

Agenda



West Dunbartonshire Council

Date: Wednesday, 28 June 2023

Time: 16:00

Format: Hybrid meeting

Contact: Carol-Ann Burns, Senior Democratic Services Officer
Email: carol-ann.burns@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Dear Member

Please attend a meeting of **West Dunbartonshire Council** as detailed above.

Members will have the option to attend the meeting remotely or in person at the Civic Space, 16 Church Street, Dumbarton.

The business is shown on the attached agenda.

Yours faithfully

PETER HESSETT

Chief Executive

Distribution:-

Provost Douglas McAllister
Councillor James Bollan
Councillor Karen Conaghan
Councillor Ian Dickson
Councillor Diane Docherty
Councillor Craig Edward
Councillor Gurpreet Singh Johal
Councillor Daniel Lennie
Councillor David McBride
Councillor Jonathan McColl
Councillor James McElhill

Councillor Michelle McGinty
Councillor June McKay
Councillor John Millar
Councillor Lawrence O'Neill
Councillor Lauren Oxley
Councillor Chris Pollock
Councillor Martin Rooney
Councillor Gordon Scanlan
Councillor Hazel Sorrell
Councillor Clare Steel
Councillor Sophie Traynor

Chief Executive
Chief Officers

Date of issue: 15 June 2023

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WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY, 28 JUNE 2023

AGENDA

1 STATEMENT BY CHAIR – AUDIO STREAMING

2 APOLOGIES

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are invited to declare if they have an interest in any of the items of business on the agenda and the reasons for such declarations.

4 RECORDING OF VOTES

The Council is asked to agree that all votes taken during the meeting will be done by roll call vote to ensure an accurate record.

5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING 5 – 12

Submit for approval, as correct record, the Minutes of Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held on 26 April 2023.

6 MINUTES OF MEETING OF AUDIT COMMITTEE 13 – 15

Submit for information, and where necessary ratification, the Minutes of Meeting of the Audit Committee held on 15 February 2023.

7 OPEN FORUM

The Council is asked to note that no open forum questions have been submitted by members of the public.

8 GLASGOW CITY REGION CITY DEAL UPDATE 17 – 20

Submit report by the Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration providing information on the progress with the implementation of the Glasgow City Region City Deal.

9/

9 FINANCAL UPDATE 21 – 28

Submit report by the Chief Officer – Resources providing an update on the financial challenges facing the Council and the estimated 2024/25 – 2028/29 revenue budget gaps.

10 INTRODUCTION OF ONLINE SURGERIES FOR ELECTED MEMBERS 29 – 35

Submit report by the Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration requesting consideration of a proposal to introduce online surgeries for Elected Members and to identify what technology and training support, if any, is required.

11 CONSULTATION ON THE SECOND REVIEW OF SCOTTISH PARLIAMENTARY BOUNDARIES 37 – 42

Submit report by the Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration requesting consideration of the implications of the Second Review of Scottish Parliamentary Boundaries and in particular the impact on the two existing Scottish Parliamentary Constituencies administered by West Dunbartonshire Council, namely Dumbarton, and Clydebank and Milngavie.

12 NOTICE OF MOTION

(a) Motion by Councillor Gordon Scanlan – Sun Safe accreditation programme

Council calls on schools to raise awareness of the dangers of overexposure to UV light in our children, the dangers of not wearing sunscreen, and encourages schools to sign up for the free Sun Safe accreditation programme.

Overexposure to UV is a serious health risk and the primary cause of skin cancer, there are on average 16,700 cases in the UK every year.

Sun Safe provide free resources for schools and nurseries to help educate children about the hazards of not wearing sunscreen and provide a free accreditation programme.

Council recognises that this month has seen a period of extreme hot weather and that it's more important than ever for children to recognise the potential dangers posed by the sunlight, and that schools and nurseries taking part in the sunlife campaign would benefit from it.

Council further recognises that overexposure to UV light is a danger for individuals of all ages and endeavours to raise awareness of these dangers through its media channels.

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WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

At a Hybrid Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held in the Civic Space, 16 Church Street, Dumbarton on Wednesday, 26 April 2023 at 4.04 p.m.

Present: Provost Douglas McAllister and Councillors Jim Bollan, Karen Conaghan, Ian Dickson, Craig Edward*, Gurpreet Singh Johal, Daniel Lennie, David McBride, Jonathan McColl, Michelle McGinty, June McKay, John Millar, Lawrence O'Neill, Lauren Oxley, Chris Pollock, Martin Rooney, Gordon Scanlan, Hazel Sorrell, Clare Steel and Sophie Traynor.

*Arrived later in the meeting.

Attending: Peter Hessett, Chief Executive; Alan Douglas, Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration (Legal Officer); Laurence Slavin, Chief Officer – Resources and Section 95 Officer; Peter Barry, Chief Officer – Housing and Employability; Beth Culshaw, Chief Officer – West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership; Amanda Graham, Chief Officer – Citizen, Culture and Facilities; Gail Macfarlane, Chief Officer – Roads and Neighbourhood; Laura Mason, Chief Education Officer; Victoria Rogers, Chief Officer – People and Technology; Angela Wilson, Chief Officer – Supply, Distribution and Property; Michelle Lynn, Assets Co-ordinator; George Hawthorn, Manager – Democratic and Registration Services, and Carol-Ann Burns, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Diane Docherty and James McElhill.

Provost Douglas McAllister in the Chair

STATEMENT BY CHAIR

Provost McAllister 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 done by roll call vote to ensure an accurate record.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Minutes of Meetings of West Dunbartonshire Council held on 31 August 2022 (Ordinary) and 29 March 2023 (Ordinary) were submitted and approved as correct records.

Council noted that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 31 August 2022 had previously been approved as a correct record by Council at its meeting on 26 October 2022 and that they had been resubmitted for approval to the present meeting in view of the earlier version having omitted the final item of business.

With reference to item under the heading 'Motion by Councillor David McBride – West Dunbartonshire Council calls for the Immediate Release and Return to the UK of Jagtar Singh Johal, on the Basis of His Continued Arbitrary Detention in India' in the Minutes of the Meeting held on 31 August 2022. Provost McAllister stated that today marked 2,000 days of the imprisonment of Mr Jagtar Singh Johal. The Provost called upon the duty of the British Government and all political parties at Westminster to make proper representations to do whatever it takes to bring Mr Jagtar Singh Johal home and for the media to highlight this plea.

The Council agreed with Provost McAllister's sentiments.

URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS EMERGENCY MOTION BY COUNCILLOR LAWRENCE O'NEILL – CLYDEBANK FOOTBALL CLUB

The Provost advised that he had received a request from Councillor O'Neill for the Council to consider an urgent item of business on Clydebank Football Club.

Councillor O'Neill relayed the terms of his motion to the Council, and the Provost advised that it would be considered after the final item of business on the agenda.

MINUTES OF OTHER COMMITTEES

The Minutes of Meetings of the following Committees were submitted and approved as correct records:-

- (1) Cultural Committee held on 29 June 2022;
- (2) Community Alliance held on 29 August 2022; and
- (3) Dumbarton Trust Committee held on 15 March 2023.

OPEN FORUM

The Council noted that no open forum questions had been submitted by members of the public.

SHARED SERVICES UPDATE

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Roads and Neighbourhood in relation to the above.

After discussion and having heard the Chief Officer – Roads and Neighbourhood in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Council agreed:-

- (1) to note the findings of the Evaluation of Shared Services;
- (2) to note the Shared Services Joint Committee had agreed the Shared Services Report on 18 April 2023;
- (3) to approve the proposed dissolution of shared services within Roads and Neighbourhood Services;
- (4) to approve the implementation date of 1 June 2023 in relation to the Roads and Neighbourhood Services management structure;
- (5) to note the proposed employee position set out in paragraph 4.2 of the report; and
- (6) to note that a future report would be presented for consideration in relation to the future delivery options in relation to Internal Audit.

Note: Councillor Edward entered the meeting during consideration of this item.

NOTICE OF MOTIONS

- (a) Motion by Councillor David McBride – Utility Companies Protocol for Emergency & Planned Works**

Councillor McBride moved:-

This Council is extremely concerned about the emergency works by utility companies and the effects this has on the traffic on our local road networks.

Whilst emergency work by its very nature, is necessary and can have limited planning time, the utility companies need to ensure there is effective management of emergency works so that they can react to traffic congestion throughout the period of the emergency work.

Cardross Road Dumbarton is a vital artery road which is the only road available for thousands of residents in Dumbarton West to get to and from their home. Over the last three years, there have been at least twelve occasions, where Cardross Road was subject to emergency work by utility companies.

The most recent emergency works in February, March and again in April, resulted in traffic chaos. Over the recent Easter holiday weekend, the Scottish Power emergency works, caused gridlock over the busy holiday weekend affecting local residents and holiday traffic.

From an elected member perspective, there appears to be limited engagement by utilities, this leads to ineffective traffic management plans and often no flexibility during the work, even when it is perfectly clear the traffic management arrangements are failing.

In addition, the utility companies contractors have failed to provide staff for specific traffic management duties. There appears to be no effective communication channels outside of normal working hours, to cater for when utility companies are carrying out emergency or planned works.

Given the above the Council agrees the following:-

1. To ask the Chief Officer for Roads & Neighbourhood Services to draft a Road Works Protocol for Traffic Sensitive Locations, in line with the Coordination of Road Works Code of Practice, to be agreed with utilities, when works are proposed in these locations to ensure awareness of responsibilities.
2. This protocol should be applied for any road works which have to be undertaken on our defined traffic sensitive locations and should incorporate protocols for emergency works.
3. The protocol should take into account:-
 - Minimal traffic management proposals,
 - Discussions on how this will work in tandem with traffic lights in nearby junctions etc;
 - Communication channels throughout the works;
 - An assurance that work will take place every day of the traffic management to ensure the length of disruption is minimized; and
 - The protocol should also include the escalation, intervention and enforcement process where Statutory Undertakers fail to deliver agreed mitigation measures to minimise traffic disruption.

The motion was unanimously agreed by the Council.

(b) Motion by Councillor David McBride – Banning of Single use Disposable Vapes

Councillor McBride moved:-

This Council notes that in the UK, 14 million single use vapes are bought each month and 5.4 million are thrown away each week. It is estimated that in Scotland this would account for around 432 of these.

This is an economic issue with 10 tonnes of lithium being discarded each year which is the equivalent to the batteries inside 1,200 electric cars. This is valuable material that is lost which could have instead been recycled.

This is also a public health issue as discarded vapes present a leak risk of toxic chemicals and micro plastics which are harmful to children, pets and water systems.

Council notes that a number of Scottish Councils have already passed a motion in support of banning the sale of single use vapes.

Council further notes that the Scottish Government is working on a refreshed Tobacco Action Plan which will be published in autumn, 2023, which will consider a range of interventions with an emphasis on reducing smoking and vaping among children and young people.

In addition, the Scottish Government is carrying out an urgent review on the impact of disposable vapes on our environment in Scotland.

Given the above, the Council requests that the Chief Executive writes to the Circular Economy Minister Lorna Slater, MSP expressing our support for a ban on the sale of single use vapes and improved recycling of vapes and other Waste Electrical & Electronic Equipment by the sector.

The motion was unanimously agreed by the Council.

(c) Motion by Sophie Traynor – Lyme Disease Council notes that May marks Lyme

Councillor Traynor moved:-

Disease awareness month. Lyme Disease UK run an annual campaign called "Wake Up To Lyme" to raise awareness for the disease. Lyme Disease is a bacterial infection that is acquired from the bite of an infected tick.

Referrals for this disease have increased across the world in recent years. Scotland has a high percentage of the UK Lyme referrals, with over 1/4 of the 8000 cases per year being diagnosed here. Council recognises the need to raise awareness and increase education about Lyme Disease. Therefore, this motion calls on the Council to use the resources being offered from charities, such as the Lyme Resource Centre -Scotland, to implement awareness of Lyme Disease and the prevention of ticks into the school curriculum.

The motion was unanimously agreed by the Council.

(d) Motion by Councillor Clare Steel – Online Surgeries for Elected Members

Councillor Steel moved:-

This Council agrees that it is important that elected members are accessible to constituents. The traditional method of surgeries has been to book a meeting room in a school, Community Centre, library or other suitable building. Council agrees that this tried and tested method should continue.

However, the world has changed significantly since the creation of West Dunbartonshire Council, the way that the public interact with one another has changed and the advances in technology particularly over the past few years has made on-line communications much faster and can be more effective.

On-line meetings have a number of advantages, they save in travel time, they cut emissions, they don't require buildings to be opened or staffed, and they can be quicker to organise and reduce potential risks to elected members. On-Line surgeries could also be advertised on the council website, Facebook and Twitter page at no additional cost.

Given the above, the Council agrees that as well as traditional surgeries, there is merit in developing the option for on-line surgeries for elected members.

The Council requests that a report be brought to a future meeting for consideration.

The motion was unanimously agreed by the Council.

(e) Motion by Councillor Karen Conaghan – Dementia Awareness

Councillor Conaghan moved:-

This Council agrees to mark Dementia Awareness Week which this year will run from the 29th of May until the 4th of June. Council recognises the impact dementia has on the day to day lives of not only the individual themselves, but also the lives of their families and friends.

Through greater awareness and education it is possible to live well with dementia but finding the right support is crucial. Council therefore agrees to raise awareness by using our social media channels to highlight the ways in which individuals living with dementia and their families can find support, and to communicate how we might all better support those living with dementia.

Council recognises the positive links that have previously been made within our communities to assist those living with Dementia and agrees to work with partners to explore what more we can do and in particular the possibility of establishing a dementia friendly community here in West Dunbartonshire.

The motion was unanimously agreed by the Council.

(f) Motion by Councillor Lauren Oxley – Pride Month

Councillor Oxley moved:-

Council agrees to mark Pride Month 2023, which begins on the 1st of June. Pride Month is recognised every year by LGBTI people and their allies through various global events that celebrate, support, and empower members of the community.

Acknowledges that as well as being a month-long celebration, Pride is also an opportunity to peacefully protest and raise awareness of current issues that are facing the LGBTI community, both at home and abroad.

Notes that whilst we have seen significant progress and advancements in LGBTI equality in Scotland over the last 20 years, recent reports have found that a rising number LGBTI people believe that homophobia and transphobia are on the rise, and that biphobia remains a problem.

Asks West Dunbartonshire Council to show solidarity with the LGBTI community by recognising Pride Month through the annual flag-raising ceremony, and on our social media channels, highlighting the importance of the month and why we must continue to support our LGBTI family members, friends, colleagues, and constituents.

The motion was unanimously agreed by the Council.

**URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS
EMERGENCY MOTION BY COUNCILLOR LAWRENCE O'NEILL –
CLYDEBANK FOOTBALL CLUB**

Councillor O'Neill moved:-

Council congratulates and sends best wishes to Clydebank Football Club, based at Holm Park Community Football Academy, who will play in the Indigo Comms West of Scotland Cup Final this coming Friday at Meadow Park, Irvine against Auchinleck Talbot.

Council wishes to collectively convey our message of Good Luck to the UCS Directors led by the Chairperson, Grace McGibbon, and the football team, managed by Gordon Moffat and his coaching staff and all the sponsors and supporters of the Bankies.

The motion was unanimously agreed by the Council.

The meeting closed at 5.05 p.m

DRAFT

AUDIT COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Audit Committee held in the Civic Space, 16 Church Street on Wednesday, 15 February 2023 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors Karen Conaghan, Ian Dickson, James McElhill, Michelle McGinty and Martin Rooney and Lay Member Mr Christopher Johnstone.

Attending: Peter Hessett, Chief Executive; Laurence Slavin, Chief Officer – Resources; Angela Wilson, Chief Officer – Supply, Distribution and Property; Victoria Rogers, Chief Officer – People and Technology; Laura Mason, Chief Officer – Education, Learning and Attainment; Julie Slavin, Chief Finance Officer, HSCP; Andi Priestman, Shared Service Manager – Audit and Fraud; Fiona Taylor, Head of Health and Community Care, HSCP and Ashley MacIntyre, Committee Officer.

Also attending: Tom Reid, Audit Director, Mazars.

Apologies: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Jonathan McColl, John Millar and Hazel Sorrell.

Councillor Karen Conaghan 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 Audit Committee held on 9 November 2022 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

OPEN FORUM

The Committee noted that no open forum questions had been submitted by members of the public.

INTERNAL AUDIT PLANS 2021/22 AND 2022/23 – PROGRESS TO 18 JANUARY 2023

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Resources advising of progress at 18 January against the Internal Audit Plans for 2021/22 and 2022/23.

After discussion and having heard the Shared Service Manager – Audit and Fraud in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the recently issued Internal Audit reports and action plans; and
- (2) to note the status of implementation progress relating to action plans from the previously issued Internal Audit reports.

PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURES AND OTHER INTERNAL AUDIT INVESTIGATIONS 16 JULY 2022 TO 18 JANUARY 2023

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Resources advising of the outcome of investigations into allegations and disclosures, in line with public interest disclosure and business irregularities policies received by Internal Audit between 16 July 2022 and 18 January 2023.

After discussion and having heard the Shared Service Manager – Audit and Fraud in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

CIPFA GUIDANCE FOR AUDIT COMMITTEES

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Resources advising of the updated CIPFA guidance on Audit Committees within Local Authorities.

After discussion and having heard the Shared Service Manager – Audit and Fraud in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the updated guidance for Audit Committees;
- (2) that the Chair of the Audit Committee would review the updated guidance with support from the Chief Officer – Resources and the Shared Service Manager – Audit and Fraud; and
- (3) that an update on the Council's current arrangements to the Audit Committee and any required improvement actions would be brought to a future meeting of the Committee for consideration and approval.

STRATEGIC RISKS 2022-2027

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – People and Technology providing an update on the strategic risks for 2022-27.

After discussion and having heard the Chief Officer – People and Technology and the Chief Officer – Education, Learning and Attainment in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

AUDIT UPDATE – WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

A report was submitted by the Audit Director, Mazars providing an update for year ending 31 March 2023.

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

- (1) to note that Tom Reid, Audit Director, Mazars would be the Engagement Lead for West Dunbartonshire Council; and
- (2) to note the contents of the report.

The meeting closed at 10.45 a.m.

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Chief Officer (Regeneration and Regulatory)

Council: 28 June 2023

Subject: Glasgow City Region City Deal - Update

1. Purpose

- 1.1** To note the progress with the implementation of the Glasgow City Region City Deal.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** It is recommended that Council notes the progress of the Glasgow City Region programme.

3. Background

- 3.1** The Glasgow City Region City Deal Infrastructure programme equates to £1.13bn of investment during period 2015-2035. Projects are progressing and have reached various stages from Strategic, Outline and Full Business Case stages of approval.

4. Main Issues

- 4.1** This report addresses City Region progress. A separate report on the Council's Exxon project is on the agenda.
- 4.2** The Glasgow City Region Chief Executives Group met on 8 June 2023. Agenda items included the Interim Performance report described in more detail below; a presentation by Glasgow City Council on the Full Business Case for Sauchiehall Street Precinct/Cambridge Street; a report on the Innovation Action Plan; a proposed approach to the use of Shared Prosperity Fund underspend; and a report on Clyde Mission.
- 4.3** The Interim Performance Report provides an update on all the regional City Deal projects, and specifically reported progress on business cases by South Lanarkshire Council for both Larkhall and East Kilbride Community Growth Areas, and by Glasgow City Council for Sauchiehall Street Precinct and Cambridge Street. Additionally it was reported that the City Deal Gateway 2 evaluation framework has been submitted to UK Government, and that progress was being made on the new Community Benefits system.
- 4.4** Glasgow City Council's Full Business Case for Sauchiehall Street Precinct/Cambridge Street was considered and approved. This project has a value of £6.596m, and is one of The Avenues projects, which provides better active travel connections and public realm within Glasgow city centre. The funding request in the Full Business Case was in addition to the £1.279m

already approved at the Outline Business Case. The final cost took account of value engineering measures already undertaken by the City Council project team.

- 4.5** The report on the Innovation Action Plan addressed the progress being made towards the Plan including ongoing work on creating an evidence base.
- 4.6** A report which outlined recent discussions on how underspend across the region-wide allocation of Shared Prosperity Fund was presented. With the current advice from UK Government that all of the Fund must be spent by March 2025 - same as Levelling Up Fund capital funding – the City Region Programme Management Office has tabled options for redistribution of underspend within the local authority or across the Region, in relation to both the reprofiling of new projects or underspend in current projects. Discussions are ongoing, and will be reported back to Chief Executives Group on 27 July.
- 4.7** Discussions on the future of the management of Clyde Mission moving from Scottish Government to the City Region are progressing but not yet concluded. Under discussion are the level of resources that would transfer including a previously ring-fenced Heat Decarbonisation Fund, and the governance of Clyde Mission, specifically in relation to Argyll and Bute Council which is in the scope of Clyde Mission but not the City Region. A Ministerial launch of the refreshed Clyde Mission is anticipated later in 2023.
- 4.8** Although not on the agenda for the Chief Executives Group meeting on 8 June, the City Region Programme Management Office continues to work with Chief Executives on a project reprogramming exercise using underspend from other projects, with the objective of prioritising projects with the most economic impact across the Region. There's currently no date for when this will be concluded.
- 4.7** A Local Investment Plan has been developed and approved by the UK Government as part of a wider Glasgow City Region Investment Plan through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The business support proposals within the Investment Plan have been developed to support business recovery and include a Business Recovery & Growth fund, Early Stage Growth grants, Towards Net Zero Grant, Enhancing Tourism Events & Attractions Fund, Business Gateway Expert Help and Shopfront & Small Business Improvement Grants.

Clyde Bridge

- 4.8** The Clyde Bridge contractor maintains a website with regular updates on the project. A viewer at the top of the website home page shows a video of progress which is updated monthly. This can be accessed at: www.graham.co.uk/clyde-waterfront
- 4.9** Since the last report the contractor has continued to make progress on site. The diversion of the Yoker Burn culvert is progressing with the existing culvert now diverted into a new channel. Works to remove the old redundant section of culvert are ongoing and the contractor expects to complete these works over the next month. The contractor have also progressed construction of the piling and crane platform on the north side of the river. On

the south side they have continued with earthworks for the new road link to Argyle Avenue and have started constructing the cycleway adjacent to the existing road in this area. Fabrication of the bridge structure continues off-site.

4.10 Next stages of works include commencing road embankment works and widening works along Dock Street in June / early July. The Contractor will continue to liaise with West Dunbartonshire Council colleagues regarding these works. The Contractor will also continue with works to construct the North Pier.

4.11 Newsletters are accessible to those who register for further updates. A link to register for updates is contained within the project webpage noted above.

5 People Implications

5.1 There are a number of senior officers involved in the Glasgow City Region wider programme as identified at City Region Update paper at Council on 26 August 2021.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 Not applicable.

7. Risk Analysis

7.1 Not applicable.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment

8.1 Not applicable.

9. Consultation

9.1 Consultation with all key stakeholders is progressing as we continue to work as part of the Glasgow City Region.

10 Strategic Assessment

10.1 At its meeting on 26 October 2022, the Council agreed that one of its main strategic priorities for the Strategic Plan 2022 - 2027 is:

- A Strong local economy and improved employment opportunities

10.2 The proposals within this report are specifically designed to deliver on this priority.

Alan Douglas
Chief Officer: Regulation and Regeneration
Date: 6 December 2022

Person to Contact: Gillian McNamara
gillian.mcnamara@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Appendix: None

Background Papers: UK Shared Prosperity Fund Report to Housing and Communities Committee 22 August 2022
Glasgow City Region City Deal- Council 13 August 2014.
“City Deal Initiative” Clyde Valley Investment Fund- Council 30 April 2014 (Memorandum of Understanding).
Clyde Valley Community Planning Partnership – City Deal Initiative – Council 28 August 2013.

Wards Affected: All

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Chief Officer - Resources

Council: 28 June 2023

Subject: Financial Update

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide an update on the financial challenges facing the Council and the estimated 2024/25 – 2028/29 revenue budget gaps.
- 1.2 This is the first financial update of 2023/24 since the 2023/24 budget was set on 1 March 2023 and rolls forward previous estimates as well as updating some assumptions. The assumptions will continue to be updated and refined as the financial year progresses.
- 1.3 This update has been prepared using three different scenarios, best case, worst case and mid-range. Relatively small variations in assumptions can lead to fairly significant changes in the outcome. Throughout the report the primary focus is on the mid-range, however, where appropriate reference is made to best case and worst case assumptions.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the updated position regarding projections for the Council's estimated revenue budget gaps in 2024/25-2028/29, in particular the updated mid-range 2024/25 budget gap of £11.8m as summarised at paragraph 4.17.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 On 1 March 2023, the Council agreed a balanced 2023/24 revenue and capital budget and estimates for 2024/25-2027/28. That budget report also highlighted estimated future year budget gaps based on a range of assumptions including future Scottish Government funding, inflation and future interest rates. The consequences of the decisions taken by Council on 1 March to agree a balanced 2023/24 budget reduced the cumulative estimated future budget gap in the best case, mid-range and worst case scenarios as set out in Exhibit 1.

Exhibit 1 – Future Year Estimated Cumulative Budget Gaps

	1 March 2023 Budget				Post Budget Setting			
Budget Gap	24/25 £000	25/26 £000	26/27 £000	27/28 £000	24/25 £000	25/26 £000	26/27 £000	27/28 £000
Best Case	16,492	20,855	27,056	33,359	6,475	10,813	16,894	23,207
Mid-Range	19,717	25,186	32,422	39,695	9,690	15,124	22,230	29,493
Worst Case	24,626	33,032	43,132	53,247	14,609	22,990	32,970	43,095

- 3.2 Appendix 1 provides further detail on how the mid-range estimated budget gap was affected by the decisions made when setting the 2023/24 budget on 1 March 2023.

4. MAIN ISSUES

- 4.1 Since the budget was agreed on 1 March 2023 I have revisited the key assumptions and cost pressures detailed in the 1 March Budget Paper. This is summarised in the paragraphs below.

4.2 *Scottish Government Finance Settlement*

In my report on 1 March 2023, I advised that my assumptions in relation to future year Scottish Government funding were :

- Best Case - Flat Cash
- Mid-Range – Flat Cash
- Worst Case - 1.0% reduction.

On the basis that the 2023/24 settlement was only a minor cash increase and reflecting on previous funding changes in the past 4 years I have determined that no change is required to these assumptions at the current time.

4.3 *Council Tax Increases*

The budget gaps referred to in paragraph 3.1 include no assumption of any increase in Council Tax as setting Council Tax is subject to a political decision when agreeing the budget in March 2024.

4.4 *Changes to Base Budget*

There have been three changes to the Council's base budget since the 1 March 2023 Budget report to Council. These are set out below.

4.5 *Base Budget Adjustment 1 – Historic HSCP Adjustment*

The Council's medium term financial strategy includes an assumption that the HSCP requisition will reduce in line with the Council's financial settlement. This £0.725m assumption was removed for 2024/25 as part of agreeing the 2023/24 budget however the base budget still needs to be adjusted to remove the assumption in the years beyond 2024/25.

4.6 *Base Budget Adjustment 2 – Rightsizing Sundry Services Budgets*

Finance have carried out a review of the sundry services budgets and identified £0.097m of budget that can be removed without impacting on staff or front line services.

4.7 *Base Budget Adjustment 3 – Amendment to ICT Inflation Assumption*

In 2023/24 a cost pressure was added to reflect assumptions about ICT

inflation. These ICT costs are subject to annual review and so the base budget has been adjusted to remove the future year impacts estimated last year with a general ICT inflation maintained until such time as the annual review is performed and a more accurate inflationary amount can be reflected.

4.8 *Changes to Non-Pay Inflation*

Inflation is included in future year budget estimates where it is considered necessary to ensure budgets are adjusted to reflect expected increases in costs. There have been two changes to my assumptions relating to inflation since the 1 March 2023 Budget report to Council.

4.9 *Non-Pay Inflation Adjustment 1 – West Dunbartonshire Leisure Trust*

Historically £0.2m per annum has been added as an inflationary increase to the management fee paid by the Council to West Dunbartonshire Leisure Trust. As the Trust's management fee is subject to an annual political decision with a reduction agreed in 2023/24 it is no longer considered appropriate to include a default assumption of an increase.

4.10 *Non-Pay Inflation Adjustment 2 – Public Private Partnership (PPP) Unitary Charge*

The Council are contractually obliged to increase the annual PPP unitary charge by 50% of the retail price index (excluding mortgage interest) (RPIX) in the February of each year. RPIX is currently about 12% but is projected to decrease significantly over the next two years. This is creating a significant impact on the Council's revenue budget and there is a need to add £0.554m to the revenue budget in 2024/25 with future year increases estimated on the basis of RPIX being at a lower amount of 4%. This assumption will be kept under review as inflation rates change.

4.11 *Bank Interest Rates*

The Bank of England raised the bank rate by 0.25% to 4.5% in May which was the twelfth consecutive rate increase. This puts borrowing costs at a level not seen since 2008 as the central bank continues to try and battle double-digit inflation. The central bank is now predicting inflation falling to 5.1% in the fourth quarter of 2023 which compares to a 3.9% projection in their February forecast. They are now estimating meeting their 2% target by late 2024. So it is clear that projections and actuals are still very volatile and if inflationary pressures continue then further tightening in monetary policy will be required.

In 2023/24 there were multiple cost pressures added to the Council's budget due to the impact of regular increases in bank interest rates on the cost of Council borrowing. This was due to the sizeable proportion of the Council debt which is short term which requires to be re-borrowed regularly and is therefore subject to fluctuations in interest rates. I have not made any changes to the future year cost pressure at the current time however a full review of the Council's estimated future loan charges will be performed to take account of the most up to date interest rate projections. The outcome of this will be

reported to a future meeting of the Council and the budget gap adjusted accordingly.

Other Cost Pressures

- 4.12 Generally services work on the basis of having to contain any cost pressures within current resources, however, there are cost pressures which are unavoidable and need to be factored into future budget processes.
- 4.13 The Council currently funds the cost of the pay award for staff employed by the West Dunbartonshire Leisure Trust. The cost of this is not currently included in future years budgets. The impact of this on the Council's revenue budget is summarised in Exhibit 2 based on an assumed pay rise of 3% per annum (see paragraph 4.16). This is the only change to cost pressures since the budget meeting on 1 March 2023.

Exhibit 2 – Changes to cost pressures since March 2023

Service	Cost Pressure	2024/25 (£000)	2025/26 (£000)	2026/27 (£000)	2027/28 (£000)	2028/29 (£000)
Leisure Management	3% Pay Award	201	410	624	845	1,072

Employee Costs

- 4.14 The Scottish Joint Council (SJC) 2023/24 pay award has still to be agreed and this may have an impact on the base budget if the pay award is greater than the 4% allowed for in the budget. The Scottish Government have agreed funding towards the SJC 2023/24 pay award equivalent to 2.5%, however this is subject to ongoing negotiations.
- 4.15 The Teachers pay award for 2023/24 has already been agreed (28 months deal covering the period 1 April 2022 – 31 July 2024) and the current year budget is sufficient to cover the deal. Future negotiations on teacher pay awards beyond 31 July 2024 will have an impact on the budget outlook.
- 4.16 For 2024/25 and beyond I had previously assumed pay awards of 2% in all three scenarios with an expectation that future projected reductions in inflation would take pressure off pay awards and also to reflect what is affordable to Local Government. Ongoing negotiations in relation to the 2023/24 pay award provide a strong indication that pay awards are going to continue being in excess of 2% however the last offer made included a Scottish Government commitment to fund 2.5% of a 5.5% offer (leaving Local Government to fund 3%). On this basis I have changed my assumptions to:
- Best Case – 2% per annum from 2024/25 onwards
 - Mid-Rage – 3% per annum from 2024/25 onwards
 - Worst Case – 4% per annum from 2024/25 onwards

There remains a risk that the pay award could be higher and this will be monitored and updated throughout the year if more information becomes

available. Every 1% over and above what is budgeted would add an additional pressure of circa £1.64m

Revised Mid-Range Estimated Budget Gap

- 4.17 Exhibit 3a sets out the revised cumulative estimated budget gap in the mid-range in between 2024/25 and 2028/29 and Exhibit 3b summarises the total cumulative budget gaps in all three scenarios. Exhibit 3a illustrates that, in the mid-range scenario the Council are faced with a budget gap of £11.829m in 2024/25 rising cumulatively to £47.940m in 2028/29. Exhibit 3b shows that the cumulative 5 year gap ranges from £34.479m in the best case scenario to £72.594m in the worst case.

Exhibit 3a – Revised Mid-Range Estimated Budget Gaps (Cumulative)

	Para Ref	2024/25 £0000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	2028/29 £000
Budget Gap 1 March	3.1	9,690	15,124	22,230	29,493	37,043
Historic HSCP Adjustment	4.5	0	725	725	725	725
Rightsizing Sundry Services Budgets	4.6	(97)	(97)	(97)	(97)	(97)
Adjust ICT inflation assumption	4.7	44	(11)	(61)	(113)	(115)
Leisure Trust Management Fee Assumption	4.9	(200)	(400)	(600)	(800)	(1,000)
PPP Inflation	4.10	554	877	1,011	1,144	1,276
Leisure Trust Pay Award Cost Pressure	4.13	201	410	624	845	1,072
Increase in pay award assumption	4.16	1,637	3,356	5,160	7,052	9,036
Revised Estimated Budget Gap		11,829	19,984	28,992	38,249	47,940

Exhibit 3b – Estimated Budget Gaps (Cumulative) – Scenario Analysis

Budget Gap	2024/25 £0000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	2028/29 £000
Best Case	9,696	15,044	21,256	27,696	34,479
Mid-Range	11,829	19,984	28,992	38,249	47,940
Worst Case	17,234	30,072	43,838	57,958	72,624

2024/25 Budget Process

- 4.18 Given the scale of the financial challenge facing the Council in 2024/25 and future years, it is important that immediate progress is made to identify saving options with momentum on this maintained between now and setting the budget in March 2024. The Senior Leadership Team held a budget workshop on 22 May 2023 to commence this process and will continue to meet periodically to develop saving options which will be presented to members for their consideration at an appropriate time.

Other Issues

4.19 *Health and Social Care Partnership Requisition*

The Council, at the budget meeting on 1 March 2023, agreed an HSCP requisition of £86.4m. There is a working assumption that the future allocation to the HSCP is on the basis of 'flat cash' plus the appropriate share of the Health & Social Care funding commitments. However this is only an assumption and the HSCP requisition will be a matter for Council to consider as part of the budget process.

4.20 *Council Tax*

As per paragraph 4.3 the estimated budget gap makes no assumptions over future Council Tax increases. This will be a matter for Council to decide however, by means of illustration, a 5% increase would generate approximately £2.0m in revenue.

4.21 *Fees and Charges*

In 2023/24 a general inflationary increase of 10% was applied to fees and charges. The current assumption built into the estimated future budget gaps is an annual increase of 4% in all three scenarios (best case, mid-range and worst case). Every 1% increase beyond 4% would generate an estimated £0.320m in revenue.

5. PEOPLE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None directly from this report but there is a strong link between HR and budgets.

6. FINANCIAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Sets out the estimated revenue budget gaps in 2024/25 to 2028/29. There are no direct procurement implications arising from this report.

7. RISK ANALYSIS

- 7.1 None directly from this report but any proposals to address the estimated budget gap will need to consider risk.

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

- 8.1 None directly from this report but any proposals to address the estimated budget gap will need to consider equality issues.

9. CONSULTATION

- 9.1 The views of all Chief Officers have been requested on this report and feedback incorporated herein.

10. STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT

- 10.1 Proper budgetary control and sound financial practice are cornerstones of good governance and support Council and officers to pursue the strategic priorities of the Council's Strategic Plan.
- 10.2 The General Services revenue budget contributes to all categories by providing funding in specific areas to help the Council achieve and develop these priorities.

Laurence Slavin
Chief Officer - Resources
Date: 28 June 2023

Person to Contact: Laurence Slavin, Chief Officer - Resources

E-mail: laurence.slavin@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Impact of 2022/23 budget decisions on estimated future budget gaps

Background Papers

Budget Report to Council - 1 March 2023

Appendix 1 – Impact of 2023/23 budget decisions on estimated future budget gaps

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
1 March Budget Report Mid-Range Budget Gap	19,717	25,186	32,422	39,695
1 March 2023 Council Decisions				
Council growth items	260	260	140	140
Management Adjustments	(1,140)	(1,140)	(1,140)	(1,140)
Saving Options	(6,972)	(6,997)	(6,997)	(6,997)
Increase in Turnover Target	(250)	(250)	(250)	(250)
Council Tax Increase	(1,915)	(1,915)	(1,915)	(1,915)
Council tax Growth Element	(10)	(20)	(30)	(40)
Updated Mid-Range Budget Gap	9,690	15,124	22,230	29,493

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Chief Officer – Regulatory & Regeneration

West Dunbartonshire Council – 28 June 2023

Subject: Introduction of Online Surgeries for Elected Members

1. Purpose

- 1.1** To enable the Council to consider the proposal to introduce online surgeries for elected members and to identify what technology and training support, if any, is required.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** It is recommended that the Council agrees:
- (a) to make available online surgeries using Microsoft Teams with immediate effect;
 - (b) that, where possible, broadband Wi-Fi should be used to optimise performance and reduce the risk of disconnection;
 - (c) to note that the traditional method of holding surgeries in venues will continue to be available to all elected members; and
 - (d) that online surgeries will be advertised on the Council's website and social media outlets, similar to traditional surgeries.

3. Background

- 3.1** At the meeting of Council held in April 2023, it was agreed that a report be brought to a future meeting for consideration of online surgeries for elected members.

4. Main Issues

Technology

- 4.1** There are currently two methods of conducting online meetings available to the Council: ZOOM and Microsoft (MS) Teams. MS Teams is the preferred option for conducting online surgeries for two reasons. Firstly, all Members currently have access to the MS Teams application and therefore no additional licences are required. Council currently holds some additional ZOOM licences (approx. 10) but this would not be sufficient to supply all elected members with an individual licence at an annual cost of £191.88 ex vat per licence (£4221.36 ex vat total annual cost for 22 licences). Secondly, if ZOOM was the preferred choice and the decision was taken not to use additional licences then this would require the organiser of the meeting (this would normally be Members' secretaries) to start the meeting and then pass the hosting of the meeting to the elected member. As most surgeries are held

outwith normal working hours, there potentially could be additional overtime costs.

Data Usage

- 4.2** One disadvantage of using MS Teams is that it uses more data than ZOOM and therefore to ensure continuity for online surgeries, it is recommended broadband Wi-Fi is used. Data usage on Council mobile phones is capped and video calling uses a large volume of mobile data. Therefore, using Wi-Fi eliminates the risk of a Teams meeting being ended due to running out of mobile data.

Equipment

- 4.3** At present Elected Members are offered a laptop and mobile phone, both of which can receive and make MS Teams calls and meetings, furthermore MS Teams Application can be downloaded and securely used on personal devices should members wish to use.

Training

- 4.4** Training on the use of MS Teams will be provided, on request, to any elected member who requires it.

5. People Implications

- 5.1** The proposed use of Microsoft Teams will involve diary management support from Members Secretaries but will not require them to commence the online surgery outside normal working hours, which might be the case when using ZOOM.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 6.1** The introduction of online surgeries could reduce the number of surgeries held in external premises where there is a small hire cost or in the case of Council premises, where there could be an additional staffing cost if the surgery is held outwith normal working hours. There is also a potential saving to be made in respect of members' travel costs to and from surgery venues but the extent of any saving will vary depending on uptake of the new service and is likely to be below £500 per year in total.
- 6.2** Using Microsoft Teams and Wi-Fi will have no financial implications for the Council. Data usage of mobile phones whilst using Microsoft Teams is capped and no additional costs will be incurred. However, there could be some additional costs in respect of purchase of additional licences if ZOOM is the Council's preferred method of holding surgeries.
- 6.3** There are no procurement implications associated with the recommendations of this report as the Council has already purchased MS Teams licences for all elected members.

7. Risk Analysis

- 7.1** The Council has a duty to ensure the security of personal data, the use of the Chat function with MS Team should not be used to ensure that there are no data protection or Freedom of Information implications. Should any Chat be used this would be deleted within 12 / 24 hours which can be set by ICT.
- 7.2** There are no additional risks to the Council as a result of the introducing online meetings but it is clear that there is a reduced risk of physical violence to Members when holding online surgeries as opposed to face to face surgeries.

9. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 9.1** An equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken and no further action is required.
(See Appendix 1)

10. Consultation

- 10.1** Finance, ICT and Legal officers have been consulted on the content of this report.

11. Strategic Assessment

- 11.1** This report supports the Councils Strategic Priorities: *Our Environment promotes A Greener Future and Our Council is Inclusive and Adaptable.*

Alan Douglas

Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration

Date: 30 May 2023

Person to Contact: Carol Ann Burns
Senior Democratic Services Officer
Email: carol-ann.burns@west-dunbartonshire.gov.uk

Appendices: EIA screening, Appendix 1

Background Papers:

Wards Affected: All Wards

AssessmentNo	739	Owner	carolann.burns	
Resource	Transformation		Service/Establishment	Regulatory
	First Name	Surname	Job title	
Head Officer	Carol-Ann	Burns	Senior Democratic Services Officer	
	(include job titles/organisation)			
Members	Carol-Ann Burns, Senior Democratic Services Officer George Hawthorn, Democratic & Registration Manager Alan Douglas, Chief Officer			
	<i>(Please note: the word 'policy' is used as shorthand for strategy policy function or financial decision)</i>			
Policy Title	Introduction of Online Surgeries for Elected Members			
	The aim, objective, purpose and intended outcome of policy			
	To provide an additional method of access to surgeries with Elected members. To reduced risk of physical violence to Members when holding online surgeries as opposed to face to face surgeries.			
	Service/Partners/Stakeholders/service users involved in the development and/or implementation of policy.			
	Elected Members Members Secretaries ICT			
Does the proposals involve the procurement of any goods or services?			No	
If yes please confirm that you have contacted our procurement services to discuss your requirements.			No	
SCREENING				
<i>You must indicate if there is any relevance to the four areas</i>				
Duty to eliminate discrimination (E), advance equal opportunities (A) or foster good relations (F)			Yes	
Relevance to Human Rights (HR)			Yes	
Relevance to Health Impacts (H)			No	
Relevance to Social Economic Impacts (SE)			No	
Who will be affected by this policy?				
Elected Members Members Secretaries Constituents				
Who will be/has been involved in the consultation process?				
<p>Elected members motion: This Council agrees that it is important that elected members are accessible to constituents. The traditional method of surgeries has been to book a meeting room in a school, Community Centre, library or other suitable building. Council agrees that this tried and tested method should continue. However, the world has changed significantly since the creation of West Dunbartonshire Council, the way that the public interact with one another has changed and the advances in technology particularly over the past few years has made on-line communications much faster and can be more effective. On-line meetings have a number of advantages, they save in travel time, they cut emissions, they don't require buildings to be opened or staffed, and they can be quicker to organise and reduce potential risks to elected members. On-Line surgeries could also be advertised on the council website, Facebook and Twitter page at no additional cost. Given the above, the Council agrees that as well as traditional surgeries, there is merit in developing the option for on-line surgeries for elected members. The Council requests that a report be brought to a future meeting for consideration.</p>				

Please outline any particular need/barriers which equality groups may have in relation to this policy list evidence you are using to support this and whether there is any negative impact on particular groups.

	Needs	Evidence	Impact
Age	Access to elected members	To provide various methods of accessing elected members and ways of communicating. Older people are more likely to be disabled	Depending on level of IT skills this may not be suitable for all constituents, however, may attract a different/new demographic to access elected members.
Cross Cutting	Web based communication methods have to follow best practice Elected members safety	To reduce potential risks to elected members in relation to security. Best practice in carrying out web meetings is address in the Council's 'Communicating Effectively ' guidance	Positive: Provides an option for elected members to use various methods of communication whilst protecting their security.
Disability	Councils have a legal duty to ensure that disabled people can access council services, as detailed in Accessibility Statement Duty to ensure that Deaf/BSL users can access. Council BSL action plan 2018-2024.	We have a duty to provide accessibility to our constituents	Positive: By providing online access to elected members this potentially will help support constituents access this service. BSL users will be able to access this via Contact Scotland BSL
Social & Economic Impact			
Sex	Womens safety	Gender based violence, women make up 80% of the victims. Women make up 90% of single parents. West Dunbarton Council Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report 21-25	Positive: For women especially unable to attend in person surgeries, this provides a further option for accessing their elected member.
Gender Reassign			
Health	Access to elected members.	Health conditions, home visits are	Positive: Providing greater flexibility to

		carried out, however an online option provides greater flexibility both for constituents and elected members. Mental health	both constituents and elected members. Where appointments could be cancelled due to covid or other conditions this is a further option to maintain the appointment. Provides additional choice of communication/access for disabled users.
Human Rights	Human Rights Act 1988 (ECHR) Article 8 It is important that communications methods are secure (privacy) It is important that people get an opportunity to participate	Providing a choice of methods of communication with elected members and constituents supports Article 8 - protects your right to respect for your private and family life. Supports participation.	Positive: Provides an accessible online Service for constituents to elected members alongside face to face and telephone meetings.
Marriage & Civil Partnership			
Pregnancy & Maternity	Access to elected members via various methods.	Possible opportunities of missed engaged by pregnancy/maternity due to time constraints and care responsibilities.	Positive: By providing an online option this will allow additional options for engagement to take place within the home environment
Race			
Religion and Belief			
Sexual Orientation			
Actions			
Policy has a negative impact on an equality group, but is still to be implemented, please provide justification for this.			
Will the impact of the policy be monitored and reported on an ongoing bases?			
Q7 What is your recommendation for this policy?			
Introduce			
Please provide a meaningful summary of how you have reached the recommendation			
EIA 739: By introducing online surgeries for Elected members this will provide constituents with an additional method of contacting their Elected members. Particular potential positive impacts for women, disabled people, older people and health conditions. Providing additional methods of communication with elected			

members may attract engagement with other demographic groups within the community. Training will be provided for Elected Members who require this and a standardise email notification for constituents receiving a Team meeting. We will ensure that the Council's Communicating Effectively guidance is followed. Publicity, including to Equality Groups will be part of the role out.

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration

West Dunbartonshire Council: 28 June 2023

Subject: Consultation on the Second Review of Scottish Parliamentary Boundaries

1. Purpose

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to ask Council to consider the implications of the Second Review of Scottish Parliamentary Boundaries and in particular the impact on the two existing Scottish Parliamentary Constituencies administered by West Dunbartonshire Council, namely Dumbarton and Clydebank & Milngavie.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1** It is recommended that the Council agrees to inform Boundaries Scotland that it supports the position detailed in paragraphs 4.5 and 4.6 of the report: that the status quo is maintained i.e. both existing constituencies remain intact, subject to a minor adjustment to the Scottish parliamentary boundary line as described in paragraph 4.4 of the report.

3. Background

- 3.1** Boundaries Scotland, which has responsibility for reviewing the Scottish Parliamentary Boundaries, published its provisional proposals on the review for public consultation on Wednesday 17 May 2023. The consultation period, which was opened for one month, is due to close on Saturday 17 June, 2023 but Boundaries Scotland has agreed to accept a late submission by this Council due to the timing of the Council meeting. Copies of the provisional proposals together with maps have been published on the Council's website and in the Dumbarton Library.
- 3.2** Following the consultation period, Boundaries Scotland will hold local enquiries in the autumn of 2023, dependent on responses to the first consultation. Thereafter, a further one month of consultation will be held on the revised recommendations in relation of the proposed constituencies. In early 2024, there will be a further one month consultation on any further recommendations on the constituencies, if required. After the consultations on the constituencies have concluded, there will be a month consultation on the region provisional proposals and later in 2024, a one month consultation on the revised region recommendations, if required. A report will be presented to Scottish Ministers on 1 May 2025, for approval by the Scottish Parliament in May 2025. If approved, the new boundaries will be effective at the next Scottish Parliamentary Election, expected in May 2026.

4. Main Issues

- 4.1** When publishing its provisional proposals, Scottish Boundaries outlined the criteria that it applied when carrying out the review. The Scotland Act 1998 states that the electorate of proposed constituencies must be as close to the electorate quota as practicable. Based on data provided by Electoral Registration Officers in September 2022, the electorate quota to be used as the basis of this review is 59,902. This increase on the previous quota is mainly due to an increase in the Scottish electorate as a result of the inclusion of 16 and 17 year olds.
- 4.2** In addition to the quota, Boundaries Scotland must also take other factors in account, such as: local authority areas, special geographical circumstances, maintenance of local ties and any inconvenience caused by alteration of the existing boundaries. However, it is important to note that Boundaries Scotland will only consider changes to the regional boundaries after the conclusion of the constituency consultations.
- 4.3** At present, West Dunbartonshire is divided equally over two Scottish Parliamentary Constituencies: Dumbarton Constituency (56,120 electors), which includes three West Dunbartonshire Council wards – Lomond, Leven and Dumbarton plus three Argyll and Bute wards; and Clydebank & Milngavie Constituency (comprising 55,121 electors) which covers three West Dunbartonshire Wards – Kilpatrick, Clydebank Central and Clydebank Waterfront plus two East Dunbartonshire Council wards. Boundaries Scotland has proposed that the Dumbarton Constituency be re-named as Dumbarton and Helensburgh Constituency (Appendix 1 refers) and the Clydebank & Milngavie Constituency be renamed as Bearsden, Milngavie and Clydebank North Constituency (Appendix 2 refers). The proposed Dumbarton and Helensburgh Constituency will lose one of the Argyll and Bute wards (Ward 9 - Lomond North, comprising 6,202 voters) but gain part of Clydebank Waterfront (excluding Polling District CW16C – Whitecrook, comprising 3834 electors) resulting in a total electorate of 57,666. The proposed Bearsden, Milngavie and Clydebank North constituency will gain one ward from East Dunbartonshire Council (ED3 - Bearsden South, comprising an electorate of 11,042) and the remaining part of Clydebank Waterfront (Polling District CW16C - Whitecrook) resulting in a total electorate of 58,415. These provisional proposals will result in increases to the electorates of both areas which will bring them closer to the quota.
- 4.4** Following the Review of Local Government Ward boundaries conducted in 2016 and implemented in 2017, an anomaly arose between the two existing Scottish Parliamentary boundaries and the new Dumbarton ward/Clydebank Waterfront ward boundary resulting in the formation of a small polling district, namely DU23C, to resolve the issue (see Appendix 1). One benefit of the proposed boundary change by Boundaries Scotland is that it removes this anomaly and would allow DU22D and DU23C to merge into one single polling district (DU22D) for the Bowling area.

4.5 The Returning Officer, having considered the provisional proposals and having analysed the significant impact of the changes on the effective administration of future elections in both these constituencies, is of the opinion that the status quo is maintained i.e. both existing constituencies remain intact, subject to a minor adjustment to the Scottish parliamentary boundary line as described in paragraph 4.4 of the report.

4.6 This position can be justified on the basis that the existing electorate figures for both constituencies (56,120 and 55,121) are within acceptable parameters of the new quota and are similar to numerous other constituency electorate figures proposed by Boundaries Scotland in this review. Furthermore, the splitting of the Clydebank Waterfront ward from the rest of Clydebank does not fit well with the criteria of maintaining local ties. It is also equally arguable that the electors residing in the Lomond North ward will see their local administrative centre as being Helensburgh and not Lochgilphead, which is some considerable distance away. Evidence of this can be found in the education structure where all of the primary schools in Lomond North feed into Hermitage Academy High School in Helensburgh. Maintaining the status quo will maintain these local connections in both constituencies.

5. People Implications

5.1 There are no direct implications for employees of this Council. However, the additional work created by Boundaries Scotland's proposed changes will put an additional administrative burden on the election team prior to the next Scottish Parliamentary elections.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

6.1 There are no financial or procurement implications arising from the consultation as Scottish Parliamentary elections are funded centrally by the Scottish Government.

7. Risk Analysis

7.1 There are no risks associated with this report.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

8.1 There are no equality impacts arising from the Council's response to the consultation.

9. Consultation

9.1 Officers from legal and finance have been consulted on the content of this report.

10. Strategic Assessment

10.1 This report does not have a direct impact on the Council's Strategic priorities.

Alan Douglas
Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration

Date: 24 May 2023

Person to Contact: George Hawthorn, Manager of Democratic and Registration Services, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton. Telephone 01389 737204 or e-mail: george.hawthorn@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Appendices:

1. Map of proposed Dumbarton and Helensburgh Constituency.
2. Map of proposed Bearsden, Milngavie and Clydebank North Constituency.

Background Papers: None

Wards Affected: All

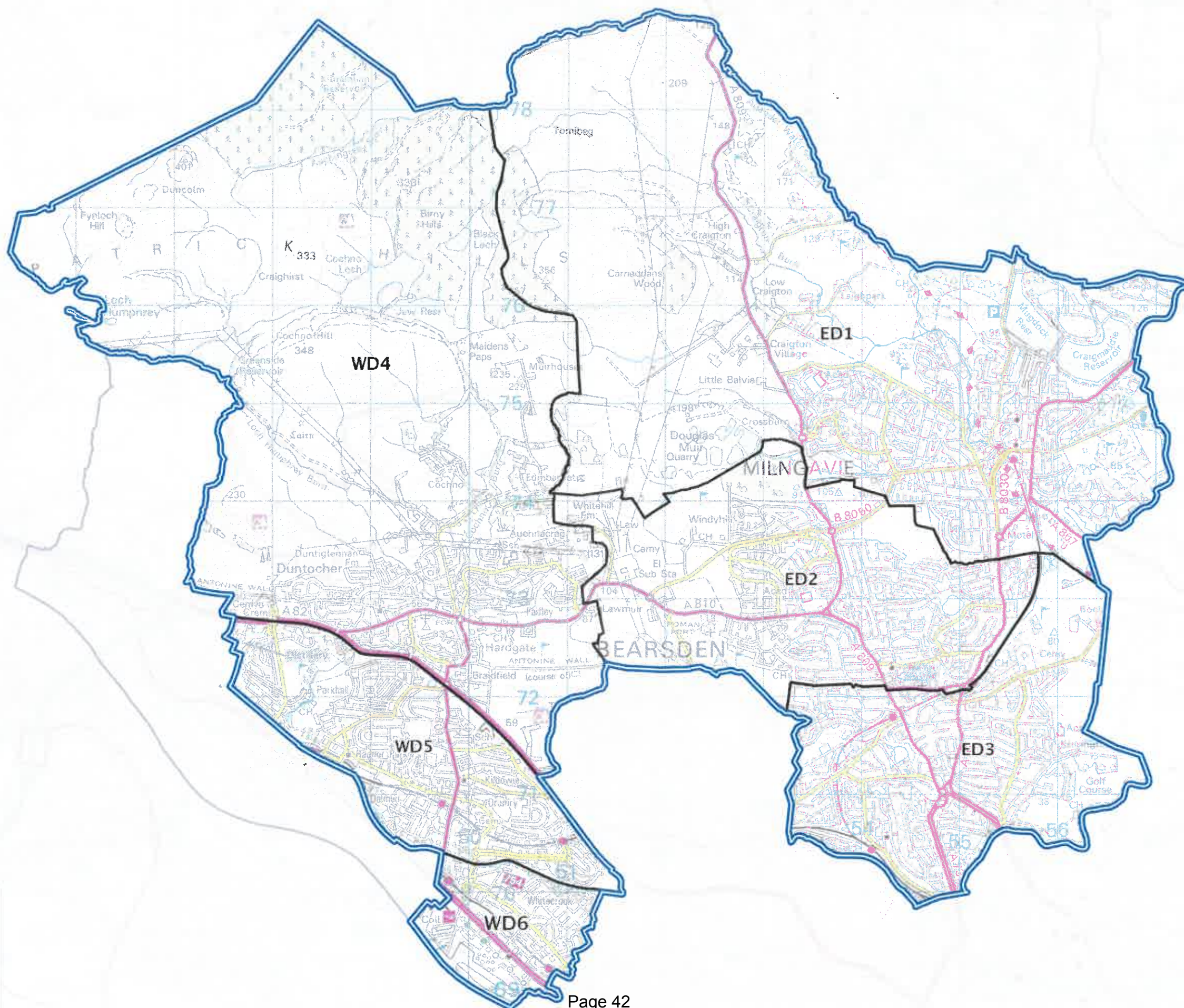
APPENDIX 1



Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries - Provisional Proposals

Bearsden, Milngavie and Clydebank Burgh Constituency - Electorate 58,415

APPENDIX 2



- Provisional Proposal
- Ward Boundary
- ED1 East Dunbartonshire Ward Number
- WD1 West Dunbartonshire Ward Number