

CORPORATE AND EFFICIENT GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee held on Wednesday, 28 November 2007 in the Council Chambers, Clydebank Town Hall, Dumbarton Road, Clydebank at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors, Jim Bollan, Margaret Bootland, Jim Brown, David McBride, Jonathan McColl, Ronnie McColl, Craig McLaughlin, Marie McNair*, Iain Robertson and Martin Rooney.

* Arrived later in the meeting

Attending: David Connell, Head of Finance; Stephen Brown, Head of Legal, Administrative and Regulatory Services; Angela Clements, Head of ICT & Business Development; Gillian McNeilly, Manager of Accounting; Vincent Gardiner, Manager of Exchequer; Liz Cochrane, Policy Manager; Angus Bodie, Manager of Roads, Waste and Transport; Graham Pollok, Manager of Regulatory Services; Kevin Neeson, Development Services Manager; Marion Smith, Section Head (Revenues); David Webster, Section Head – Performance Management and Shona Barton, Committee and Members' Services Officer.

Also Joyce White, Executive Director of Corporate Services
Attending: (Designate).

Councillor Craig McLaughlin in the Chair

CHAIR'S REMARKS

Before commencing with the business of the meeting, the Chair, Councillor McLaughlin, introduced Mrs. Joyce White, the recently appointed Executive Director of Corporate Services.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of Meeting of the Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee held on 26 September 2007 were submitted and approved as a correct record, subject to the following amendments:-

- (1) with reference to the item headed Grant Administration, Councillor McLaughlin advised that there should have been mention of the Grants Working Group in his motion. It was further noted that in the Minutes of

Meeting of the Corporate Services Committee held on 27 June 2007 (Page 124 refers), reference was made to the creation of a Grants Sub-Committee when it should have been a Grants Working Group. Thereafter, it was agreed that this Working Group would consist of 2 Members of the Administration (namely Councillors Craig McLaughlin and Ronnie McColl) and 2 Members of the opposition (namely Councillors Marie McNair and David McBride). It was also noted that an invitation would be extended to the Community Volunteer Service (CVS) to nominate a representative to join the Working Group; and

- (2) that apologies were submitted for Councillor Gail Casey, when it should have been Councillor Marie McNair.

DECLARATION OF NON-FINANCIAL INTEREST

Councillor Iain Robertson declared a non-financial interest in the following item of business.

DUMBARTON GOLF COURSE – REPAIRS TO EMBANKMENT

In terms of remit from the meeting of the Tendering Committee held on 24 October 2007 (Page 509 refers), there was submitted the relevant Excerpt Minute together with a report by the Acting Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development (Land & Environment) providing details of proposed funding of the emergency flood embankment repair works to the River Leven at Dumbarton Golf Course.

Having heard Councillor McBride, the Committee noted that at the meeting of the Tendering Committee held earlier on 28 November 2007, the minutes of the meeting held on 24 October 2007 had been amended to state that funding for the project would not come solely from the Dumbarton Common Good Fund.

After discussion and having heard the Manager of Roads, Waste and Transport and the Head of Legal, Administrative and Regulatory Services in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to continue consideration of the report until the next meeting of the Committee.

Having heard the Manager of Roads, Waste and Transport it was noted that the contract had already been awarded and work would commence at the beginning of January.

NOTE: Councillor Marie McNair entered the meeting during discussion of the above item.

RENT HARMONISATION

With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of the Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee held on 26 September 2007 (Page 429 refers), a report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing information on the rent harmonisation programme and seeking guidance on the way forward.

After discussion and having heard Councillor McLaughlin, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to continue consideration of the report until the next meeting of the Committee to allow feedback from tenants groups to be obtained; and
- (2) that a further report be submitted to the next meeting providing additional information on the levels of rent and detailing whether or not it was considered that some rents were too high.

CHRISTMAS PAYMENTS TO ELDERLY PEOPLE'S ORGANISATIONS

With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of the Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee held on 26 September 2007 (Page 433 refers), a report was submitted by the Chief Executive seeking approval to make Christmas payments to elderly people's organisations.

After discussion and having heard the Head of Finance in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to approve the Christmas contributions to elderly people's organisations as shown in the Appendix to the report, subject to the organisations submitting satisfactory supporting information.

Having heard Councillor McLaughlin, it was further agreed that the Grants Working Group would discuss the arrangements for distribution of the funds in future years.

PERFORMANCE OF REGISTRATION SERVICE

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive:-

- (a) providing information on the performance of the Registration Service in West Dunbartonshire in terms of the national enhanced performance indicators produced by the General Register Office for Scotland (GROS) for the period 2003 to 2006; and
- (b) informing of the outcome of a Registration customer service survey which was carried out earlier this year.

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:-

- (1) that all Registration staff be congratulated on their excellent level of performance and service to customers;
- (2) to note that a capital bid would be made next year for monies to improve the accommodation at the Alexandria Area Registration Office;
- (3) to note that an application for Charter Mark was pending; and
- (4) that a report would be circulated to Members of the Committee, providing a breakdown of the customer surveys for each office.

YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME

A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development (Housing and Regeneration Services) advising on the outcome of a short life working group on a protocol for enhancing the employability and employment prospects of young people in West Dunbartonshire and making recommendations thereon.

After discussion and having heard the Development Services Manager in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the contents of the report;
- (2) to delegate responsibility to the Corporate Management Team to prepare a detailed protocol for the programme and consult with the Trades Unions;
- (3) to the launch of the programme with appropriate partner agencies and in particular Scottish Enterprise Dunbartonshire, Careers Scotland and the Community Planning Partnership;
- (4) to approve the enhancement of the basic allowance by £25 to £80; and
- (5) to instruct that a further report be brought back to a future meeting of the Committee reporting on the progress of the programme.

AIR QUALITY PROGRESS REPORT 2007

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive advising of the findings of the Local Air Quality Progress Report 2007 and advising of the further measures being taken to improve local air quality by the Environmental Health Section.

Having heard Councillor McLaughlin, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the contents of the report; and
- (2) to endorse the actions of the Environmental Health and Roads Sections to improve local air quality.

**THE PRIVATE WATER SUPPLIES (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2006
AND THE PRIVATE WATER SUPPLIES (GRANTS) (SCOTLAND)
REGULATIONS 2006**

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive advising on the implications of the Private Water Supplies (Scotland) Regulations and the Private Water Supplies (Grants) (Scotland) Regulations 2006 and seeking approval for the Environmental Health Section to administer the grant system.

Having heard Councillor McLaughlin, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the contents of the report;
- (2) to apply the discretionary powers to recover the costs of the work incurred by the Environmental Health Section in implementing the 2006 Regulations; and
- (3) to authorise the Environmental Health Section to administer the grants system in respect of the Private Water Supplies (Grants) (Scotland) Regulations 2006.

**DALMUIR WASTE WATER TREATMENT WORKS ODOUR
IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive seeking approval of the Odour Improvement Plan for Dalmuir Waste Water Treatment Works (WwTW) provided by Scottish Water and Scotia Water Limited as required by the Sewerage Nuisance (Code of Practice) (Scotland) Order 2006.

Having heard Councillor McLaughlin, the Committee agreed to approve the first phase Odour Improvement Plan as required by the Sewerage Nuisance (Code of Practice) (Scotland) Order 2006.

ANNUAL EQUALITIES REPORT

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive introducing the West Dunbartonshire Annual Equalities Report, which sets out the Council's progress in the promotion of equal opportunities and provides information with which to monitor performance.

Having heard Councillor McLaughlin, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the contents of the annual equalities report; and
- (2) to endorse the approach being taken by the Council in the promotion of equal opportunities.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive noting the progress with developing the performance management framework and presenting the consultants' review of the process.

After discussion and having heard the Section Head – Performance Management in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note:-

- (1) the contents of the report;
- (2) that in the report reference is made to the "Audit and Risk Committee", when this should be "Audit and Performance Review Committee"; and
- (3) that it was hoped the new Performance Management system would be in place for the beginning of the next financial year.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DEPARTMENT – QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE REVIEW

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive setting out the performance of the Chief Executive's Department in the second quarter of 2007/8 covering the period from 1 July to 30 September 2007.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

CORPORATE SERVICES DEPARTMENT – QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE REVIEW

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive setting out the performance of the Corporate Services Department for the period from 1 July to 30 September 2007.

Having heard the Head of Finance, it was noted that Appendix 1 to the report had been issued in error. An amended copy of the Appendix was then circulated to the Committee.

After discussion and having heard Councillors McLaughlin and Rooney, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

PROVOST'S FUND

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive advising of the current sum available within the Provost's Fund and inviting Members' to approve a top up.

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

- (1) to transfer the sum of £5,000 from the Corporate Contingency budget to the Provost's Fund; and
- (2) that a copy of the expenditure report on the Provost's hospitality account be sent to Councillor Rooney on a regular basis.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND CORPORATE SERVICES BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT: PERIOD 6 (2007/08)

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive advising of the performance of the Chief Executive and Corporate Services budgets for the period to 15 October 2007.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

DUMBARTON COMMON GOOD FUND MONITORING REPORT TO 15 OCTOBER 2007

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing details of income and expenditure on the Common Good Fund Account to 15 October 2007.

After discussion, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to remove the reference to the provision of funds for Dumbarton Golf Club flooding from the statement of income and expenditure; and
- (2) to note the contents of the report.

COUNCIL TAX ON-LINE ENQUIRY SERVICE

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing an update on the availability of an on-line enquiry service for council tax.

After discussion and having heard Councillor McLaughlin, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the availability of the council tax on-line enquiry service; and

- (2) to instruct officers to investigate alternative ways of sending out on-line passwords.

CHANGE TO COUNCIL TAX BILLING DATE

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive seeking approval for the payment date for council tax to be changed from the 28th of the month to the 1st of the month, effective from 1 April 2008.

After discussion and having heard the Manager of Exchequer in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to approve the change in payment date from the 28th of the month to the 1st of the month with effect from 1 April 2008.

Councillor Bollan, having failed to gain a seconder for a proposed motion, requested that his dissent be recorded in the minutes.

COUNCIL TAX ANNUAL STATEMENTS

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing an update on the issue of council tax annual statements and making recommendations for their future issue.

After discussion and having heard Councillor McLaughlin, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the issue of Council Tax statements in October;
- (2) to approve the issue of statements by March each year detailing balances associated with council tax, community charge, non domestic rates and sundry debtors; and
- (3) that the first issue of statements should contain Council tax information only.

Having heard the Head of Finance in answer to Members' questions, the Committee noted that many of the debtors would be multiple debtors and the numbers of statements to be issued would be approximately 20,000.

TREASURY UPDATE (1 APRIL 2007 – 15 OCTOBER 2007)

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive advising about interest rates and treasury transactions of the Council which had taken place during the period from 1 April 2007 to 15 October 2007.

Having heard the Manager of Accounting in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

UPDATE ON FINANCE REVENUES COLLECTION

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing an update on the collection of the local Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR).

Having heard Councillor McLaughlin, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the contents of the report; and
- (2) to pass on congratulations on behalf of the Committee to those staff involved in the collection of Council Tax and NNDR.

GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing an update on the budget position of Grants to Voluntary Organisations and providing details of grant applications put forward for approval.

After discussion, Councillor McLaughlin, seconded by Councillor Ronnie McColl, moved:-

That the Committee agree to the virement of funds from the local grants budget to fund the grant to Dumbarton North Community Council, and continue consideration of the remaining grant applications until the next meeting of the Grants Working Group to allow for other sources of funding to be explored, prior to the December meeting of Council when a report would be submitted.

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

That the Committee agrees to the award of grants as follows:-

Grant application 07/115 – Crosslet Centre OAP’s Wednesday Night Club be awarded the full grant requested of £902, to be funded from the Common Good Fund.

Grant application 07/107 – Strathleven Artizans be awarded the full grant requested of £6,000, 50% to be funded from the Common Good Fund and 50% from Reserves.

Grant application 06/140 – Levenvale Older People’s Welfare Association be awarded the full grant requested of £250.

Grant application 07/60 – Dalmonach Tuesday/Friday Club be awarded the full grant requested of £1,592.

Grant application 07/76 – West Dunbartonshire Minority Ethnic Association be awarded the full grant requested of £2,000 to be funded from the Common Good Fund.

Grant application 07/120 – West Dunbartonshire Sports Council be awarded the full grant requested of £8,000, 50% to be funded from the Common Good Fund and 50% from Reserves.

Grant application 07/85 – Unity Enterprise Independence Options be awarded the full grant requested of £2,230 to be funded from the Common Good Fund.

Grant application 07/100 – Rape Crisis Centre be awarded the full grant requested of £7,290, 50% to be funded from the Common Good Fund and 50% from Reserves.

Grant application 07/116 – Young at Heart Physically Disabled Group be awarded the full grant requested of £1,228 to be funded from Reserves.

Grant application 07/114 – Dumbarton North Community Council be awarded the full grant requested of £6,960, with £4,341.32 to be funded from the Community Council budget and £2,358.68 to be funded from Reserves.

On a vote being taken 5 Members voted for the Amendment and 5 for the Motion. There being an equality of voting, the Convener exercised his casting vote in favour of the motion which was accordingly declared carried.

The meeting closed at 10.53 a.m.