

To: Council

On: 15 December 2022

Report by: Director of Finance and Resources

Heading: Governance Arrangements

1. Summary

1.1 The report sets out a number of Board nominations by the Labour Group to fill the vacancies created following the resignation of Councillor Hood from that group.

1.2. The report also proposes the undernoted additional terms of reference to the Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board in relation to the devolution from the Scottish Government to local authorities of empty property relief from 2023/24 onwards. The terms of reference of all Boards were agreed at the meeting of the Council held on 29 September 2022. However, the Provost is satisfied that the circumstances relevant to these additional terms of reference was not apparent at the time the decision on 29 September 2022 was made.

- To determine the operation and policies of any locally determined non-domestic rates schemes or reliefs in line with relevant legislation
 - To determine the operation and policies of any locally determined council tax schemes, discounts, or reductions in line with relevant legislation
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2. **Recommendations**

2.1 Council is asked to:

Approve the following Board nominations by the Labour Group:

Councillor McDonald will fill the vacancy on the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board

Councillor Davidson will fill the vacancy on the Communities and Housing Policy Board

Councillor McMillan will fill the vacancy on the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board

Councillor Ann-Dowling will fill the vacancy on the Planning and Climate Change Policy Board

Councillor McDonald will fill the vacancy on the Regulatory Functions Board

Councillor Montgomery will fill the vacancy on the Renfrewshire Valuation Joint Board

2.2 Approve the addition to the terms of reference of the Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board as follows:

35 To determine the operation and policies of any locally determined non-domestic rates schemes or reliefs in line with relevant legislation

36 To determine the operation and policies of any locally determined council tax schemes, discounts, or reductions in line with relevant legislation; and

that the remaining paragraphs be renumbered accordingly.

3 **Background**

3.1 Councillor Hood has resigned from the Labour Group. This has created a vacancy on each of the Boards and Joint Board on which he had been nominated by the Labour Group as a member. Councillor McMillan has advised of the Labour Group nominations to fill these vacancies.

3.2 Empty Property Relief (EPR) provides certain rates relief on unoccupied non-domestic properties. Empty Property Relief is currently mandatory and fully funded by the Scottish Government through the Local Government Settlement. The Scottish Government have devolved Empty Property Relief to local authorities from 2023-24 onwards. The devolution of this relief to the Council

will permit the Council to administer any support for unoccupied properties in a way that is tailored to local needs.

- 3.3 The Council will be required to consider, set and operate local policies as a result of this power being devolved. It is suggested that the most appropriate board to consider such matters is Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board and that the terms of reference of that Board should be amended accordingly.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** - none
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - none
3. **Community/Council Planning** – none
4. **Legal** – as detailed in paragraph 3.2
5. **Property/Assets** – none
6. **Information Technology** – none
7. **Equality & Human Rights** - The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report as it deals with Member appointments to Board, and the Council's internal governance arrangements in respect of terms of reference of boards. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website. (Report author to arrange this).
8. **Health & Safety** – none
9. **Procurement** – none
10. **Risk** – none
11. **Privacy Impact** – none
12. **CoSLA Policy Position** – as detailed in Settlement and Distribution Group (SDG) Paper September 2022 - Devolution of Empty Property Relief on 1 April 2023
13. **Climate change** - none

List of Background Papers

- (a) Correspondence from Councillors McMillan and N Graham intimating their nominations to Boards and Outside Bodies.
- (b) Settlement and Distribution Group (SDG) Paper September 2022 - Devolution of Empty Property Relief on 1 April 2023

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