

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

At an Assembly Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held in the Council Chambers, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton on Wednesday 9 October 2002 at 7.00 p.m.

- Present:** Provost Alistair Macdonald and Councillors James Bollan, Geoffrey Calvert, Mary Campbell, Mary Collins, Anthony Devine, James Flynn, Daniel McCafferty, James McCallum, Linda McColl, Ronnie McColl, John McCutcheon, Duncan McDonald, James McElhill, Margaret McGregor, Craig McLaughlin, Connie O'Sullivan, Iain Robertson, John Syme, John Trainer and Andrew White.
- Attending:** Tim Huntingford, Chief Executive; Eric Walker, Director of Corporate Services; Ian McMurdo, Director of Education and Cultural Services; David McMillan, Director of Commercial and Technical Services; Dan Henderson, Director of Economic, Planning and Environmental Services; Stephen B. Brown, Head of Legal and Administrative Services; Rod McCreath, Head of Protective Services; Bill Clarke, Head of Strategy, Social Work and Housing Services; and Dave Low, Administrative Assistant.
- Apology:** An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor Ian McDonald.

Provost Alistair Macdonald in the Chair

EMERGENCY ITEM

Provost Macdonald advised that he intended to deal with one item as a matter of urgency, being an emergency motion from Councillor McCallum on the temporary relocation of the Meadow Centre Gym to the Westbridgend Community Hall.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Provost Macdonald advised that he intended to deal with the business in the following order, in that the emergency motion would immediately precede the motion submitted by Councillor Bollan at item 6(a) on the agenda.

OPEN FORUM

The following question was submitted in accordance with Standing Order 2(b):-

MRS. LINDA WOOD, SALISBURY PLACE, MOUNTBLOW, DALMUIR

Is there going to be anything done to these houses (Salisbury Place, Mountblow) in the foreseeable future as I bought mine fifteen years ago and can't sell it? I live in constant fear of drug addicts and vandals which I know is a social problem and not the Councils.

The place is such a mess now that it is a magnet for these people, and I feel that if nothing is going to be done I will be forced out of my home due to ill health as my nerves are shattered and then I will be homeless.

Provost Macdonald advised that Mrs. Wood was not in attendance to put her question to the Council in person, but that in the interest of fairness the Council would send Mrs. Wood and the local Member a copy of the response as shown below:-

In response to Mrs Wood's question, £75,000 was invested in lighting improvements in 2001/2002, however there is no further capital investment planned at this time.

The Social Work and Housing Services Department and the Housing Issues Working Group has been investigating ways of attracting tenants to certain areas. Alternative ways of securing vacant properties which reduce the negative impact of boarding up properties is also in progress.

Two significant projects are also in progress in the Mountblow area.

The first is the North Mountblow Community Project which, through funding from West Dunbartonshire Partnership and the Council, will provide premises for community use.

This project, which is due to open at the end of this year, has been led by local people who will be looking at ways of maximising this resource for everyone in the area and in particular young people and the elderly.

The second is the introduction of an out of hours estates service from early next year.

This service will operate for a 6 month pilot period in the Mountblow area and will aim to:-

- Reduce the incidence and cost of vandalism
- Improve environmental conditions
- reduce the number of complaints of anti social behaviour

Staff will be working at night and at week-ends and will be looking to work closely with the community to tackle many of the issues raised by Mrs Wood.

I am sure that the work due to start in Mountblow will, with the support of local people, make a difference and help alleviate the problems which Mrs Wood has raised.

CONTAMINATION OF THE WATER SUPPLY IN PARTS OF WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE BY THE CRYPTOSPORIDIUM SPORE

With reference to the Assembly Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held on 14 August 2002, Provost Macdonald introduced Mr. Jon Hargreaves, Chief Executive, Professor Alan Alexander, Chairman and Mr. Geoff Aitkenhead, Asset Management Director, Scottish Water, to the Council.

Professor Alexander offered an apology on behalf of Scottish Water to the people and Councillors of Clydebank for the error which meant that they had not been informed of the incident at the same time as others affected by the contamination outbreak.

Mr. Aitkenhead explained (a) the source of the Clydebank water supply, (b) the environmental conditions prevalent immediately prior to the contamination incident, (c) the chronology of the incident and (d) the actions taken by Scottish Water staff to inform the people of Clydebank of the problem.

Following detailed discussion and questions from Members, the Council:-

- (a) noted that compensation for the incident would be dealt with by Scottish Water on an individual basis and dependent on the circumstances of each case;
- (b) noted that Scottish Water would consider placing an advertisement in the Council newspaper providing further information on the submission of compensation claims;
- (c) noted that Councillor involvement would be incorporated into future emergency plans produced by Scottish Water, and
- (d) reiterated its support for the proposed new water treatment facility in Milngavie.

The Provost thanked the three Scottish Water officials for their attendance and they left the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The Council agreed to adjourn at this point and resumed a short time thereafter, those present being as shown on the sederunt with the exception of Councillor A. Devine who re-entered the meeting during consideration of the immediately following item of business.

PRESENTATION – COSLA SHORT LIFE WORKING GROUP ON ASBESTOS

The Provost introduced Mr. Thomas Gorman, Welfare Rights Officer, to the Council.

Prior to the presentation Provost Macdonald thanked Mr. Gorman for his efforts in raising awareness of the issues related to the widespread use of asbestos.

Mr. Gorman thereafter advised Members of the work of the COSLA Short Life Working Group on Asbestos (SLWG). He listed the organisations that had participated in the SLWG and detailed its aims, the extent of the problem and the contents of the SLWG report.

At the conclusion of his presentation, Mr. Gorman advised Members that a conference would be held in Stirling University on 12 December 2002 to address the issues raised by the SLWG report.

The Provost thanked Mr. Gorman for his presentation and he left the meeting.

REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS

A report was submitted by the Returning Officer proposing certain changes to existing polling districts to eliminate polling anomalies and increase flexibility in the identification of polling places for the combined poll on 1 May 2003.

The Council agreed to approve the proposals detailed in Appendix 2 of the Returning Officer's report subject to the proposal relating to Polling Districts CM10 and CM22 (Ward 6 Kilbowie) being amended in accordance with the local Member's wishes that the status quo be maintained.

MOTIONS

- (a) Provost Macdonald accepted a petition from Mrs Mary Ronald and Mrs Theresa Meldrum containing 205 signatures of people objecting to the closure of Westbridgend Community Hall to accommodate the Meadow Centre Gym.

He afforded Mrs. Ronald the opportunity to address the Council in relation to her objections to the relocation of the Meadow Centre Gym to the Westbridgend Community Hall.

Thereafter, an emergency motion was submitted by Councillor McCallum in the following terms:-

This Council believes that the displacement of the clubs that use the Westbridgend Community Centre as a result of the Meadow Centre refurbishment has been a mistake and calls upon the officers of the Council to make alternative arrangements.

Councillor McCallum was heard in support of his motion which the Council unanimously agreed to support subject to the amendment of 'and calls on the officers of the Council to make alternative arrangements' on line three of the motion to 'and instructs the officers of the Council to make alternative arrangements'.

(b) A motion was submitted by Councillor Bolland in the following terms:-

This Council opposes any further military action by the British Government against Iraq and the Iraqi people.

A war will de-stabilise the region further and will intensify the suffering of millions of innocent people.

We call on the Government to use all its influence to seek a diplomatic solution to the current crisis.

We further agree that the UN should be the organisation to lead the efforts to try and find a peaceful solution, which is acceptable to Iraq and the UN.

We also agree to circulate this motion to every Scottish Local Authority, all Scottish MSPs and MPs, seeking their support and endorsement.

Councillor Bolland moved and was heard in support of his motion which was seconded by Councillor Collins.

As an amendment, Councillor Ronnie McColl, seconded by Councillor Syme, moved that:-

This Council calls upon the UK Government to reaffirm that the UN is the only body with the authority to sanction military action in Iraq;

that as a matter of course, weapons inspectors must be given free and unfettered access to sites they wish to investigate in Iraq;

to ensure all diplomatic avenues are thoroughly investigated and only on presentation of incontrovertible evidence of any threat by Saddam Hussein should military intervention be considered.

This Council declares its total opposition to any unilateral action against Iraq by any individual country or alliance of countries without the UN mandate.

As a second amendment, Councillor Trainer, seconded by Councillor White, moved that:-

This Council opposes any further military action by the British Government against Iraq and the Iraqi people.

A war will de-stabilise the region further and will intensify the suffering of millions of innocent people.

We call on the Government to use all its influence to seek a diplomatic solution to the current crisis.

We further agree that the UN should be the organisation to lead the efforts to try and find a peaceful solution, which is acceptable to the full international community.

We also agree to circulate this motion to every Scottish Local Authority, all Scottish MSPs and MPs, seeking their support and endorsement.

The Council agreed that there be a roll call vote.

On a vote being taken between the second amendment by Councillor Trainer and the first amendment by Councillor Ronnie McColl by way of calling the roll, 12 Members (namely Provost Macdonald and Councillors Bollan, Campbell, Collins, Flynn, McCafferty, McCallum, Duncan McDonald, O'Sullivan, Robertson, Trainer and White) voted for the second amendment, 8 Members (namely Councillors Calvert, Devine, Linda McColl, Ronnie McColl, McCutcheon, McElhill, McGregor and Syme) voted for the first amendment and 1 Member Namely Councillor McLaughlin) abstained.

On a vote being taken between the second amendment and the motion by Councillor Bollan by way of calling the roll, 9 Members (namely Provost Macdonald and Councillors Flynn, McCafferty, McCallum, Duncan McDonald, O'Sullivan, Robertson, Trainer and White) voted for the second amendment, 4 Members (namely Councillors Bollan, Campbell, Collins and Devine) voted for the motion and 8 Members (namely Councillors Calvert, Linda McColl, Ronnie McColl, McCutcheon, McElhill, McGregor, McLaughlin and Syme) abstained. The second amendment was accordingly declared carried.

Councillors Campbell, Collins, McCafferty, Ronnie McColl, McCutcheon, McGregor and McLaughlin left and re-entered the meeting during the immediately following item of business.

(c) A motion was submitted by Councillor Calvert in the following terms:-

This Council welcomes the invitation by the Board of Skypoint Faifley to call in Audit Scotland in order to resolve outstanding financial issues.

This Council instructs the Chief Executive to give every assistance to Audit Scotland and the Board in order to achieve this objective.

Councillor Calvert was heard in support of his amendment which was seconded by Councillor McCutcheon.

As an amendment, Councillor Trainer, seconded by Councillor White moved that:-

This Council welcomes the announcement that the Board of Skypoint, Faifley has asked for assistance with their accounts from Audit Scotland. We note with regret the news that Audit Scotland may not be able to provide support to Skypoint.

Council therefore instructs the Director of Corporate Services to assist the Board by arranging an audit of Skypoint Faifley. West Dunbartonshire Council's Head of Audit shall conduct the audit. Following the audit the Director of Corporate Services shall bring forward a report to Council of the findings and outcome of the audit. The report shall also outline any lessons to be learned from Council's involvement with Skypoint, Faifley.

These lessons should be used to support other community organisations in receipt of public funding from West Dunbartonshire Council in the future.

The Council agreed that there be a roll call vote. On a vote being taken by way of calling the roll, 10 Members (namely Provost Macdonald, and Councillors Calvert, Devine, Flynn, McCallum, Linda McColl, Duncan McDonald, O'Sullivan, Trainer and White) voted for the amendment and 11 Members (namely Councillors Bollan, Campbell, Collins, McCafferty, Ronnie McColl, McCutcheon, McElhill, McGregor, McLaughlin, Robertson and Syme) voted for the motion which was accordingly declared carried.

The meeting concluded at 10.20 p.m.