

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

At the Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held in the Council Chambers, Clydebank Town Hall, Dumbarton Road, Clydebank, on Wednesday 17 December 2008 at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Provost Denis Agnew and Councillors George Black, James Bollan, Margaret Bootland, Jim Brown, Geoff Calvert, Gail Casey, Jim Finn, William Hendrie, Douglas McAllister, David McBride, Jonathan McColl, Ronnie McColl, Jim McElhill, Patrick McGlinchey, Craig McLaughlin, Willie McLaughlin, Marie McNair, John Millar, Iain Robertson, Martin Rooney and May Smillie.

Attending: David McMillan, Chief Executive; Bill Clark, Executive Director of Social Work and Health; Elaine Melrose, Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development; Terry Lanagan, Executive Director of Educational Services; Joyce White, Executive Director of Corporate Services; David Connell, Head of Finance and ICT; David Webster, Section Head (Performance Management); Andrew Fraser, Head of Legal, Administrative and Regulatory Services and Craig Stewart, Committee Officer.

Provost Denis Agnew in the Chair

ONE MINUTE SILENCE

After hearing Provost Agnew, the Council stood in silence for a period of one minute in remembrance of former Councillor Patricia Rice who passed away recently.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held on 26 November 2008 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

In relation to a point raised by Councillor Rooney concerning 'Hospital Watch – Request for Deputation' (Pages 1524/25 refers) and in particular the reference to "having failed to received two-thirds of the vote" in relation to the determination of whether suspension of Standing Orders would be required in respect of a proposed motion by him, it was noted that the minutes should be amended to reflect the fact that a vote did not take place as such, albeit that it had become clear at the meeting that the two-thirds majority would not be achieved.

In relation to a point raised by Councillor Rooney concerning 'Minutes of the Audit & Performance Review Committee' (Pages 1526/27 refers), the Chief Executive confirmed that as the Audit & Performance Review Committee had no delegated powers, it was a matter for the Council to agree the Minutes of that Committee, including ratification of any decisions that may be contained therein. It was noted, however, that it was a matter for the Committee to approve the minutes of its meetings as a correct record.

OTHER BUSINESS

With reference to the item under the heading 'Notices of Motion' and in particular the motion by Councillor Bollan relating to the methods used by the Council to recover debts from employees who had received back payments due to the single status agreement (which would be discussed later on in the agenda), the Chief Executive and Head of Legal, Administrative and Regulative Services were heard in explanation of the reasoning behind whether an officer's report on a Motion should precede or follow it. The Council agreed to note that it was a matter for the Provost, as Chair, to determine.

In response to a question by Councillor R. McColl, the Provost informed the Council that he had received a request for the Council to consider an Urgent Item of Business, not on the agenda of this meeting, and that this matter would be dealt with at the appropriate point later in the meeting.

OPEN FORUM

The Council noted that no open forum questions had been submitted for consideration at this meeting.

MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE

The Minutes of Meeting of the Community Participation Committee held on 19 November 2008 were submitted and all decisions contained therein were approved.

With reference to the item under the heading 'Scottish Parliament Constituency Boundaries' (Page 1518 refers), it was noted that the Conservative Party had not opposed the proposed boundary changes.

IMPLEMENTATION OF LEARNING DISABILITY CHARGES

With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held on 26 November 2008 (Page 1528 refers) a report was submitted by the Executive Director of Social Work and Health providing the Council with further information on the implementation of Learning Disability Charges.

Councillor McNair, seconded by Councillor J. McColl, moved:-

This Council notes with concern the finding of the Independent Review of Charges for Learning Disability Services in West Dunbartonshire.

Council welcomes the Independent Review which vindicates the decision taken by Council on 27 August 2008 to examine the effect charges are having on people with learning disabilities.

Although the numbers of service users and carers consulted is small (20% of service users and potentially as little as 7% of carers/relatives) Council agrees the findings of the Independent Review are of significance.

In particular Council notes:-

- 69% of carers still express concern about charge
- 57% of service users with learning disabilities still express concern about the charges
- 63% of people with learning disabilities did not support the suggestion that there should be charges of community care services
- Even from this small sample a significant number indicate the introduction of charges has changed the activities they do
- The average income of people with learning disabilities is lower than that of the general population.

Council welcomes the work done to assess the Independent Living Fund (ILF) by Welfare Rights Service and support the continuation of this work.

Whilst recognising that those on ILF will be reimbursed for any charges, Council notes that this may not be an option for the majority of service users and their families.

Council agrees that unfortunately there is little evidence to this effect within the report from the Executive Director of Social Work and Health. The report points out that despite a significant amount of service users (70%) having received an income maximisation check, only a minority (40%), have been so far entitled to ILF. ILF entitlement requires, among a range of criteria, that the highest rate of the care component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) is in payment.

This Council therefore agrees to end Learning Disability charges for anyone who is not in receipt of ILF, and at any point should someone have their ILF withdrawn at a further date, with immediate effect with any shortfall in budget being met from the reserves.

Furthermore, Council recognises that both the SNP and Labour Group 2008/09 budgets proposed the implementation of charges for learning disabilities services. Council invites both Groups not to propose the re-introduction of these charges in the 2009/10 budget or in any subsequent years.

Finally, Council instructs the Chief Executive to ensure that the Learning Disability charges are removed from the 2009/10 draft budget.

As an amendment, Councillor Rooney, seconded by Councillor Millar, moved:-

That the Council calls on the SNP Administration to reconsider their introduction of charges on clients who receive Learning Disability services.

The Executive Director of Social Work and Health, Head of Legal, Administrative and Regulatory Services and the Chief Executive were heard in answer to Members' questions and in further explanation of the likely impact any change would have on the Social Work and Health departmental budget.

Thereafter Councillor Rooney, with the consent of the Council withdrew his amendment.

The motion was accordingly declared carried.

HRA 2008/2009 BUDGETARY CONTROL STATEMENT TO 15 NOVEMBER 2008

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development providing the Council with an update on the financial performance of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to the period ended 15 November 2008.

The Council agreed to note the contents of the report.

HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2008/2009 BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT TO 15 NOVEMBER 2008 (PERIOD 7)

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development providing the Council with an update on the progress of the HRA capital programme as at 15 November 2008.

Councillor McLaughlin, seconded by Councillor J. McColl, moved:-

That the Council agrees the recommendations contained in the report.

In addition this Council agrees that given the current difficulties in the capital budget that officers look at examining all land assets across the Council for potential disposal before the end of this financial year.

The Council agrees because of the tight timescale that authority is delegated to the Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development to agree potential sites, values and subsequent disposal.

A future report should be brought forward detailing any disposals.

After discussion and having heard the Chief Executive and the Head of Legal, Administrative and Regulatory Services in clarification of certain matters, Councillor McLaughlin sought a short adjournment to further discuss the terms of the motion with the Legal Officer and possible changes that would require to be made to it to make it competent.

ADJOURNMENT

After hearing Provost Agnew, the Council agreed to adjourn for a short period.

The meeting reconvened at 8.04 p.m. with all those Members shown on the sederunt in attendance.

Councillor C. McLaughlin advised Council that, following advice he had been given by the Legal Officer, he would request that his motion be withdrawn and be resubmitted in an amended form.

Thereafter Councillor C. McLaughlin, with the consent of the Council withdrew his motion.

Councillor McLaughlin, seconded by Councillor J. McColl, then moved:-

That the Council agrees the recommendations contained in the report.

In addition this Council agrees that given the current difficulties in the capital budget that officers look at examining all surplus land assets held in the Housing Revenue account across the Council for potential disposal before the end of this financial year.

The Council agrees because of the tight timescale that authority is delegated to the Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development to agree potential sites, values and subsequent disposal.

A future report should be brought forward detailing any disposals.

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

The Council agrees to approve the recommendations of the report as follows:-

- (1) to note the contents of the report; and
- (2) to approve the budget virement as referred to in paragraph 3.10 and detailed in Appendix D to the report.

On a vote being taken, 12 Members voted for the amendment and 10 for the motion. The amendment was accordingly declared carried.

GENERAL SERVICES REVENUE 2008/2009 BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT (PERIOD 7)

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services informing the Council of the performance of the General Services Revenue Budget for the period to 15 November 2008.

After discussion and having heard the relevant Executive Directors in answer to Members' questions, the Council agreed to note the terms of the report.

GENERAL SERVICES CAPITAL BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT: PERIOD 7 (2008/2009)

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services providing the Council with an update on the General Services Capital Plan for 2008/2009.

After discussion and having heard the Head of Finance & ICT in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to approve the updated capital plan including the budget virement, and noted the position to date as outlined in Appendices I and II of the report.

BEST VALUE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing the Council with an update on the progress of the Council's Best Value Improvement Plan (BVIP).

It was agreed that the Members of the Council review and comment on the progress of the Best Value Improvement Plan.

NATIONAL PAY AWARD – LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services seeking the Council's approval to implement the National Pay Award, as recommended by the Employers Secretary of the Scottish Joint Council for Local Government Employees.

Councillor Robertson, seconded by Councillor J. McColl, moved:-

That the Council agrees to approve the recommendations of the report as follows:-

Council are asked to approve implementation of the National Pay Award as recommended by the Employers Secretary of the Scottish Joint Council (SJC).

The effect of the award is:-

- 3% increase on all SJC points and on all SJC scales for the year 1st April 2008 – 31st March 2009
- 2.5% increase on all SJC points and all SJC scales for the year 1st April 2009 – 31st March 2010.

As an amendment, Councillor Bootland, seconded by Councillor Rooney, moved:-

Council notes that there is as yet no collective agreement with the Joint Trade Unions for the 2008/09 National Pay Award. We agree the process at National level between employers and the Joint Trade Unions should continue in search of a collective agreement.

However, in recognition that the award was due to staff in April 2008, and the current financial difficulties for everyone, the Council agrees to pay the offered 3% increase as an interim payment on all SJC points and on all SJC scales for the year 1/4/08 - 31/3/09 pending further discussions.

Following discussion, Councillor Robertson, with the consent of the Council withdrew his motion.

The amendment was accordingly declared carried.

ADJOURNMENT

After hearing Provost Agnew, the Council agreed to adjourn for a short period.

The meeting reconvened at 9.26 p.m. with all those Members shown on the sederunt in attendance.

QUESTION

Question from Councillor John Millar to the Convener of Housing, Environment and Economic Development

Having heard Councillor Millar, the Council agreed to note that the question, as printed on the agenda, had been withdrawn.

URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS

Provost Agnew ruled that there were no special circumstances concerning the request for the Council to consider an Urgent Item of Business, previously referred to earlier in the meeting, and therefore the matter would not be discussed.

NOTICES OF MOTION

(A) Equal Pay Compromise Agreements and Recovery of Arrears

(i) Report by the Executive Director of Corporate Services

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services providing the Council with an update on the recovery of arrears from employees in receipt of an equal pay compromise award.

Having heard the Head of Legal, Administrative and Regulatory Services in clarification of certain matters, the Council agreed to note the action taken to date.

(ii) Motion by Councillor Bollan

This Council agrees that no deductions will be made from any equal pay or single status (re-alignment payments) back payments due to any Council employee, who has a repayment plan in place, without their written consent. Workers have been advised they must sign a mandate by 26 November 2008.

If no written consent is forthcoming then the matter will rest there. There will be no follow up sanctions by WDC to freeze bank accounts, arrest wages or use any other recovery method against employees into this bracket.

Councillor Bollan was heard in support of the above motion which was seconded by Councillor Black.

The Executive Director of Corporate Services and Head of Legal, Administrative and Regulatory Services were heard in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions.

As an amendment, Councillor C. McLaughlin, seconded by Councillor Roberson, moved:-

That the Council agrees:-

- (1) to note the actions taken to date as outlined in the Executive Director's report; and
- (2) to note that all Council Tax payers, regardless of whether they worked for West Dunbartonshire Council, would be treated equally in respect of this issue.

Councillor Bollan, seconded by Councillor J. McColl, then moved:-

This Council agrees that no deductions will be made from any equal pay or single status (re-alignment payments) back payments due to any Council employee, who has a repayment plan in place, without their written consent. Workers have been advised they must sign a mandate by 26 November 2008.

If no written consent is forthcoming then the matter will rest there. There will be no follow up sanctions by WDC to freeze bank accounts, arrest wages or use any other recovery method against employees into this bracket unless they fail to adhere to their agreement in the future.

Thereafter, following discussion the mover of the motion (Councillor Bolla) and amendment (Councillor C. McLaughlin), with the consent of Council, withdrew their respective motion and amendment.

The second motion moved by Councillor Bolla, seconded by Councillor J. McColl, was accordingly declared carried.

(B) Motion by Councillor by Councillor Casey – Purchase of Land by Owner-Occupiers

Council is extremely concerned at the length of time it is taking for owner occupiers of ex-council stock to purchase small pieces of council land attached to their properties.

A policy has been agreed to allow owner occupiers to purchase the land however, until the land is surveyed and valued by the Council, no progress can be made.

This Council requests the Director of HEED to bring forward a report that explains the reasons for this deadlock, the actions being taken both to clear the backlog of requests and to ensure that future requests are dealt with timeously, and when we can expect to see these problems resolved.

The Council agreed to approve the above motion.

(C) Motion by Councillor David McBride – A New Build for Dumbarton Academy

This Council reaffirms its public commitment that 'a new build Dumbarton Academy is its number one priority'.

Council welcomes the UK Governments decision to bring forward capital spending in 2008/09 & 2009/10 to support jobs and continue public investment in the nations infrastructure. Council notes that the Scottish Governments share of this capital spending is £33 million in 2008/09 and a further £227 million in 2009/10.

Council further notes that if the political will exists, then the Scottish Government has sufficient uncommitted financial resources to fund a new build Dumbarton Academy. To date the SNP administration has failed to secure the necessary funding to allow Dumbarton Academy pupils to be taught in a modern and suitable school.

Given the above Council instructs the Leader of the Council and the Spokesperson for Educational Services to seek an urgent meeting with both: (i) the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Efficient Governance and (ii) the Cabinet Secretary for Education & Lifelong Learning to demand the necessary financial support for a new build Dumbarton Academy.

In addition, the Chief Executive and the Executive Director of Education are likewise instructed to write to the Scottish Finance Minister John Swinney MSP for a share of the additional resources to come to West Dunbartonshire to fund a new build Dumbarton Academy.

Councillor McBride was heard in support of the above motion which was seconded by Councillor McGlinchey.

As an amendment, Councillor Smillie, seconded by Councillor R. McColl, moved:-

This Council reaffirms its commitment that a new build for Dumbarton Academy is its number one priority.

Council welcomes the UK Government's decision to bring forward £260 million in 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 to support continued public investment in Scotland's infrastructure.

Council notes that this is not additional funding and that it is an acceleration of the capital allocation from 2010/2011.

Council notes that over the next 2 years the Scottish Local Government share of the £260 million is £80 million and that under normal distribution West Dunbartonshire Council's share would be £1.6 million.

Council notes that the Leader of the Council and the Spokesperson for Education has met with the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Life Long Learning to press the Council's case for funding.

Council also notes that the Leader has written to both Cabinet Secretary for Education and Life Long Learning and Cabinet Secretary for Finance on this subject.

Council therefore instructs the Council Leader to continue to press West Dunbartonshire Council's case for additional funding with the Scottish Government.

At this point in the meeting, Provost Agnew reminded Members to be mindful of the language and terminology they were using in debate, particularly with regard to the personal nature of some remarks.

On a vote being taken, 13 Members voted for the amendment and 8 for the motion. The amendment was accordingly declared carried.

(D) Motion by Councillor Martin Rooney – Councillor Marie McNair

This Council notes that Councillor McNair was elected on a Labour manifesto, her election expenses were paid for by the Labour Party and committed Labour Party members in Clydebank actively campaigned to get Labour Councillors elected in the Clydebank Waterfront Ward. Council also notes Councillor McNair's recent comments in the Press that she ... *'will be an independent and strong voice for her ward ...'*

This Council notes that Councillor McNair did not stand as an Independent candidate and was not elected as an Independent Councillor. Council notes that, having stood as a Labour candidate in support of the Labour manifesto, Councillor McNair has betrayed the trust placed in her by the constituents of Clydebank Waterfront Ward who voted for Labour Councillors to represent them.

Therefore this Council calls on Councillor McNair to abide to have the courage to resign as a Councillor and to stand for election under her new guise so that the members of Clydebank Waterfront can decide for themselves who they wish to represent them.

Let the electorate decide.

Councillor Rooney was heard in support of the above motion which was seconded by Councillor Bootland.

As an amendment Councillor R. McColl, seconded by Councillor C. McLaughlin, moved:-

This Council notes the reasons Councillor McNair resigned from the Scottish Labour Party, as set out in the following letter of resignation which was sent to the General Secretary of the Scottish Labour Party on 10th November 2008:

Dear Colin

I refer to my resignation e-mail on Friday 31 October 08 and my commitment that I would send you further details in relation to this.

My decision to resign came after careful consideration and a realisation that nothing was going to improve within the Labour Party in West Dunbartonshire.

You, and others in the Party at all levels, have been aware for some time of the problems in West Dunbartonshire Labour Party. It fills me with despair that such thuggish and intimidatory behaviour has been tolerated and covered up by the Labour Party.

There is a ruling clique within the Labour Group that takes its orders from senior members, including the Parliamentarians from Dumbarton.

Their word is law. Nothing else matters and anyone who disagrees is intimidated and shouted down. The Dumbarton MSP even sends her husband to Labour Group meetings to ensure things go their way and any disagreements, no matter how minuscule is reported back. Condemnatory resolutions are then forced through the CLP. Things are so bad that many Clydebank delegates stay away because they know that their views will be ignored and can't stomach the aggressive and horrible atmosphere.

It saddens me greatly that nothing has been done about this behaviour despite many party members/Councillors registering their concerns with John Smith House.

I have raised my concern with the leadership of the Group to no avail and letters remain unanswered.

I met recently with one of your Scottish Organisers along with Councillor Gail Casey. We raised our issues and were assured that something would be done and a meeting would be organised with the Labour Group to resolve things. Nothing happened. We were left feeling undervalued and ignored and the beastly behaviour and intimidation yet again prevailed.

I have held various positions within the Group and Council on behalf of the Party during my six years as a Councillor. However, at the last AGM I didn't even put myself forward for any position as I knew the clique wouldn't allow me any.

Indeed, a couple of my colleagues, not in the clique, put themselves forward and got nothing. This is despite some of that clique taking more than one position which is contrary to Labour Party rules. There is absolutely no gender balance within the group which is again contrary to Labour Party rules. This is an issue that was raised but as usual was ignored. John Smith House is fully aware of this.

If we raised any objections we were portrayed as being confrontational and not part of the team and frequently shouted down.

The principles of comradeship and fraternity don't get a look in, in West Dunbartonshire.

The behaviour that is tolerated in a party that suggests it believes in equality and fairness is quite breathtaking.

For months I have had to suffer sexual innuendo and comments from a party observer. For example:- "Hello lovely lady, oh they are lovely ankle straps" (had shoes on that strapped around the ankle) and "I must say lovely girl you are looking beautiful today".

I raised this with the Group Leader but it was clear that he wasn't interested and did nothing about it.

Also, the CLP debated a motion condemning a Councillor for not obeying the clique and chairing a committee meeting as instructed. The motion was passed severely criticising him and demanding that he attend the next meeting of the CLP to account for himself. This was despite them knowing that he was seriously ill and wasn't even attending Council meetings. Astonishingly the motion was supported by the parliamentarians with the MP even voting for it.

There are no acceptable boundaries between Council business and Party/MP issues. This was emphasised to me when I was harangued at a party meeting by John McFall because I had voted against a planning application that would have developed proposals on behalf of the Strathleven Development Company that he chairs.

I am at a loss to understand why I have been treated this way. I have been a loyal servant to the Party. In 2003, as a young female candidate I defeated the sitting SNP Councillor who is now the SNP Leader on the Council. In 2007 I also campaigned successfully to get elected in a ward that had a strong SNP base.

I must be doing something right as senior representatives of the Scottish Labour Party Scottish Executive Committee endorsed me as a suitable candidate for the last Council elections.

Even now I have left the Party the lies and intimidation continues. The Party is trying to spin that my resignation is about their proposals on equal pay. This is completely untrue. I have always supported and voted for the best possible deal for low paid female employees. I also held the equality remit in the last Council's Labour Administration.

It is a matter of public record that I vote with Labour when this issue was last debated in Council.

If Labour bring forward further proposals that are fully costed and meet best value and legal requirements and provide the best deal for low paid workers I support them.

Finally, this has been an extremely difficult and distressing time. I have been a Labour activist and member for many years and feel I have been forced out of the party. There is great injustice in the West Dunbartonshire Labour Party which goes against what the Party is meant to stand for but nobody listens.

I have great respect for many members of the Party who have been supportive and share the same political beliefs. It is with much regret, that because of the actions of the clique and their supporters I have had to resign from the Labour Party.

Yours sincerely

COUNCILLOR MARIE A MCNAIR

Given the shocking nature of the letter's content, Council advises the Labour Party to stop wasting officers' and elected members' time, and Council taxpayers money by bringing internal party matters to this Council.

Councillor McNair is a valued member of this Council and as such has the full support of this forum to represent her constituents as she sees fit.

Furthermore Council defends her right to attend Committees, Sub-Committees, Working Groups, and outside bodies to which Council has appointed her.

Council instructs officers to prepare a report for the February meeting of this Council advising how the new political demographic of the Council should be reflected in the political balance of Committees.

Until this report is forthcoming there will be no change to Committee representation unless a member resigns, whereupon Council will decide who fills the vacancy.

Following debate, the Council agreed to proceed by way of a Roll Call Vote.

On a vote being taken, 12 Members voted for the amendment (namely Provost Agnew, Councillors Black, Brown, Finn, Hendrie, J. McColl; R. McColl; J. McElhill, C. McLaughlin, W. McLaughlin; Robertson and Smillie); 8 for the motion (namely Councillors Bootland, Calvert, Casey, McAllister, McBride, McGlinchey, Miller and Rooney) and 2 abstained (namely Councillors Bollan and McNair).

The amendment was accordingly declared carried.

ADJOURNMENT

After hearing Provost Agnew, the Council agreed to adjourn for a short period.

The meeting reconvened at 11.48 p.m. with all those Members shown on the sederunt in attendance.

(E) Motion by Councillor Martin Rooney – Vale of Leven Hospital

This Council notes the publication of the 'Vision for the Vale of Leven Hospital' following a comprehensive review of services at the hospital by NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde.

Council welcomes plans to expand (i) planned outpatient; (ii) day care; and (iii) diagnostic services including dental care, ophthalmology, the development of a rheumatology service and additional capacity for kidney dialysis and cancer care as this will save patients from travelling further a field for outpatient appointments.

However Council regrets the loss of anaesthetics and the consequent reduction in (i) emergency services; (ii) coronary care; and (iii) stroke services; resulting in reduced bed capacity at the Vale of Leven Hospital. The Council further regrets that this will lead to more people having to make the journey to the RAH in Paisley.

This Council believes that 24/7 anaesthetics should remain at the Vale of Leven Hospital in order that a fuller range of services can be provided and resolves to do all that it can to support those campaigning for the hospital, such as Hospital Watch.

The Council also insists that the Board of NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde and the Health Secretary ensure that the anaesthetics service is retained.

In relation to the tragic outbreak of Clostridium Difficile. This Council agrees with the families' call for a full public inquiry without further delay and calls on the Cabinet Secretary for Health to stop prevaricating and grant a public inquiry with immediate effect so that the families get the answers they deserve.

Councillor Rooney was heard in support of the above motion which was seconded by Councillor McBride.

As an amendment, Councillor Robertson, seconded by Councillor J. McColl, moved:-

This Council welcomes the publication of the "Vision for the Vale of Leven Hospital" consultation by Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS.

Council acknowledges that the content of this publication represents a reversal of decades of decline and removal for services from the hospital.

At the recent seminar, presented by the GG&C NHS, the Board's senior management made it clear that they were using early feedback from the consultation sessions to develop and refine the consultation proposals. They have agreed to reflect these developments in writing to the Council and other stakeholders.

Council therefore agrees to develop a final response to the consultation to be presented to the January Council.

Council notes that a Police enquiry is underway in relation to the C Diff outbreak at the Vale of Leven Hospital. The Council calls for a full independent public enquiry to be conducted, when the time is right, with a wide ranging remit to investigate the tragic deaths. The remit should include investigating the systematic downgrading of the Vale of Leven Hospital which may or may not have been a contributing factor.

On a vote being taken, 12 Members voted for the amendment and 10 for the motion. The amendment was accordingly declared carried.

(F) Motion by Councillor Martin Rooney – Jamestown Primary School

This Council notes that Jamestown Primary School is a listed building, and in very good condition. In addition the external areas of the school are in good order. Council also notes that the current repair costs of Jamestown Primary School are only £90,000.

The School currently provides affordable education which is slightly above the national average, at a cost of £3,700 per pupil.

Council also notes that following an extensive consultation of parents in which 77% of parents that responded opted for the retention and a major refurbishment of Jamestown Primary School. The Parent Council at Jamestown has therefore proposed the following:-

A major refurbishment which would enhance existing facilities, to include the area currently occupied by EECC, providing classroom accommodation for all pupils within the main school building itself. The existing annex to be modified to provide purpose built PE and community facilities. Importantly this major refurbishment would retain the valued identity and history of the school.

Given the overwhelming majority of the Parent Forum in favour of the Parent Council's proposed option, as indicated on the parental questionnaire, this Council agrees that this proposal be formally costed and considered along with the other options being put to elected members as part of Phase 2 Schools Regeneration.

Councillor Rooney was heard in support of the above motion which was seconded by Councillor Millar.

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

Council notes that Labour have withdrawn from the Phase II Schools Working Group and since then have been trying to hijack the process from the sidelines, ignoring not only elected members involved but also the parents.

It is entirely inappropriate for Members to consider a single school in isolation when we are conducting a Council wide consultation.

On a vote being taken, 13 Members voted for the amendment and 9 for the motion. The amendment was accordingly declared carried.

COMPLIMENTS OF THE SEASON

Provost Agnew, on behalf of the Council, thanked the staff in attendance for their resilience in staying on until the end of the meeting and wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

The meeting closed at 12.26 a.m.