

CORPORATE AND EFFICIENT GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee held on Wednesday, 20 April 2011 in the Education Centre, St. Margaret of Scotland Hospice, East Barns Street, Clydebank at 2.00 p.m.

Present: Councillors Jim Bollan, Jim Brown, David McBride, Ronnie McColl, Lawrence O'Neill, Iain Robertson* and Martin Rooney.

* Attended later in the meeting.

Attending: Joyce White, Executive Director of Corporate Services; Andrew Fraser, Head of Legal, Administrative & Regulatory Services; Vincent Gardiner, Manager of Exchequer; Gillian McNeilly, Manager of Accounting; Colin McDougall, Manager of Risk & Performance; Patricia Marshall, Manager of ICT; Angela Terry, Manager of Organisational Development; John Stevenson, Section Head – Environmental Health and Craig Stewart, Committee Officer.

Apologies: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Jim McElhill, Craig McLaughlin and Marie McNair.

Councillor Ronnie McColl in the Chair

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

It was noted that there were no declarations of interest in any of the items of business on the agenda.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of Meeting of the Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee held on 16 February 2011 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE CULTURAL SUB-COMMITTEE

The Minutes of Meeting of the Corporate Cultural Sub-Committee held on 28 January 2011 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

Having heard the Head of Legal, Administrative and Regulatory Services in clarification of certain matters, it was agreed:-

- (1) that a Briefing Note would be issued to Members in respect of the item under the heading 'International Links – Beauvoisin: Update on Twinning Visit'; and

- (2) that it would be helpful, in future, if further and more detailed information could be provided to Members in respect of resolutions of the Corporate Cultural Sub-Committee which required ratification of the Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee.

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT 1948 – POLICY ON INDIGENT FUNERALS

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services seeking approval for a policy to ensure a consistent approach is taken for the arrangement of indigent funerals.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to continue this matter to the next meeting of the Committee in order to allow further consultation to take place.

APPOINTMENT OF PUBLIC ANALYST, AGRICULTURAL ANALYST AND FOOD EXAMINER

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services seeking approval for an amendment to the current statutory appointments of Public Analyst and Food Examiner for West Dunbartonshire Council.

The Committee agreed:-

- (1) to approve the deletion of Alison Laird, Food Examiner and addition of Alison Aitken to the list of statutory appointed Food Examiners; and
- (2) that the Executive Director of Corporate Services be given delegated authority to maintain an accurate record of these statutory appointments.

RENT ARREARS WRITE-OFF – QUARTER 4 2010/11

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services seeking approval for rent arrears write-offs for the third quarter of 2010/11.

After discussion and having heard the Client & Support Manager and the Head of Legal, Administrative and Regulatory Services in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to approve rent arrears write-offs totalling £23,649.30 for 2010/11 as detailed in the Appendix to the report.

WRITE-OFF OF MISCELLANEOUS INCOME DEBTOR ACCOUNTS

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services recommending for approval the write-off of debts in respect of miscellaneous income debtor accounts.

After discussion and having heard the relevant officers in elaboration and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) that a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee outlining the range of measures which the Council may be in a position to take in respect of dealing with debtors and how they accessed Council services; and
- (2) to approve the write off of miscellaneous income debtor accounts totalling £138,722.50.

WRITE-OFF OF NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services recommending for approval the write-off of debts in respect of National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR).

The Committee agreed to approve the write off of NNDR accounts totalling £776,502.77.

ADMISSION TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME – CLYDEBANK REBUILT

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services seeking approval for the Council to act as guarantor for Clydebank Rebuilt in their application for full admitted body status with the Strathclyde Pension Fund.

After discussion and having heard the Executive Director of Corporate Services and the Client & Support Manager in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed, subject to the conditions outlined in 6.1 of the report, that the Council would act as guarantor for the application by Clydebank Rebuilt to join Strathclyde Pension Fund.

RENEWAL/RE-TENDERING OF THE COUNCIL'S INSURANCE CONTRACTS

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services seeking authority to renew and, where appropriate, re-tender the Council's Insurance Contracts.

The Committee agreed:-

- (1) that authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Corporate Services, in consultation with the Chair of the Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee, to renew the insurance contracts which are subject to long term agreements and are due for renewal and, if appropriate, agree an extension;
- (2) that authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Corporate Services, in consultation with the Chair of the Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee to re-tender particular insurance contracts where this is considered to be in the best interests of the Council; and

- (3) to note that the meeting of the Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee on 16 February 2011 authorised the Executive Director of Corporate Services, in consultation with the Chair of the Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee to re-tender the mortgage property 'right to buy' block buildings insurance policy and to accept the most economically advantageous tender, the outcome of which will be reported to the Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee.

PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING (PDP)

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services seeking agreement to implement a revised policy and framework for Performance and Development Planning (PDP) for all staff across the Council (excluding Chief Officers and Teachers).

The Committee agreed:-

- (1) to the implementation of the PDP policy and procedure with effect from April 2011; and
- (2) to the implementation of the PDP policy and procedure for a three year period with an annual review of the process undertaken at the end of each performance year.

GRANT APPLICATIONS

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services providing an update on grants to voluntary organisations from the Trust Fund and Dumbarton Common Good budgets.

After discussion and having heard the Manager of Accounting and relevant officers in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the grant due to be awarded for community councils (£1,970);
- (2) to approve the grants as recommended from the Dumbarton Common Good (£67,400); and
- (3) to continue to the next meeting of the Committee consideration of the application by Bellsmyre Digital Community to enable submission of a full report providing details of how Bellsmyre Digital Community were taking matters forward in regard to their various project plans and arrangements with regard to their application for Lottery funding. If the applicants had an immediate financial problem, the Committee agreed that authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Corporate Services, in consultation with the Convener, to grant temporary funding to cover the period up to the next Committee meeting.

PROVOST'S FUND

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services advising of the current sum available within the Provost's Fund and inviting Members to approve a top-up.

After discussion, Councillor R. McColl, seconded by Councillor Brown, moved:-

That the Committee agrees to approve the transfer of £5,000 from the local Grants budget to the Provost's Fund.

As an amendment, Councillor McBride, seconded by Councillor O'Neill, moved:-

That given the short time between now and the local government elections next year, that the sum of £1,500 be transferred instead from the local Grants budget to the Provost's Fund.

On a vote being taken, 4 Members voted for the amendment and 3 for the motion. The amendment was accordingly declared carried.

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) STRATEGY

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services seeking agreement for a strategy for the management of the Council's ICT assets.

The Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note in Section 8 of the ICT Strategy document, the financial bids already progressing to support the delivery of the strategy;
- (2) to note governance of the ICT Strategy will form part of the existing governance arrangements for Corporate Asset Management and Corporate Finance Strategies;
- (3) to note that an annual progress report and plan for coming year will be made available;
- (4) to note that future bids for investment to deliver the ICT strategy will be through normal bidding process and a 5-year rolling plan of investment to deliver the remainder of the ICT Strategy will be brought to Committee following agreement of the 2011-12 capital programme in June 2011; and
- (5) otherwise to approve the ICT Strategy 2011 – 2016.

NATIONAL TRADING STANDARDS ENFORCEMENT TEAMS

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services requesting that the Committee delegates power to the Executive Director of Corporate Services to authorise enforcement officers employed by national trading standards enforcement teams which operate within West Dunbartonshire.

The Committee agreed:-

- (1) that power be delegated to the Executive Director of Corporate Services to authorise officers employed by Glasgow City Council without limit of time subject to the controls outlined in section 6 of the report; and
- (2) to note that the procedure for authorising officers employed by North Lanarkshire Council in the Scottish Scambusters Team would remain unchanged.

FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY AUDIT OF WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL – 26 TO 28 OCTOBER 2010

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services on the results of a Food Standards Agency (FSA) audit and recommending endorsement of the Action Plan agreed by the Environmental Health Section and the FSA.

The Committee agreed to note the outcome of the FSA audit and endorsed the action plan detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

SICKNESS ABSENCE REPORTING – QUARTER 3 (2010/11)

A report was submitted by the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development advising on the levels of employee sickness absence for the third Quarter 2010/11 (October, November and December 2010).

After discussion and having heard the Executive Director of Corporate Services in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the contents of this report;
- (2) to note the new targets agreed for West Dunbartonshire Council for 2010/11; and
- (3) that a Briefing Note would be issued to Members in respect of the year end statistics, particularly in view of the voluntary severance trawl that had recently been carried out.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT: PERIOD 11 2010/11

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive advising of the performance of the Chief Executive budget for the period to 28 February 2011.

After discussion and having heard the Executive Director of Corporate Services and the Manager of Accounting in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note that any Member of the Committee requiring further and/or specific information on the content of the report was invited to contact the Executive Director; and
- (2) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

CORPORATE SERVICES BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT: PERIOD 11 2010/11

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services advising of the performance of the Corporate Services budget for the period to 28 February 2011.

After discussion and having heard the Executive Director of Corporate Services and relevant officers in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

DUMBARTON COMMON GOOD FUND – MONITORING REPORT TO 28 FEBRUARY 2011

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services providing the Committee with details of income and expenditure on the Common Good Fund Account to 28 February 2011.

The Committee agreed to note the Statement of Income and Expenditure to 28 February 2011.

TREASURY UPDATE (1 APRIL 2010 – 28 FEBRUARY 2011)

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services advising about interest rates and treasury transactions of the Council which have taken place during the period 1 April 2010 to 28 February 2011.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DEPARTMENT PUBLIC SERVICE IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK (PSIF) IMPROVEMENT PLAN

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive informing of the Chief Executive's Department Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) self assessment and the resulting Departmental Improvement Plan.

The Committee agreed to note the Chief Executive's Department PSIF improvement plan 2010/11, 2011/12 and 2012/13.

CORPORATE SERVICES PUBLIC SERVICE IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK (PSIF) IMPROVEMENT PLAN

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services informing of the Corporate Services Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) self assessment and seeking approval to implement the Departmental Improvement Plan.

The Committee agreed to note the Corporate Services Department PSIF improvement plan.

The meeting closed at 3.08 p.m.