

## **WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

At the meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held in the Lesser Town Hall, Municipal Buildings, Dumbarton Road, Clydebank on Wednesday, 17 December 2003 at 7.00 p.m.

**Present:** Provost Alistair Macdonald and Councillors Denis Agnew, Margaret Bootland, Dennis Brogan, Geoff Calvert, Gail Casey, Tony Devine, Jack Duffy, James Flynn, Jackie Maceira, Douglas McAllister, James McCallum, Linda McColl, Duncan McDonald, Craig McLaughlin, Marie McNair, Connie O'Sullivan, Martin Rooney, Andy White and Raymond Young.

**Attending:** Tim Huntingford, Chief Executive; Eric Walker, Director of Corporate Services; Ian McMurdo, Director of Education and Cultural Services; David McMillan, Director of Commercial and Technical Services; Alexis Jay, Director of Social Work and Housing Services; Frank Newall, Head of Services, Education and Cultural Services; Stephen Brown, Head of Legal and Administrative Services and George Hawthorn, Senior Administrative Officer.

**Apologies:** Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Jim Bolland and Margaret McGregor.

### **Provost Macdonald in the Chair**

## **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

- 1515 The Minutes of Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held on 26 November 2003 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

## **MINUTES OF THE AUDIT & PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE**

- 1516 The Minutes of Meeting of the Audit & Performance Review Committee held on 26 November 2003 were submitted and all decisions contained therein were approved.

## **APPLICATION FOR RELIEF OF RATES – DRUMKINNON TOWER**

- 1517 A report was submitted by the Director of Corporate Services recommending that the Drumkinnon Tower Visitor Centre be granted discretionary relief of rates for 2002/2003 and 2003/2004.

### **Declaration of Non-Financial Interest**

1518 Provost Macdonald declared a non-financial interest in this item of business and took no part in the deliberations thereon. Thereafter, Depute Provost Linda McColl took the Chair during this item.

1519 Councillor Devine, seconded by Councillor Calvert, moved that the recommendations of the report be approved, as follows:-

1520 That the Council agrees:-

- (1) to grant 60% discretionary relief of rates to the Drumkinnon Tower Visitor Centre for 2002/03 and 2003/04;
- (2) to note that the award of relief would terminate on 31 March 2004 and would therefore require further review thereafter (or sooner if circumstances change before then); and
- (3) to note that the cost to the Council would be £54,769, to be funded from the General Fund balance.

1521 As an amendment, Councillor McLaughlin, seconded by Councillor Young, moved that discretionary relief of rates should not be granted to the Drumkinnon Tower Visitor Centre.

1522 The Director of Corporate Services was heard in response to Members' questions.

1523 On a vote being taken, 2 Members voted for the amendment and 16 for the motion which was accordingly declared carried.

### **LOCAL GRANTS**

1524 A report was submitted by the Director of Corporate Services recommending specific proposals for the management of the Local Grants Budget based upon maximising leverage from other sources of funding.

1525 Having heard Councillor Devine and following discussion, the Council agreed to refer the report to the next meeting of the Community Participation Committee for comment in order to allow the views of small groups to be received prior to the matter being considered at a future meeting of Council.

### **GENERAL SERVICES CAPITAL BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT - PERIOD 7, 2003/2004**

1526 A report was submitted by the Director of Corporate Services on the General Services Capital Budgetary Control report – Period 7, 2003/2004.

- 1527 Having heard the Chief Executive and the Director of Corporate Services in answer to Members' questions, the Council agreed to note the contents of the report.

### **BUILDING OUR FUTURE – SCHOOL ESTATE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

- 1528 A report was submitted by the Director of Education and Cultural Services seeking approval of the "Building Our Future – School Estate Management Plan" which is required to be submitted to the Scottish Executive by 31 December 2003.

- 1529 The Council agreed:-

- (1) to approve the submission of the "Building Our Future – Asset Management Plan" to the Scottish Executive by the due date of 31 December 2003; and
- (2) that this report and its Appendix be submitted to the Children's Services Committee for the obvious interest of non-elected members on that Committee.

### **INFORMATION FOR VULNERABLE PEOPLE ABOUT BOGUS CALLERS OPERATING IN THEIR AREA**

- 1530 A report was submitted by the Director of Social Work and Housing Services providing information on an extension to provision to promote the safety of vulnerable people in West Dunbartonshire by alerting people to the activities of bogus callers if they are in the area.

- 1531 Having heard Councillor White in further explanation, the Council agreed:-

- (1) to thank the Clydebank Seniors Forum for their excellent work in respect of the "Good Morning Clydebank" initiative; and
- (2) to approve the development of this service to cover all of West Dunbartonshire and to authorise publicity about the scheme.

### **ASYLUM SEEKERS**

- 1532 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive advising Council of the position and difficulties in relation to completing contract negotiations with the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) and seeking Council's agreement to withdraw its offer to provide accommodation.

- 1533 Following discussion and having heard the Chief Executive in answer to Members' questions, the Council agreed:-

- (1) to end contract negotiations with NASS for the provision of accommodation for asylum seekers; and
- (2) to request the Chief Executive to advise partner organisations and community representatives of this decision and to thank them for their support and commitment.

### **CONTRACTS OF EMPLOYMENT FOR CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND DIRECTORS**

- 1534 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing information on the contractual position of members of the Corporate Management Team and seeking approval for the establishment of a Recruitment Committee to oversee appointments over the coming year.
- 1535 Councillor White, seconded by Councillor Calvert, moved:-
- 1536 This Council recognises that the current management team have implemented the new structures of the Council agreed in 1999 and welcomes the opportunity to consider the direction of the management team over the coming years.
- 1537 Council accepts that 2004 will see significant changes in the senior staffing of the Council as the current contracts come to an end.
- 1538 Council agrees with the Chief Executive's recommendations for the termination of the contracts of the Directors of Education and Cultural Services and Corporate Services, recognising the significant contribution both have made to the effective management of the Council since 1995.
- 1539 Furthermore, Council agrees to the establishment of a Recruitment Committee with delegated powers. The membership should be as stated by the Chief Executive, but with the additional involvement of all Service Convenors who have a responsibility for any part of a Department's services.
- 1540 Finally, for any new Directors appointed Council agrees to make the appointments on the basis of fixed term contracts.
- 1541 As an amendment, Councillor McLaughlin, seconded by Councillor Young, moved:-

1542 That Council should agree to the terms of the above motion with the exception to the proposal that the contracts of the Director of Education and Cultural Services and Director of Corporate Services be terminated early and therefore both officers should fulfil their current contracts.

1543 On a vote being taken, 2 Members voted for the amendment and 18 for the motion which was accordingly declared carried.

### **MA KHIN KHIN LEH – PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE**

1544 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive advising of a request by the local branch of Amnesty International for support for a prisoner of conscience in Burma and making recommendations thereon.

1545 Having heard Provost Macdonald, the Council agreed to designate Ma Khin Khin Leh as its adopted Prisoner of Conscience and to lend its support to the local branch of Amnesty International in raising awareness of her plight and in seeking her release.

### **PROVOST'S REMARKS**

1546 Provost Macdonald wished everyone present happiness, good health and peace over the festive period and for the forthcoming year and, on behalf of the Council, expressed his best wishes to Councillors Bolla and McGregor.

The meeting closed at 7.30 p.m.

