

SHARED REGULATORY SERVICES JOINT COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Remote Meeting held on 14th December, 2021.

The Committee agenda is available [here](#).

The Meeting recording is available here.

Present:

Representing Bridgend County Borough Council – Councillors D. Lewis and D. Patel.

Representing Cardiff City and County Council – Councillors M. Michael (Chair) and Mrs. N. Mackie.

Representing the Vale of Glamorgan Council – Councillors E. Williams (Vice-Chair) and P. Drake (Substituting for J.W. Thomas).

(a) Announcement –

Prior to the commencement of the business of the Committee, the Chair read the following statement: “May I remind everyone present that the meeting will be live streamed as well as recorded via the internet and this recording archived for future viewing”.

(b) Apology for Absence –

This was received from Councillor J.W. Thomas (Vale of Glamorgan Council).

(c) Minutes –

RESOLVED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 28th September, 2021 and the Special Meeting held on 2nd December, 2021 be approved as a correct record.

(d) Declarations of Interest –

No declarations were received.

(e) Implementation Reserve (DS1510) –

At 2015/16 year end £46k was retained within the Implementation Reserve to fund the anticipated costs of establishing Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) as a separate employer under the umbrella of the Cardiff and Vale Pension Fund.

An agreement has now been reached between the SRS and the Cardiff and Vale Pension Fund, which has resulted in there no longer being a requirement to set the SRS up as a separate employer.

Having considered the report its was

RESOLVED – T H A T the £46k retained within the Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) Implementation Reserve to fund the set up costs of the SRS being identified as a separate employer under the umbrella of the Cardiff and Vale Pension Fund be returned to the partner Authorities in line with 2015/16 contributions rate.

Reason for decision

As a result of additional information being included in the annual payroll return provided to the Cardiff and Vale Pension Fund, there was no longer a requirement for the SRS to be identified as a separate employer within the Fund. SRS pension Assets and Liabilities could now be accurately established with valuation costs met from within existing revenue budgets.

(f) Shared Regulatory Services Draft Budget Proposal 2022/23 (DEH) –

The purpose of the report was to gain the Joint Committee’s approval of the proposed Shared Regulatory Services budget for the financial year 2022/23.

A detailed breakdown of the Authority Specific budgets was shown in Appendix A of this report. The analysis clarified how each service was funded, such as Authority funded or recovered via fees.

The effect of the budget adjustments detailed below in respect of the Draft Proposed 2022/23 Budget was that there remained an aggregate budget expectation of £8.331m. This was made up of;

- £134k of savings which have been taken from both recharged Management Overheads and also from within Core.
- £134k of additional salary costs resulting from an assumed 2% pay award.
- No further consideration for price inflation was included within the budget.

An analysis of service disciplines where savings had been taken from was illustrated in the following table;

	Staff	Non	New
	Reduction	Staffing	Income
Savings Illustration	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's
Management Overheads	57	0	0
Food Services	0	5	0

Housing Services	0	10	0
Health & Safety	0	36	0
Pollution Services	0	7	0
Trading Standards	4	0	15
Total Savings Taken	61	58	15

Staff savings taken within Management Overheads related to a deleted post within the Admin Team, plus an increased staff recharge to an external grant, which more accurately reflected the level of support provided.

The savings taken within non-staffing related to the realignment of supplies and services budgets within Core, where there had been historical underspends.

Income budgets within Trading Standards had been increased to reflect the increased earning power of Primary Authority Services.

In accordance with the Joint Working Agreement, the population figures used within the Core Budget section of this report should reflect the data used by Welsh Government in the calculation of the 2022/23 budget settlements awarded to Councils. However, this information would not be available until after the date of the Committee, therefore the 2021/22 population split had been used until the revised data is received from Welsh Government.

Authorities were due to be advised of their Provisional Settlement on the 21st December 2021, with the 2022/23 Final Settlement due to be announced on the 1st March 2022.

Should there be an amendment to population statistics used within the Provisional Settlement, it was proposed that the Partner budget contribution within Core be recalculated to reflect the change. However, there would be no change to the overall value of the Proposed Budget.

Having considered the report, it was

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the proposed Shared Regulatory Services Budget for 2022/23 be approved.
- (2) T H A T the individual Authorities be requested to approve in writing the Proposed Budget for 2022/23 by 10th March, 2022.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.
- (2) To allow the budget to be finalised prior to the start of 2022/23.

(g) Overview and Update on Shared Regulatory Services (DEH) –

The Head of Service presented the report which provided an update on the work undertaken by the Shared Regulatory Service (SRS) and progress towards completing the actions contained in the SRS Business Plan.

SRS Business Plans were developed in consultation with stakeholders; they informed and directed the work of the service and contributed toward the corporate priorities of each partner Council. The service had five key aims, namely:

- Improving Health and Wellbeing
- Safeguarding the Vulnerable
- Protecting the Local Environment
- Supporting the Local Economy
- Maximising the use of our resources

The report contained information outlining how the service was working to achieve better outcomes for residents and businesses within the region through a series of different actions and work programmes. The report provided an overview of activities undertaken in the period July to October 2020, detailed under the following areas:

- Human Resources
- Financial Position Quarter 1 – Appendix 1
- Performance Monitoring – Appendix 2
- Service Update – Covid-19 related work including (infographic contained in Appendix 3);
- Progress against the SRS Business Plan
- Illegal Tobacco
- ‘Ask the Regulator’ – Podcasts
- Licensing – Taxi Licenses
- Animal Welfare
- Noise Nuisance
- Enforcement Activity – Appendix 5

In discussing the financial position for Quarter 1, the Head of Services stated that an underspend of £250k was reported to Joint Committee on the 28th September 2021 relating to 2020/21. It had been proposed that £100k of this underspend be retained by the Service to cover the residual investigation costs incurred in early 2021/22 and that the balance be returned to partners on the basis of their 2020/21 revised underspend. This was agreed by the Joint Committee.

In addition, the SRS published a number of operational plans to advise stakeholders of the work to be carried out in certain environments. The document attached at Appendix 4 was the Port Health Plan 2021/22, which set out how the SRS would fulfil its purpose of preventing and controlling infectious disease coming into Cardiff, Barry and the surrounding areas via the ports and airport. The goal was to protect the health of the public. The Plan detailed the statutory obligations in relation to food safety, imported food control, ship sanitation, disinsection, waste control, animal health and set out how they would be delivered.

The Joint Committee was asked to consider the draft Port Health Plan and approve its use in the SRS region.

With regard to enforcement action, the Joint Committee issued its thanks to the SRS staff for the number of successful prosecutions, and it suggested that there should be greater publicity around this in order to deter possible criminal activity. The Committee also suggested that monthly press releases should be put out to promote the successes of the Service. This could be shared by the individual Committee Members via social media.

There being no further comments or queries, the Joint Committee

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the contents of the report be agreed.
- (2) T H A T of the £250k underspend for 2020/21, £100k be retained by the Service to cover the residual investigation costs incurred in early 2021/22 and that the balance be returned to partners on the basis of their 2020/21 revised underspend.
- (3) T H A T the draft Port Health Plan 2021/22 be approved for use in the Shared Regulatory Services region.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) Following consideration of the report and discussions at the meeting.
- (2) In order for the Service to retain £100k to cover residual investigation costs and for remaining balance to be returned to the partner Authorities
- (3) Following consideration of the contents of the draft Port Health Plan 2021/22.

(h) Shared Regulatory Services Fees and Charges 2022-23 (DEH) –

The report set out the proposed fees to be charge by Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) in the 2022-23 financial year for a range of licensing and other services. The Joint Committee was asked to approve the recommendations made with respect to the setting of those fees for which it had responsibility.

For completeness, the report also set out fees which SRS would be required to charge during the 2022-23 financial year but where were set by external bodies such as the Association of Port Health Authorities and the UK and Welsh Governments.

The Joint Committee was in agreement for the Head of Service and the Interim Section 151 Officer for the Vale, to look at the possibility of implementing or introducing a reduced charging and fee regime for 2022-23. If this was possible then further discussions on this would be held with Section 151 Officers in Bridgend and Cardiff.

Subsequently it was

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T the Shared Regulatory Services charging and fee proposals, as set out in the report, be agree for implementation from 1st April, 2022.

(2) T H A T the Head of Shared Regulatory Services and Interim Section 151 Officer for the Vale of Glamorgan be given delegated authority to explore the possibility of implementing or introducing a reduced charging and fee regime for 2022-23, and for discussions on this to be held with Section 151 Officers in Bridgend and Cardiff.

Reasons for decisions

(1) Following consideration of the report and discussions at the meeting.

(2) In order to allow the Head of Shared Regulatory Services and the Interim Section 151 Officer the explore the possibility of implementing a reduced charging and fee regime for 2022/23.