

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

At a reconvened meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held in the Council Chambers, Town Hall, Dumbarton Road, Clydebank on Wednesday, 28th February, 2001 at 5.30 p.m.

Present: Provost Alistair Macdonald, Councillors John Syme, Andrew White, Anthony Devine, Mary Collins, Ian McDonald, John McCutcheon, Linda McColl, Iain Robertson, Geoffrey Calvert, James McCallum, John Trainer, James Bolland, Craig McLaughlin, Ronald McColl, Margaret McGregor, James Flynn and Connie O'Sullivan.

Attending: Tim Huntingford, Chief Executive; Ian McMurdo, Director of Education and Cultural Services; Eric Walker, Director of Corporate Services; Alexis Jay, Director of Social Work and Housing Services; Gerry McInerney, Head of Personnel Services; Stephen Brown, Head of Legal and Administrative Services; and Dave Low, Administrative Assistant.

Apologies: Apologies for absence were received from Councillors James McElhill, Mary Campbell, Daniel McCafferty and Duncan McDonald.

Provost Alistair Macdonald in the Chair

Prior to commencing with the business of the meeting, Provost Macdonald reminded those present that the business on the agenda had been continued from the adjourned meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held on 20th December 2000.

NOTICES OF MOTION

(a) A motion was resubmitted from Councillor Ronald McColl in the following terms:-

That this Council writes to COSLA with the recommendation that they make a joint approach with all the Unions involved in wage negotiations, to the Scottish Executive, for further money to fund the wage rises for the next two financial years.

Councillor McColl thereafter withdrew his motion in light of the current developments in wage negotiations.

(b) A motion was resubmitted from Councillor Bolland in the following terms: -

This Council agrees to restrict to 10% the maximum amount of money that can be deducted from an Employee's salary/wage, on their pay cycle, for any recoverable debt. This maximum amount can be waived with the Employee's written consent.

This Council further agrees that the practice of opening Employee's pay slips without their consent, shall cease immediately.

In view of the current practice by the Debt Recovery Section an Independent audit of the Labour Council's anti-poverty strategy be carried out urgently.

Councillor Bollan moved and was heard in support of his motion which was seconded by Councillor Ronald McColl.

By way of an amendment, Councillor White, seconded by Councillor Devine, moved as follows:-

This Council notes the establishment of the Income Collection/Debt Advocacy Forum and its remit to develop policy, advocate and lobby on behalf of those in debt.

Council notes that the Forum's membership will include external advice groups etc. and can also include members of the Opposition.

Council therefore agrees to invite Councillor Bollan and other Opposition members to consider putting themselves forward for membership.

This Council will do everything possible to lead the field of responsible and caring debt recovery that will be a benchmark for others to follow.

On a vote being taken, 11 members voted for the amendment and 6 for the motion. The amendment was carried.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Council approved the undernoted resolution in relation to the immediately following item of business: -

That under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it may involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Act".

(c) A motion was resubmitted from Councillor McCutcheon in the following terms: -

This Council has reservations with regard to the way the investigation was carried out into allegations of misconduct by management in a residential home. This Council calls for an independent inquiry into the running of this home and into the allegations that were raised.

Further, Council notes with regret the failure to date to implement many of the good recommendations that came out of this report that will help safeguard the interests of workers in all nursing homes within West Dunbartonshire.

Finally, Council seeks an assurance from the Chief Executive that whistle blowers within West Dunbartonshire have the same rights of dignity to work as those that they accuse.

Councillor McCutcheon moved and was heard in support of his motion which was seconded by Councillor Ian McDonald.

By way of amendment, Councillor Flynn, seconded by Councillor Trainer, moved that no action be taken.

On a vote being taken, 10 members voted for the amendment and 7 for the motion. The amendment was carried.

The meeting closed at 6.25 p.m.