date is £1.710m and represents 54% of the annual budget of £3.175m.

2. Year-end Projection

- 2.1 At this point in the year, the overall outturn is expected to be an underspend of £0.126m, however, as in previous years this projection is sensitive to the eventual outturn of the annual electoral canvass.
- 2.2 Staff costs indicate an underspend of £0.103m, largely through the management of staff vacancies and difficulties experienced in recruiting. Trainee Valuer and Clerical Assistant posts are in the process of being advertised, and it is hopeful that once appointments have been made, new staff should be in post by January for the majority of the positions. In addition to normal business as usual, a large scale scanning exercise to digitise records is to be undertaken by the organisation, for which temporary staff are to be recruited.
- 2.3 There is uncertainty relating to the costs associated with Valuation Appeal hearings scheduled throughout the current financial year and the requirement for legal counsel. At the moment it is forecast to be on target but, the level of expenditure is largely out-with the control of the Assessor.
- 2.4 Maintenance work is scheduled to be carried out in the Wick Office. It is intended to replace carpeting which is raising a health and safety concern. Estimates are being collated on costings for replacing the outdated heating system, to install more efficient heating. It is anticipated that this will result in a small saving to the department however the initial outlay may result in a higher overspend than projected.

- 2.5** Expenditure on postages for the period to date would indicate an overspend. The bulk of expenditure has fallen within the first half of the year due to the timing of the annual canvass but two unexpected polls this year will result in additional expenditure, namely costs incurred in sending manual poll cards and absent vote application forms. As previously reported a review of printing and postage provision is currently underway with future savings expected.
- 2.6** Payments for computer charges are projected as being within budget. Additional funding has been made available for the Barclay implementation (£0.040m). Projects identified are estimated to be within budget.
- 2.7** IER funding from the Cabinet Office is higher than projected for 2019/20. It was initially estimated that an allocation of £0.080m would be received however, after a successful justification led bid in 2018/19, the allocation has increased to £0.110m.
- 2.8** In the previous report to 31 July 2019 a projected overspend was anticipated for rent charges however, the estimated outturn is now projected to be in line with budget. Following discussions with the Highland Council's Development and Infrastructure Services, an agreement was negotiated to maintain rent at similar levels without significant increases from June 2020.

3. Recommendation

The Board is invited to comment and otherwise note the content of this report.

Designation: Assessor and ERO

Date: 13 November 2019

Author: Bill Gillies

Assessor & ERO

HIGHLAND & WESTERN ISLES VALUATION JOINT BOARD

**REVENUE BUDGET 2019/20
MONITORING STATEMENT FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 October 2019**

Heading	Period to date		Annual Estimated		Year End Estimated variance £000
	Budget £000	Actual £000	Budget £000	outturn £000	
Staff costs					
Salaries including NI, superann and overtime	1,199	1,039	2,055	1,952	(103)
Travel and subsistence	42	23	71	71	-
Other staff costs	16	20	28	28	-
	1,257	1,082	2,154	2,051	(103)
Property costs					
Heating, lighting and cleaning	28	15	48	48	-
Rent, rates and water	144	185	207	207	-
Other property costs	4	5	7	9	2
	176	205	262	264	2
Administrative costs					
Printing, stationery and photocopying	16	9	26	26	-
Postages	92	134	158	163	5
Telephone and fax costs	7	4	12	12	-
Advertising	1	2	2	2	-
Legal expenses	17	11	30	30	-
Other administration costs	5	(2)	9	9	-
	138	158	237	242	5
Apportioned Costs					
Central service support	0	0	60	60	-
Transport costs	3	3	5	6	1
Supplies and services					
Computer charges	228	310	391	391	-
	228	310	391	391	-
Board expenses	6	0	11	11	-
Valuation Appeal Committee expenses	82	64	140	140	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	1,890	1,822	3,260	3,165	(95)
Income	(49)	(112)	(85)	(116)	(31)
NET EXPENDITURE	1,841	1,710	3,175	3,049	(126)