

Agenda



West Dunbartonshire Council

Date: Monday, 22 March 2021

Time: 10:00

Format: Video Conference

Contact: Email: committee.admin@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Dear Member

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

The Convener has directed that the powers contained in Section 43 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 will be used and Members will attend the meeting remotely.

The business is shown on the attached agenda.

Yours faithfully

JOYCE WHITE

Chief Executive

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Chief Executive
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Date of issue: 9 March 2021

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WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

MONDAY, 22 MARCH 2021

AGENDA

1 STATEMENT BY CHAIR

2 APOLOGIES

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are invited to declare if they have an interest in any of the items of business on this 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 GENERAL SERVICES BUDGET - BUDGET SETTING 2021/22 To Follow

Submit report by the Chief Officer – Resources on the above.

6 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS To Follow

Submit report by the Chief Officer – Resources on the above.

7 DUMBARTON COMMON GOOD FUND BUDGET UPDATE 2021/22 5 - 8

Submit report 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.

8 TAXI LICENSING FEES 9 - 13

Submit report by the Chief Officer – Regulatory and 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.

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**Report by Chief Officer - Resources****Council: 22 March 2021**

Subject: Dumbarton Common Good Budget Update 2021/22**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on the Dumbarton Common Good budget for 2020/21 and seek approval for a revised budget for 2021/22 and indicative budgets for 2022/23 and 2023/24.

2. Recommendations**2.1** Members are asked to:

- i) Note the probable outturn for 2020/21 as set out in the Appendix;
- ii) Approve the revised 2021/22 budget as set out in the Appendix;
- iii) Note the indicative budgets to 2023/24 as set out in the Appendix;
- iv) 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
- v) Note that WD HSCP has agreed to fund the grant application from Alternatives.

3. Background

- 3.1** Following a report to Council on 4 March 2020 Members agreed a budget for Dumbarton Common Good for the period from 2020/21 - 2023/24.
- 3.2** The budget agreed at Council on 4 March 2020 (with no additional in-year approvals) has projected annual net expenditure of £0.118m, deducted from a net brought forward balance of £0.454m, resulting in a balance to be carried forward into 2021/22 of £0.336m.
- 3.3** The Prudential Reserve of the Common Good remains at £0.025m.
- 3.4** A grant application from Alternatives was received and reported to Corporate Services Committee on 9 September 2020, requesting a one-off grant of £0.050m. Committee continued the application requesting further action.

4. Main Issues

- 4.1** The Appendix provides details of the financial performance of the Common Good Budget for 2020/21, together with draft budget for 2021/22 for consideration and approval, with indicative budgets updated to 2023/24.

- 4.2 The probable outturn against the revised budget projects a net income of £0.055m – resulting in a favourable variance (underspend) of £0.173m and the main variances are:

Town Centre Management not yet spent	(£0.169m)
Small Grants budget not spent	(£0.007m)
Dumbarton Fireworks event not required	(£0.009m)
Less Rental income due than anticipated	<u>£0.012m</u>
Total	<u>(£0.173m)</u>

- 4.3 Based upon this expected underspend the brought forward reserves at 31 March 2021 are now projected at £0.493m, and based on the proposed budget are projected at £0.386m by 31 March 2022.
- 4.4 In terms of the adequacy of reserves – the prudential level of reserves is viewed as being an adequate level to deal with any financial shocks to the fund, based on previous experience and future expectations specifically in relation to income streams. As can be seen the level of reserves remains significantly above the prudential level and are therefore judged as being adequate.
- 4.5 Regarding the grant application from Alternatives, the WD HSCP has agreed to fund this request.

5. Option Appraisal

- 5.1 No option appraisal was required for this report.

6. People Implications

- 6.1 There are no people implications.

7. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 7.1 Other than the financial position noted above, there are no financial or procurement implications.

8. Risk Analysis

- 8.1 The Council must consider financial and reputational risks when considering funding to external organisations. The financial risk is that the Dumbarton Common Good remains within budget and a robust budgeting being agreed and ongoing monitoring and review will ensure that this is protected. There is a risk that the voluntary organisations awarded grants don't remain financially sustainable and that grant payments made are not used for purposes expected. Organisations funded by the Common Good must comply with conditions of grant which includes providing financial accounts etc. to the Council on a regular basis. This allows officers to monitor spend as being in line with expectations as well as the financial sustainability of the organisations.

9. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

9.1 No equalities impact assessment was required in relation to this report.

10. Environmental Sustainability

10.1 No assessment of environmental sustainability was required in relation to this report.

11. Consultation

11.1 Legal and Financial Officers have been consulted in preparing this report.

12. Strategic Assessment

12.1 Good financial governance is essential to the delivery of each of the Council's Strategic Priorities.

Stephen West
Strategic Lead, Resources
Date: 9 March 2021

Person to Contact: Gillian McNeilly, Finance Manager,
Council Offices, Church Street, Dumbarton,
Email: Gillian.mcneilly@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Appendices: Appendix: Financial Analysis and Revised Budget

Background Papers: Minute of Council – 6 February 2013 – *Dumbarton Common Good Fund budget 2013/14*
Report to Council – 4 March 2020 – *Dumbarton Common Good Fund budget 2020/21*
Report to Corporate Services Committee – 9 September 2020 – *Grant Application*
Minute of Corporate Services Committee – 9 September 2020 – *Grant Application*

Wards Affected: 2 and 3.

DUMBARTON COMMON GOOD FUND
Estimates 2021/22

Appendix 1

	2019/20 Actual Outturn	2020/21 Budget	2020/21 YTD	2020/21 Projected Outturn	2021/22 Draft Budget	2022/23 Indicative Budget	2023/24 Indicative budget
Description	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Alcoholics Anonymous - Grant for Property repairs & maintenance of CG property	8,176	8,000	225	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000
Alternatives	227	0	(7)	(7)	0	0	0
Bellsmyre Digital Project	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Bellsmyre Schools Out	61,241	35,601	33,102	35,601	35,601	35,601	35,601
Bellysyre Development Trust	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
Christmas Lights	25,633	36,000	24,000	36,000	36,000	36,000	36,000
Dumbarton Senior Citizens	15,000	15,000	0	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
Dumbarton Fireworks	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Town Centre Management - Capital	9,050	9,050	0	0	9,050	9,050	9,050
Rockvale Rebound - Rent	37,633	191,548	0	22,777	168,771	0	0
Scottish Maritime Museum	2,600	2,630	0	2,630	2,630	2,630	2,630
Small Grants	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
West Dunbartonshire Citizen's Advice Bureau	0	7,000	0	0	7,000	7,000	7,000
Central Admin Allocation	40,000	40,000	0	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000
Estates Dept - Management Fee	14,000	14,000	0	14,000	14,000	14,000	14,000
Tullochan Trust	10,840	10,840	0	10,840	10,840	10,840	10,840
	46,520	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	341,919	440,669	128,320	255,841	417,892	249,121	249,121
Interest on Revenue Balance / Investments	(3,121)	(1,100)	0	(1,100)	(1,100)	(1,100)	(1,100)
Rental Income	(308,217)	(321,525)	(142,497)	(309,674)	(310,000)	(310,000)	(310,000)
Total Income	(311,338)	(322,625)	(142,497)	(310,774)	(311,100)	(311,100)	(311,100)
Net Expenditure	30,582	118,044	(14,177)	(54,933)	106,792	(61,979)	(61,979)
Balance b/fwd	(468,676)	(454,585)	(438,094)	(438,094)	(493,027)	(386,235)	(448,214)
Balance c/fwd	(438,094)	(336,541)	(452,271)	(493,027)	(386,235)	(448,214)	(510,193)

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**Report by Chief Officer – Regulatory & Regeneration.****Council: 22 March 2021**

Subject: Taxi Licensing Fees**1. Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with 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. The report also advises of the anticipated income from these fees if a 4% increase is applied from 1 April 2021. In addition, the report provides details of other financial assistance available to date for taxi drivers and details of Central Government support available for self-employed persons.

2. Recommendations

Members are asked to note the terms of the report.

3. Background

- 3.1** At a meeting of Council on 24 February 2021, a motion was agreed to request a report from Officers to report to Council on the cost of the Taxi Badge ("Taxi/Private Hire Car Driver's Licence"), the cost of the Taxi Plate ("Taxi/Private Hire Car Operator's Licence"), the scale of fees levied in West Dunbartonshire, and how that compares to benchmarked or comparator Local Authorities, and the details of the anticipated income from a 4% increase on this year's fees. In addition, to provide a summary of other grant monies available to date for taxi driver's in comparison with other self-employed persons.
- 3.2** The Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 requires Councils to set fees so that the total amount of income derived from fees is sufficient to meet the expenses of the authority in exercising their licensing functions. This is on the basis of full cost recovery for taxi fees in terms of Part 2, Section 12 of the Act.
- 3.3** A full fee review was conducted and reported to the Licensing Committee on 22 January 2014, which led to fees charged for licences covered by the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 and licences covered by other legislation such as Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963 and Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 being revised so that they more accurately met the cost of regulating the activities administered within the licensing function. Fees relating to both Taxi/Private Hire Car Driver's Licences and Taxi/Private Hire Car Licences

were not increased at that time as the outcome of the review showed that taxi related fees broke even with the expenses incurred. In terms of the fee review exercise the reports to the Licensing Committee refer to the processes undertaken and factors considered by Officers in the fee review. Officers conducted a mid-term fee review in 2017 that did not indicate any surplus with regard to fee income surpassing the costs of the licensing function for all licence types. In terms of determining the fee reviews, a variety of costs were considered for full cost recovery including staffing costs, legal costs and the proportion of central support allocation costs for licensing services. The costs and exercises undertaken by officers are more fully referred to in the reports to the Licensing Committee on [22 January 2014](#) and the most recent full review concluded in March 2020; the terms of which were issued to Members of the Licensing Committee. Again, this most recent fee review showed no surplus projected in any licence categories.

3.4 Currently there are 446 licensed Taxi/Private Hire Car Drivers in West Dunbartonshire with 216 licensed to operate in the Clydebank zone and 230 in the Dumbarton & Vale of Leven zone.

3.5 West Dunbartonshire Council's current taxi fees are as follows:

Licence Type	Charge	Licence Duration
Taxi/Private Hire Car Driver's	£284.50	1 year
Taxi Private Hire Car Driver's	£638.50	3 years

The Taxi/Private Hire Car Operator's licence has a duration of 3 years. These fees are typically subject to a 4% increase each year following decisions taken annually by Council in relation to the update of the Long Term Finance Strategy.

4. Main Issues

4.1 It is not known at the time of writing this report as to whether all Taxi/Private Hire Car Drivers or Taxi/Private Hire Car Operators will renew their licences in the next financial year. On the basis that all submit applications for renewal then anticipated fee income would be as follows with the 4% uplift worth £9,064:

Licence Type	Annual Fees (2020/21 prices)	Annual Fees (2021/22 prices)	Increase
Private Hire	£16,578	£17,241	£663
Taxi Drivers	£143,724	£149,473	£5,749
Taxi Licences	£66,312	£68,964	£2,652
Total	£226,614	£235,678	£9,064

4.2 In terms of comparators with other Local Authorities at Appendix 1 there is a group of Councils that are benchmarked for planning and other matters.

There is no specific group of licensing authorities identified for licensing benchmarking. Accordingly, Officers decided to benchmark in terms of the Local Government benchmarking 'family group' that West Dunbartonshire Council are within for planning and other such matters.

- 4.3** Eligible holders of a Taxi/Private Hire Car Driver's Licence who meet the Scottish Government criteria have been able to apply for a Taxi Fund Grant of £1,500. All licence holders who are self-employed have also been able to apply for additional financial support using the UK Government's various self-employment schemes. It is difficult to quantify the full range of supports available for self employed persons as this will depend on individual circumstances of the applicant.

5. People Implications

- 5.1** There are no people implications.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 6.1** There are no financial or procurement implications from the terms of this report.

7. Risk Analysis

- 7.1** As the report is for noting there are no risks associated with considering this report. Civic fees are not limited to taxi related licensing functions but cover a range of licensable activities such as Street Trader's, Window Cleaner's, Second Hand Dealer's, Public Entertainment etc. Many of those licensees will also have also suffered adverse trading conditions since the onset of the pandemic. Any decision to depart from the fees agreed for certain categories of licensee is likely to prompt other licence holders to ask to be treated the same and will have a financial implication which would be required to be considered depending on what that decision was.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 8.1** An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required.

9. Consultation

- 9.1** The Chief Officer - Finance has been consulted in connection with the terms of this report.

10. Strategic Assessment

10.1 This report supports the Council's strategic aim of a strong local economy.

Name: Peter Hessett

Designation: Chief Officer – Regulatory & Regeneration.

Date: 8th March 2021.

Person to Contact:	Raymond Lynch, Section Head (Licensing) Municipal Buildings, College Street, Dumbarton, G82 1NR 01389 737818. raymond.lynch@west-dunbarton.gov.uk .
Appendices:	Scale of Fees for Benchmarked Local Authorities-Taxi Licensing Fees.
Background Papers:	None.
Wards Affected:	All

Local Authority Comparators - Taxi Fees February 2021								
Local Authority	Taxi Driver's Grant Fee	Duration	Taxi Driver's Renewal Fee	Duration	Taxi Licence Grant Fee	Duration	Taxi Licence Renewal Fee	Duration
West Dunbartonshire	£284.50	1 year	£284.50	1 year	£638.50	3 years	£638.50	3 years
Edinburgh	£194.00	1 year	£118.00	1 year	£673.00	1 year	£365.00	1 year
Glasgow City	£162.00	3 years	£162.00	3 years	£402.00	3 years	£402.00	3 years
East Dunbartonshire	£189.00	3 years	£189.00	3 years	£404.52	3 years	£404.52	3 years
Falkirk	£212.00	1 year	£111.00 £268.00	1 year 3 years	£254.00	1 year	£138.00 £330.00	1 year 3 years
North Lanarkshire	£175.00	1 year	£160	1 year	£485.00	3 years	£426.00	3 years
Aberdeen City	£50.00	1 year	£105.00	3 years	£395.00	1 year	£215.00	1 year
Dundee	£195.00	3 years	£195.00	3 years	£240.00	1 year	£240.00	1 year

For noting:-

Over a 6 year period the amount of fees a driver and operator would pay are as follows:-

Local Authority	Taxi Driver's	Taxi Licence
West Dunbartonshire	£1707	£1277
Edinburgh	£784	£2498
Glasgow City	£324	£804
East Dunbartonshire	£378	£809
Falkirk	£702	£998
North Lanarkshire	£975	£911
Aberdeen City	£255	£1470
Dundee	£1170	£1440