

CORPORATE AND EFFICIENT GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee held on Wednesday, 16 February 2011 in Meeting Room 3, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors Jim Bollan, Jim Brown, David McBride, Ronnie McColl, Jim McElhill, Craig McLaughlin, Marie McNair and Martin Rooney.

Attending: Joyce White, Executive Director of Corporate Services; Andrew Fraser, Head of Legal, Administrative & Regulatory Services; David Connell, Head of Finance and ICT; Vincent Gardiner, Manager of Exchequer; Janice Rainey, Section Head (Accountancy); Alison Wood, Corporate Procurement Team Leader; Kevin McGrath, Corporate Procurement Officer; Tony Gallagher, Senior Registrar; George Hawthorn, Senior Administrative Officer and Craig Stewart, Committee Officer.

Apology: An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor Iain Robertson.

Councillor Craig McLaughlin in the Chair

CHAIR'S REMARKS

Prior to commencing with the business of the meeting, Councillor McLaughlin, Chair, informed the meeting of the sad news that Councillor Robertson's mother had recently passed away and expressed condolences, on behalf of the Committee, to Councillor Robertson on his loss.

DECLARATION 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 Meeting of the Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee held on 22 December 2010 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE CULTURAL SUB-COMMITTEE

The Minutes of Meeting of the Corporate Cultural Sub-Committee held on 14 December 2010 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

REVIEW OF REGISTRATION SERVICE 2011

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services on the steps required to implement the Council's decision in October 2010 to make savings of £95,000 through the closure of two registration offices.

After discussion and having heard the Executive Director of Corporate Services and relevant officers in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, Councillor McLaughlin, seconded by Councillor McColl, moved:-

This Committee acknowledges that this Council can no longer sustain 3 registration offices. Glasgow City with a population of 600,000 has only one registration office covering the entire city which is geographically spread wider than West Dunbartonshire. Yet West Dunbartonshire Council has 3 for a population of just 90,000.

However, we also accept the need to lessen the impact of the changes to our communities and while we agree the recommendations contained within the report (see undernote) we wish to see further work done to enable people to access as many of the same services as practical from other local Council offices and Libraries, such as forms etc.

In addition, we should look to our contact centre to develop the skills set to answer and handle basic questions and enquiries regarding the registration needs of people.

Undernote

That the Clydebank and Alexandria Registration Offices should close and works should proceed to remodel the Dumbarton Registration Officer to accommodate the new arrangements as soon as possible in the new financial year to maximise the savings to the Council.

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

That the Committee agrees to note the report and requests officers to bring a further report to the June meeting of the Committee, which also details an option of keeping all three current offices opened. The report should include proposals to fund this option, including utilising reserves.

On a vote being taken, 4 Members voted for the amendment, 4 for the motion. There being an equality of voting, the Chair exercised his casting vote in favour of the motion which was accordingly declared carried.

LEGAL SERVICES COMPETITIVENESS REVIEW

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services on the completion of the Legal Services Competitiveness Review – Financial Benchmarking and Customer Survey stages and advising on future steps to ensure service development and improvement.

After discussion and having heard the Head of Legal, Administrative and Regulatory Services in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the findings of the review.

DUMBARTON COMMON GOOD FUND - 2011/12 DRAFT BUDGET

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services providing a draft budget for 2011/2012.

After discussion and having heard the Head of Finance and ICT in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to approve the draft budget for 2011/2012 as shown in the Appendix to the report; and
- (2) to note that a briefing note would be issued to Members following the recent meeting that was held with Councillors representing the Dumbarton area to discuss possible spend on capital projects.

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

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services providing information on the renewal/re-tendering of the Council's insurance contracts.

The Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the arrangements that have been made regarding the renewal of the Council's various insurance contracts within the terms of existing long term agreements on 1 August 2010;
- (2) to note the arrangements that have been made regarding the renewal of the Mortgage Property 'Right to Buy' Block Buildings Insurance Policy on 1 April 2010 and that the Contract would be re-tendered with effect from 1 April 2011; and
- (3) that authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Corporate Services, in consultation with the Chair of the Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee, to re-tender the Mortgage Property Blanket Insurance Policy and to accept the most economically advantageous tender, the outcome of which would be reported to the Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee.

FORMER TENANT RENT ARREARS – QUARTER 3 2010/11

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

After discussion, the Committee agreed to approve rent arrears write-offs totalling £6,287.16 for 2010/11 as detailed in the Appendix to the report.

LOCAL PROCUREMENT

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services advising of options for developing the Local Procurement Policy to provide a more integrated approach to engaging with the local business community.

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

- (1) to approve the actions outlined in Appendix 1 to the report for inclusion in a revised Local Procurement Policy;
- (2) to recognise the Council Policy to support the Scottish Living Wage, currently £7.15 per hour, and request that officers investigate whether adherence to this Policy could be encouraged in the Local Procurement Policy; and
- (3) that a further report be prepared for a future meeting of the Committee on measures which the Council should take to develop better communication links with small and medium sized business enterprises in West Dunbartonshire in terms of the Local Procurement Policy.

HOUSING AND COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT TAKE-UP STRATEGY

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services recommending a housing and council tax benefit take up strategy for the Council.

Having heard the Executive Director of Corporate Services and the Client & Support Manager in further explanation and in answer to a Member's question, the Committee agreed to approve the housing and council tax take up strategy on the basis outlined in the Appendix to the report.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT: PERIOD 9 2010/11

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive advising of the performance of the Chief Executive budget for the period to 31 December 2010.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the report with satisfaction.

CORPORATE SERVICES BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT: PERIOD 9 2010/11

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services advising of the performance of the Corporate Services budget for the period to 31 December 2010.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the report with satisfaction.

CORPORATE SERVICES FORWARD PLAN

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services providing the Committee with an up to date position as to progress on key actions/projects in regard to the Corporate Services Department mid year performance review.

The Committee agreed to note the key focus areas for the Corporate Services Directorate for 2010/11.

TREASURY UPDATE (1 APRIL 2010 – 31 DECEMBER 2010)

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services advising about interest rates and treasury transactions of the Council which have taken place during the period 1 April 2010 to 31 December 2010.

After discussion and having heard the Head of Finance and ICT in answer to a Member's question, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

GRANT APPLICATIONS

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

The Committee agreed to note the grant awarded to Bowling and Milton Community Council as per the formula set by the Scottish Government.

DUMBARTON COMMON GOOD FUND – MONITORING REPORT TO 31 DECEMBER 2010

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services providing the Committee with details of income and expenditure on the Common Good Fund Account to 31 December 2010.

The Committee agreed to note the Statement of Income and Expenditure to 31 December 2011.

PROCUREMENT BEST PRACTICE INDICATORS 2009/10

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services advising of Procurement Best Practice Indicators (BPIs) that have been produced for the year 2009/2010.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the report and Appendix 1.

The meeting closed at 10.50 a.m.