

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held by video conference on Monday, 22 March 2021 at 10.10 a.m.

Present: Provost William Hendrie, Bailie Denis Agnew and Councillors Jim Bollan, Jim Brown, Gail Casey, Karen Conaghan, Ian Dickson, Diane Docherty, Jim Finn, Daniel Lennie, Caroline McAllister, Douglas McAllister, David McBride, Jonathan McColl, Iain McLaren, Marie McNair, John Millar, John Mooney, Lawrence O'Neill, Sally Page, Martin Rooney and Brian Walker.

Attending: Joyce White, Chief Executive; Angela Wilson, Chief Officer – Supply, Distribution & Property; Beth Culshaw, Chief Officer, West Dunbartonshire Health & Social Care Partnership; Peter Hessel, Chief Officer – Regulatory & Regeneration (Legal Officer); Stephen West, Chief Officer – Resources; Victoria Rogers, Chief Officer – People & Technology; Peter Barry, Chief Officer – Housing & Employability; Gail MacFarlane, Chief Officer – Roads & Neighbourhood; Malcolm Bennie, Chief Officer – Citizen, Culture & Facilities; Laura Mason, Chief Education Officer; Gillian McNeilly, Finance Manager; Raymond Lynch, Section Head (Licensing); Robert Mackie, Senior Officer (Licensing Services); George Hawthorn, Manager – Democratic & Registration Services and Craig Stewart, Committee Officer.

Also Attending: Richard Smith, Senior Audit Manager and Zahrah Mahmood, Senior Auditor, Audit Scotland.

STATEMENT BY CHAIR

Provost Hendrie advised that the meeting was being audio streamed and broadcast live to the internet and would be available for playback.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

RECORDING OF VOTES

The Council agreed that all votes taken during the meeting would be by roll call vote to ensure an accurate record.

**GENERAL SERVICES BUDGET PREPARATION 2021/22 TO 2023/24 –
BUDGET UPDATE: BUDGET SETTING 2021/22**

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Resources:-

- (a) providing an update in relation to both the revenue and capital budget process for 2021/22 to 2023/24;
- (b) providing an update on specific issues and seeking approval as appropriate; and
- (c) seeking approval to set the General Services revenue and capital budgets for 2021/22 through approval of options to close the 2021/22 budget gap.

Councillor Dickson, seconded by Councillor McColl, moved:-

Council agree the budget as detailed in the spreadsheet and associated Fairer Future document (*shown as Appendices 1 and 2 to these Minutes*).

Agree recommendations 2.1 (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (g), (i) and (j).

Agree to make the two existing temporary project worker posts in the Communities Team permanent with a report to come back to Corporate Services outlining how the Council plans to deliver the Community Empowerment Strategy and Action Plan, and what resources are required.

Agree that a report will come to Corporate Services for members to decide whether to accept the Digital Team growth bid.

As an amendment, Councillor Rooney, seconded by Councillor McBride, moved:-

The Labour group approach to the budget this year has been straightforward in that we have rejected service cuts and utilised reserves to: (i) protect council services; (ii) protect council jobs; and (iii) protect valued services for our communities.

The Council agrees the recommendations at 2.1 of the report

The Council also agrees the use of the estimated one-off **£700,000** additional announced by the Scottish Government / COSLA on Thursday 18th March to reduce the budget gap for 2021/22 from **£3.345m** to **£2.645m**.

This Council notes that the Trades Unions have rejected the COSLA Pay offer, therefore West Dunbartonshire Council agrees to set aside as part of the revenue budget the one-off grant of **£700,000** to contribute towards any additional costs of the Local Government Pay Negotiations for 2021 and to cover any costs associated relating to Councils decision on Item 8 later in the agenda on Taxi Licensing Fees, with any unused funds would be retained in reserves.

Furthermore, the Council notes that West Dunbartonshire Health & Social Care Partnership has **£3.517m** of COVID reserves and calls on the Council members on the Integrated Joint Board to support an increase to social care pay rates and to explore options for a phased increase to **£15** per hour.

As well as the above, the council agrees to explore the following for inclusion into the Councils Capital Programme and requests that officers bring forward reports around the potential options for these two projects to a future committee for consideration:

- An options appraisal on a replacement for the HUB CE Centre.
- An options appraisal on a replacement Linnvale Community Centre in the context of future redevelopment of the school campus

In order to balance the Council remaining revenue budget gap the measures identified in the table below would be implemented.

BUDGET SAVINGS

ITEM DESCRIPTION	NON RECURRING	RECURRING	TOTAL
Use of Change Fund - available per report	£1,136,000		£1,136,000
Implement funding of transactional costs to capital receipts per report	£895,000		£895,000
Accelerate use of PPP Sinking Fund from savings option 1	£700,000		£700,000
Unearmark and use Net Zero Carbon Target fund	£344,000		£344,000
Recover to prudential reserves over a 2 year period rather than 100% in 2021/22	£170,000		£170,000
Apply a general efficiency target for CMT		£100,000	£100,000
TOTALS	£3,245,000	£100,000	£3,345,000

BUDGET GROWTH

ITEM DESCRIPTION	NON RECURRING	RECURRING	TOTAL
Use one-off grant to contribute towards Local Government Pay / Taxi Licensing costs / reserves	£700,000		£700,000
TOTALS	£700,000		£700,000

On a roll call vote being taken 11 Members voted for the amendment, namely Councillors Bollan, Casey, Lennie, Douglas McAllister, McBride, Millar, Mooney, O'Neill, Page, Rooney and Walker and 11 Members voted for the motion, namely Provost Hendrie, Bailie Agnew, Councillors Brown, Conaghan, Dickson, Docherty, Finn, Caroline McAllister, McColl, McLaren and McNair.

There being an equality of votes, the Provost, Chair, used his casting vote in favour of the motion which was accordingly declared carried.

PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2020/21 TO 2030/31 AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2021/22 TO 2030/31

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Resources seeking approval of the proposed Prudential Indicators for 2020/21 to 2023/24 and Treasury Management Strategy (including the Investment Strategy) for 2021/22 to 2023/24.

Having heard the Finance Manager in further explanation and in answer to a Member's questions, the Council agreed:-

- (1) the following Prudential Indicators and Limits discussed in Appendix 1 and set out within Appendix 6 of the report for the period 2020/21 to 2023/24:
 - Capital Expenditure and Capital Financing Requirements (Tables A and B of the report);
 - Forecast and estimates of the ratio of financing costs to Net Revenue Stream (Table D of the report);
- (2) to approve the policy for loans fund advances discussed in Appendix 1 in section 3 of the report;
- (3) to approve the Treasury Management Strategy for 2021/22 to 2023/24 (including the Investment Strategy) contained within Appendices 2 to 6 of the report;
- (4) to agree the following Treasury Prudential Indicators and Limits discussed in Appendix 2 and set out within Appendix 6 of the report for the period 2021/22 to 2023/24:
 - Operational Boundaries (Table F);
 - Authorised Limits (Table G);
 - Counterparty Limits (Table J); and
 - Treasury Management Limits on Activity (Table L);
- (5) to note the draft Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators for the period 2024/25 to 2030/31 discussed in Appendices 1 and 2 and set out within Appendix 6 of the report;

- (6) to approve the statement by the Section 95 Officer regarding the gross debt level in comparison to the Capital Financing Requirement (Appendix 2 - Point 2.3 of the report); and
- (7) to note the report will be referred to Audit Committee for further scrutiny.

DUMBARTON COMMON GOOD FUND BUDGET UPDATE 2021/22

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Resources providing an update on the Dumbarton Common Good budget and seeking approval of a revised budget for 2021/22 and indicative budgets for 2022/23 and 2023/24.

After discussion and having heard the Finance Manager in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Council agreed:-

- (1) to note the probable outturn for 2020/21 as set out in the Appendix to the report;
- (2) to approve the revised 2021/22 budget as set out in the Appendix to the report;
- (3) to note the indicative budgets to 2023/24 as set out in the Appendix to the report;
- (4) to note the projected balances carried forward of £0.518m at 31 March 2021 and £0.389m at 31 March 2022 (based upon the revised draft budget 2021/22); and
- (5) to note that WD HSCP has agreed to fund the grant application from Alternatives.

TAXI LICENSING FEES

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Regulatory & Regeneration providing an analysis of the position within West Dunbartonshire Council in respect to both Taxi/Private Hire Car Driver's Licences and Taxi/Private Hire Car Operator's Licences with regard to the level of fees charged and how this compares to other local authorities.

After discussion and having heard the Section Head (Licensing) and the Senior Officer (Licensing Services) in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Council agreed to note the terms of the report.

The meeting closed at 12.02 p.m.

SNP Budget 2021/22			
	£		£
Budget Gap	£3,345,000		Remaining Gap 2020/21 £0
WDC Share of Extra Scot Gov' Funding	-£700,000		
Updated Budget Gap	£2,645,000		
SNP Growth Items	Revenue	Capital	Description
Additional Pavement Improvements		£200,000	Extra funding to accelerate pavement maintenance and improvements across West Dunbartonshire.
Womens Aid	£40,000		There has been a huge increase in service demand on Women's Aid organisations during the pandemic and this one off funding of £20,000 for each of the 2 Women's Aid organisations in West Dunbartonshire will help them provide these vital services.
Fund 1 Year Taxi/Private Hire Driver License Extension	£167,000		Recognising the unusual effect the pandemic has had on taxi/private hire car drivers and as a one off measure, anyone currently holding a full taxi/private hire car drivers license will have the license expiry date extended by an additional year. A report will come to Licensing Committee to start a consultation with the trade on the option of offering 2 or 3 year licenses in the future.
Top Up Provost's Small Community Grants Fund	£8,000		We expect a greater requirement for small grants from this fund as groups try to restart as the pandemic restrictions are eased.
Money to fund blended meetings	£500	£12,000	Makes available the estimated funding reported on 25th Nov 2020 for blended Meetings. There are multiple systems available and a procurement exercise will be required to identify the best solution for WDC.
Preventative Repairs Backlog	£152,000		This additional budget will allow for planned maintenance not able to be completed during lockdown, ensuring a smoother return to good condition libraries, community centres, schools and nurseries for example.
Addition to change fund	£74,500		Increases our ability to deliver transformational change projects and targeted savings elsewhere in this budget.

SNP Balancing Items	Revenue	Capital	Description
Free School Meals Reserve	-£300,000		No longer required (see below)
Free School Meals Revenue	-£1,038,000		Align the implementation of free school meals expansion with the Scottish Government timetable and funding.
HSCP Saving	-£260,000		HSCP Share of general savings target. HSCP have indicated they can manage their budget gap thanks to reserves and on-going changes in ways of working. There will be no cuts or other detriment to services.
Use of Capital Receipts	-£895,000		Continue policy on use of capital receipts to have a benefit for the general services revenue budget.
General Efficiency Target Across WDC	-£250,000		Targeted general efficiencies and reduction in overtime usage
Capitalise Zero Carbon Fund	-£344,000	£344,000	Officers advise that this earmarked revenue reserve can be capitalised, allowing Council to use this one off money to avoid cutting services in the 2021/22 budget. Any bids to come to the relevant service committee.
Budget is agreed subject to relevant consultations and the completion of Equalities Impact Assessments.			

WEST
DUNBARTONSHIRE
COUNCIL

A Fairer Future 2021 - 2022

Our vision, values and ethos

“ West Dunbartonshire Council will deliver high quality services, led by priorities identified by the communities of West Dunbartonshire, in an open and transparent way ”

Strategic priorities 2017 - 22

- 1 A strong local economy and improved job opportunities
- 2 Supported individuals, families and carers living independently and with dignity
- 3 Meaningful engagement with active, empowered and informed citizens who feel safe and engaged
- 4 Open, accountable and accessible local government
- 5 Efficient and effective frontline services that improve the everyday lives of residents

As a Council we want every employee to have **PRIDE** in the services they deliver:

**Personal
Responsibility
In
Delivering
Excellence**

This ethos reflects the personal stake that every one of us has in delivering our Council's priorities and underpins our commitment to the values we have adopted as a Council:

**Ambition
Confidence
Honesty
Innovation
Efficiency
Vibrancy
Excellence**

At the core of what we do as a Council is a commitment to reduce inequality and tackle root causes of poverty. The strategic priorities we have adopted are focused on improving the lives of people of West Dunbartonshire, by promoting equality for all. Underpinning our strategic priorities are key cross cutting principles, which inform all the work that we do. We will be:

- **a listening Council**
- **an accessible Council**
- **a responsive Council**
- **an open Council**



Foreword

The past 12 months have brought unprecedented financial challenges to the way local authorities operate.

In West Dunbartonshire, we have worked hard and despite the challenges we faced, we have adapted to ensure we continue to deliver high quality services for our residents during what has undoubtedly been an uncertain time. As a Council, we are committed to doing everything we can to support our most vulnerable citizens throughout this crisis and beyond. One year on from the first lockdown we are now beginning to see brighter days, with easing of restrictions and a sense of normality on the horizon.

Our hard work does not stop there though. Our focus is now firmly on ensuring our services our communities and our residents can make a full recovery from the impacts of Coronavirus. As part of this, our budget allows for the recruitment of two Community Empowerment Officers with an option to increase this to four coming to councillors in the future.

These new roles are of vital importance as they will ensure that as an organisation we continue to support our residents to get involved and help make positive changes throughout the area.

Our residents are at the heart of all of our decisions, and as we take steps towards recovery from Covid-19, these new roles will allow us to successfully engage with them to hear their ideas and aspirations for each community post pandemic.

I am pleased to once again deliver a budget with no service cuts and which includes important new money to benefit people across our communities.

We all want to see West Dunbartonshire thriving, and by working together, we can ensure it continues to.

Councillor Ian Dickson
Convener of Corporate Services
& Spokesperson for Finance

Covid-19 response in numbers

24,817

home care visits
provided each
week



3,910

residents given support from WDC and
HSCP Crisis Support teams



More than

3,000

residents on shielding list
contacted with 1,273 given
additional support

11,369

highest number of
participants in Google
meets each day

2,000,000

hits on OurCloud.buzz since
March 2020

1,418

highest number of children who
have accessed
school/ELCs
in one day



640

tonnes of
household
waste per week
collected from
45,000 properties



Distributed
4,488 grants totalling

£22.95m
to our Business Community



9,020

Crisis Grants applications

6,579 granted
£466k paid out



3,264

Community Care
Grants applications

2,016 granted
£589k paid out

85,204

calls answered
by the Contact Centre -
21,903 of which were
Council Tax related



38,546

followers on social
media and almost

212,932

interactions
across the channels



145

homeless
assessments



139

households provided with
temporary accommodation

5,500

welfare calls made to our tenants

912

people on shielding list contacted
for additional support and
provided with an action plan

22,760

repairs calls
answered



998

employees have
volunteered to help

100,000

digital books issued

20,000

books physically issued via Click & Collect



25,000

online sessions including Bookbug,
Early Year crafts and storytelling

808,709

items of PPE
distributed



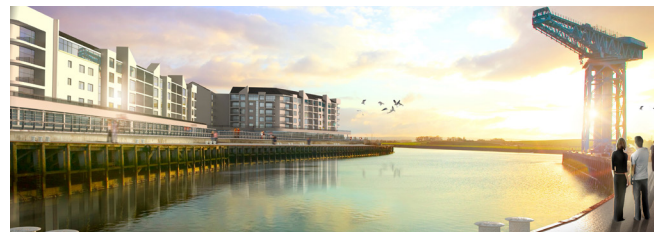
Key projects in 2020/21



Progressed construction at Renton Campus



Opened new care home, Queens Quay House



Unlocked the potential of Queens Quay for development



Launched Queens Quay Energy Centre



Created new Early Learning and Childcare Centres across West Dunbartonshire



Secured planning permission for a major development in Bowling



Secured funding for Faifley Education Campus



Commitments

- Invest £1.85m to assist residents to secure employment through the delivery of our employability services, including support for Foundation and Modern apprenticeships
- From the £1.85m, invest £0.75m through 'young persons guarantee' and 'kickstart' to help young people to move towards and into employment
- From the £1.85m, Invest £0.5m through the 'Parental Employment Support Fund' invested in supporting people from disadvantaged backgrounds to secure and sustain employment
- Invest approximately £1m in community development and learning to assist people to gain informal and formal qualifications
- Invest £0.9m in welfare/benefits teams to address disadvantage by helping families to maximise income from benefits and employment and reduce the cost of living
- Invest £0.5m in community-based organisations providing access to welfare/consumer and employment rights
- Continue investment of £418k of Scottish Government funding to tackle digital exclusion amongst children and young people in West Dunbartonshire by purchasing 2,084 additional Chromebook devices and providing households with internet connectivity
- Work in partnership with community based organisations to address food insecurity
- Continue to facilitate access to welfare/debt support, employability and practical assistance for access to food and medicine via a multi-disciplinary team drawn from across the Council
- Continue to provide free sanitary products to support communities by helping eliminate period poverty in West Dunbartonshire
- Continue to support our communities to ensure those most affected by the pandemic can access help and assistance
- Complete work on a new gym, changing pavilion and all-weather running track at Posties Park
- Work with our partners to ensure the aims of the Community Empowerment Strategy are embedded and promoted
- Support the community empowerment agenda and the recovery phase by working across West Dunbartonshire to develop individual and community skills and capacity
- Work with the community to develop the approach to Community Budgeting and explore additional funding models to support local groups
- £200k to increase the work we can do repairing and improving our pavements across the area.



- Deploy 68 new staff to enable the full implementation of 1,140 hours of free Early Learning and Childcare across West Dunbartonshire, supporting thousands of children and families
- Support programmes that address holiday hunger among school pupils, support 'lockdown learning' and assist pupils to re-engage with education services
- Establish programmes of Supported Study across West Dunbartonshire for our children and young people as part of recovery efforts from the pandemic
- Continue to support safe working environments for our workforce during the pandemic by providing PPE and testing
- Support the successful roll out of the vaccination and community testing programmes for our residents
- Completion of Lomond Bridge restoration and refurbishment as part of significant regeneration works in Balloch
- Completion of Connecting Clydebank, public realm and sustainable transport improvements to enhance the area for pedestrians and motorists
- Completion of design and commencement of construction to address flooding issues at Gruggies Burn in Dumbarton
- Increase participation of residents in influencing and enhancing the services we deliver to our communities, in an open and transparent way
- Continue to focus on employee wellbeing to ensure they are supported and skilled to deliver positive outcomes for communities
- Continuing to deliver and enhance our technology to support employees to maintain services while working remotely
- Enhancing and transforming our approach to digital technologies and use of data to drive forward improvement to our services
- Support recovery through the full restoration of services and reopening of our buildings and office
- Invest £1.7m in providing high-quality library services to the people of West Dunbartonshire including engaging activities such as Book Bug and Storytime sessions as well as a significantly expanded online library
- Guarantee funding levels for another three years for both Women's Aid organisations in West Dunbartonshire to secure the important services they deliver to vulnerable women and families in our communities
- A one off grant of £20k for both Women's Aid organisations to assist them in managing the increased levels of need in our communities as a result of pandemic restrictions
- An additional £8k for the Provost's small community grants fund to allow groups to apply for more support as they recover from the Pandemic
- Add £152k to the Preventative Maintenance budget allowing us to undertake important repairs and maintenance of Council buildings such as schools, community centres and libraries, that we were unable to do during last year's lockdowns.

