

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Chief Executive

Council: 16 May 2007

Subject: Elected Members' Support Services

1. Purpose

- 1.1** This report provides information on the support services provided for Members and asks for consideration to be given to these arrangements in light of the recent Election.

2. Background

- 2.1** Since the last Local Government Elections in May 2003, there have been a number of changes made to the accommodation arrangements and staffing support for Elected Members.
- 2.2** For operational reasons following the recent elections, it is now essential to review the position.

3. Main Issues

Current staffing situation

- 3.1** The Members' Services Section currently has two office bases in Rosebery Place, Clydebank and Garshake Road, Dumbarton.
- 3.2** In Clydebank there are three members of staff, two Senior Members' Secretaries and one Members' Secretary. These Secretaries provide a comprehensive secretarial and administrative service for the Provost, Leader of the Council and for all Elected Members who use the facilities in Clydebank.
- 3.3** In Dumbarton there are two Members' Secretaries who provide comprehensive secretarial and administrative support for the Elected Members who use the facilities in Dumbarton.
- 3.4** Following the election in 2003 there were also two additional posts created, one Researcher for the Labour Group and one PA to the Leader of the Council. These posts have since been deleted as part of the budget savings for 2007/2008.
- 3.5** The current level of service to Members may require to be reviewed. This will be largely dependent on where the Provost, Leader and their deputies will wish to be based.

Members' Accommodation

- 3.6** Final arrangements for Members' Accommodation will depend on the preferred locations for the Provost, the Leader of the Council and their deputies.
- 3.7** Interim arrangements for Rosebery Place and Garshake Road are detailed below. At this stage, these arrangements can address only the issues of group rooms.

Accommodation – Rosebery Place, Clydebank

- 3.8** The current accommodation in Clydebank is spread over two floors in Rosebery Place – comprising the Members' suite on the first floor and the Leader's accommodation on the second floor.
- 3.9** The Members' suite has a large room which has most recently been utilised by Independent Councillors. The Cunard Room was recently redesignated as the Labour Group Room, with additional accommodation provided for opposition Members in two of the smaller rooms in this corridor, one of which had previously been used as the Members' Library. The Provost also has an office within the Members' suite.
- 3.10** The Senior Members' secretary for the Provost has an office adjacent to the Provost's office in the Members' suite, while the Members' secretary also has an office within the suite. The Senior Members' secretary for the Leader is currently accommodated in an office adjoining the Leader's office on the second floor.
- 3.11** Given the political makeup of the new Council, the following is a suggested allocation of the accommodation in Rosebery Place:

Large Room (previously Independent room) – allocated for use by Labour Members

Small room (formerly Cunard Room) – allocated for use by SNP Members

Small room (previously used by 2 Independents) – allocated for use by Independent Member

The above proposals are shown on the plan attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

Accommodation – Garshake Road, Dumbarton

- 3.12** Both Elected Members and support staff are located on the first floor of the offices at Garshake Road, Dumbarton. At present the Labour Group suite is located at the start of the corridor, directly opposite the Chief Executive's room and is regularly used by up to 6 Elected Members.

- 3.13** The Provost also has an office on the first floor and this is currently also used by the Depute Provost.
- 3.14** The opposition accommodation is located at the far end of the corridor and consists of two rooms, one utilised by the SNP Members and one which is shared by an SSP Member and Independent Member.
- 3.15** There is also a room used by Independent Members located half way along the corridor. This room was previously occupied by the PA to the Leader and the Research Adviser. The Member's Secretaries also have accommodation on this floor and are located in one office half way along the corridor.
- 3.16** Given the political makeup of the new Council the following is a suggested allocation of the accommodation in Garshake Road, Dumbarton:-

Large Room (previously Labour room) – allocated for use by Labour Members

Large Room (previously Members' Library) – allocated for use by SNP Members

Independent Room (previously used by Leader's support staff) – allocated for use by Independent Members

The above proposals are shown on the plan attached as Appendix 2 to this report.

4. Personnel Issues

- 4.1** There may be personnel issues dependent on the decision made by Council on the level of support to be provided to Members.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1** There may be financial implications dependent on the decision made by Council on both the level of support and the accommodation arrangements.

6. Risk Analysis

- 6.1** There was no requirement to carry out a risk assessment.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1** The new political structure of the Council necessitates a general review of arrangements for Members' accommodation and support services. This review should be carried out in consultation with Members themselves.
- 7.2** Suitable working arrangements have to be established meantime for the political groups.

7.3 It will also be necessary for accommodation to be allocated to those Councillors who take on the position of Provost, Depute Provost, Leader of Council and Depute Leader of the Council.

8. Recommendations

8.1 Members are asked:-

- (a) to instruct a review of Members' accommodation and the provision of Members' services, which review will be carried out in consultation with Members:
- (b) to approve the allocation of accommodation to Members as detailed in 3.11 and 3.16 above pending the results of the review; and
- (c) to delegate authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Provost, Depute Provost, Leader of the Council and Depute Leader to agree appropriate accommodation for these positions.

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David McMillan
Chief Executive
Date: 10 May 2007

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Appendices: Appendix 1 - Plan of Members' Accommodation - Rosebery Place

Appendix 2 - Plan of Members' Accommodation - Garshake Road

Background Papers: None

Wards Affected: All