

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL
Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton, G82 3PU

25 March 2004

MEETING: WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL
WEDNESDAY 31 MARCH 2004
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
COUNCIL OFFICES
GARSHAKE ROAD
DUMBARTON

Dear Member,

Please attend a Meeting of **West Dunbartonshire Council** to be held in the **Council Chambers, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton** on Wednesday, 31 March 2004 at 7.00 p.m.

The business is as shown on the attached agenda.

Yours faithfully

TIM HUNTINGFORD

Chief Executive

Distribution:-

All Members of West Dunbartonshire Council.

Chief Executive

Director of Corporate Services

Director of Economic, Planning and Environmental Services

Director of Education and Cultural Services

Director of Commercial and Technical Services

Director of Social Work and Housing Services

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY, 31 MARCH 2004

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES

2. OPEN FORUM

(a) Gillian Bolton, 85 Westcliffe, Dumbarton - Concerns about school closures and creation of super schools

I am writing to be allowed to submit a question about school closures in this area for your next meeting. I am very worried about these closures due to the fact that my son has special needs; he is autistic. My son received excellent intense education in Bonhill Nursery for two years. I thought he would have to go to a special school but he surprised us all and came on so well. The decision was made to send him to Dalreoch with full-time support as it was a small p.1. I cannot describe how I felt sending him on that first day to a mainstream school as for so long I thought he would have to go to the Renton Language Unit or Kilpatrick School. Now that you have decided to close Dalreoch and others what is going to happen to all kids like my son and others who have all kinds of special needs?

I know my son and a lot about autism and there is no way these kids would cope in huge class sizes or the setting of a huge school as in your super school idea. So what is the plan for my son and others like him?

I feel now really disappointed as I felt my son was receiving an excellent education. School is the only thing my son has going for him just now as I have been fighting for nearly two and a half years for social work services but that is another story, my main concern is the school closures. I have heard you say that you would like kids to walk or cycle to school. There is no way that is possible for my son; he does not even get in the garden himself because he does not understand the dangers of roads. Also, I could not send him on a bus unless I was with him as I take my son right into school and pass him onto his S.E.N.

I would like to hear what suggestions you have to this. Also, one suggestion from parents from Dalreoch was to sell part of the land to pay for our repairs.

(b) Jacqueline Murray, 9 Knoxland Square, Dumbarton - Change Fund

How much change fund money did our local authority receive? How was this spent? How did people with learning disabilities and carers decide this? We asked this question previously, the answer given was in regards to different funding altogether “CCCF”, therefore we would like our initial question answered please.

We have yet to receive a breakdown of the “Changing Children’s Services Fund” as promised by Councillor McCallum at the meeting on 26 November.

(c) Derek Barrowman, 38 Roman Crescent, Old Kilpatrick - Conduct Disorder Research Pilot Project

I was present at the Council meeting on Wednesday, 26 November 2003, the subject in discussion was Conduct Disorder, Research/Pilot project.

I would as a parent of a 16 year old who has ADHD and OCD like to know have you employed anyone yet to carry out the much needed research? If not, then why not allow our support Group ADHD, to carry out the research as the children in this group range in age and severity of behavioural problems and display most if not all the symptoms associated to Conduct Disorder.

We would like to see the draft for the proposal and wish to be kept informed of the progress and process of this project.

Have you re-applied for more funding or is it a one-off?

(d) April Neill, Vice-Chair, The Right to Swim, 3 Garshake Terrace, Dumbarton – Council’s Swimming Pool Policy: Child Admissions – Cost Implications.

Will the Council consider the cost burden incurred by families affected by the implementation of the child admissions policy? It seems very unfair and socially unjust that a family affected will have to pay for an extra adult and indeed sometimes an extra two adults. This cost can be upwards of £366 p.a. for a family that used to swim 3 or 4 times a week.

(e) April Neill, Vice-Chair, The Right to Swim, 3 Garshake Terrace, Dumbarton – Council's Swimming Pool Policy: Child Admissions – Safety. (Page 1)

I have enclosed figures of drowning statistics for children under 16 in British public swimming pools (see Page 1 of enclosed agenda papers).

Evidence shows that swimming in Council owned pools are the safest place to swim in Europe and perhaps the world.

Excluding families without offering alternatives in authority pools will drive them to swim in areas that are deemed not as safe such as privately run pools or indeed rivers, canals and the sea where statistically most children die. Conversely the family stays at home where it is recognised as the most dangerous place for young children and therefore increases the danger to the child.

After perusal of the above does the Council still believe that the implementation of the new child admissions policy is warranted under the guise of safety. If so, why has no alternative provision been made to allow families who cannot meet the new policy rules to swim in what is recognised as the safest place to carry out that activity.

Or is it the Council's intention to have an exclusion policy?

(f) April Neill, 3 Garshake Terrace, Dumbarton – New Railings at Council Offices, Dumbarton.

Why have new railings been put up outside the Council Offices in Dumbarton and at what cost?

Would the Council agree that the money could have been put to better use like school maintenance?

(g) Chris Neill, 3 Garshake Terrace, Dumbarton – Open Forum – Lack of time to follow proper protocols.

With regards to recent requests to speak at open forums and the lack of time to follow proper protocols as laid down in Council standing orders, can the Council respond as to why the public were not allowed to speak at recent meetings for it seems they are frightened to listen to the concerns of the electorate and can they assure the public that consideration will be made to allow members of the public to speak if normal protocols cannot be made?

(h) Chris Neill, 3 Garshake Terrace, Dumbarton – Consultation on Outline Business Case for the Regeneration of the Schools' Estate

During the building of the Outline Business Case for the school regeneration programme, no public opinion had been sought. A blank piece of paper has never existed concerning this subject was it the Council's intention to exclude the public at the early stages to prevent a backlash and a possible halt to the proposals put forward to the executive? What assurances can be given that this was not the case and that no decision has been made by the Council concerning the way forward with PPP without proper consultation and that the people of this region will be heard and listened to?

(i) Chris Neill, 3 Garshake Terrace, Dumbarton – Recycling of Glass

Can the Council look into the collection of glass from homes in the area as it has been reported that glass for recycling is in short supply and in fact the UK has had to import glass for recycling. The glass recycling bins throughout the region are not accessible unless you have a car.

As an avid supporter of the Council's recycling projects, I would like to see Green light collect glass from households, I understand they do collect the glass from the recycling stations.

What would be the increased cost incurred and could they be levied off against any savings in reduced landfill costs etc?

(j) Chris Neill, 3 Garshake Terrace, Dumbarton – Police presence at Council Meetings

Is it normal practice to threaten members of the electorate with police action when they are using their freedom of speech and right to democracy and further more is it going to be a continuing issue that Police are going to be present when the public attend meetings held by the Council, as was seen at the recent CSC meeting, what was the reason for having them there, further more what will the cost of the police presence amount to would it not be cheaper to hire a private company such as those used in the recent Skypoint eviction?

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

(a) 25 February 2004

(Pages 3 - 9)

Submit for approval, Minutes of Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held on 25 February 2004.

(b) 8 March 2004

(Pages 11 -13)

Submit for approval, Minutes of Special Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held on 8 March 2004.

4. MINUTES OF THE RECRUITMENT COMMITTEE (Pages 15 - 16)

Submit for information, the Minutes of Meeting of the Recruitment Committee held on 8 March 2004.

5. AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE

(a) Minutes of Meeting on 25 February 2004 (Pages 17 - 21)

Submit for information, and where necessary ratification, Minutes of Meeting of the Audit and Performance Review Committee held on 25 February 2004.

**(b) Remit – Proposals for Best Value Reviews in 2004/05
(Pages 23 - 30)**

With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of the Audit and Performance Review Committee held on 25 February 2004, when it had been agreed to refer the above report to Council for consideration to allow all Members to consider the recommendations, submit report by the Chief Executive setting out the proposed Best Value Reviews for 2004-2005.

**(c) Remit – Best Value Strategic Review of Access for People with a Disability
(Pages 31 - 40)**

With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of the Audit & Performance Review Committee held on 25 February 2004, when it had been agreed that the report by the Director of Commercial and Technical Services on the above Review be referred to the Disability Working Group for comment and thereafter, the report and any comments received be submitted to Council for consideration, submit report by the Director of Commercial and Technical Services.

Members are asked to note that the Resources Manager, Commercial and Technical Services, will give a verbal report on any comments received from the Disability Working Group.

6. REMITS FROM COMMUNITY SAFETY & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE - LICENSING OF HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION (HMO) 2003/05 (Pages 41 - 44)

With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of the Community Safety & Environmental Services Committee held on 3 March 2004, submit relevant excerpt minute together with report by the Director of Economic, Planning and Environmental Services seeking approval of the strategy to be employed to identify all houses in multiple occupation and to agree associated charges.

Council is asked to approve the proposed revised licensing fees as detailed in section 5 of the above report.

7. REVISED PROTOCOL FOR MEMBER/OFFICER RELATIONS (Pages 45 - 59)

With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held on 25 February 2004, when the Council had agreed to approve, in principle, the Revised Protocol for Member/Officer Relations but, in so doing, continued consideration of the Protocol to this meeting of Council, submit report by the Chief Executive.

8. FIRE DAMAGE AT HILL STREET, DUMBARTON (Pages 61 - 62)

Submit report by the Director of Social Work and Housing Services seeking approval to demolish 4 four-in-a-block flats at 2, 4, 6 and 8 Hill Street, Brucehill, Dumbarton.

9. HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2004/2005 (Pages 63 - 81)

Submit report by the Director of Social Work and Housing Services:-

- (a) advising Council of the resources available for the 2004/2005 HRA Capital Programme; and
- (b) recommending approval of the proposed HRA Capital Programme and budget for 2004/2005.

10. NON HRA CAPITAL PLAN 2004/2005 (Pages 83 - 100)

Submit report by the Director of Corporate Services requesting the Council to consider the General Services Capital Plan 2004/2005 recommended by the Corporate Management Team.

11. REVIEW OF LOCAL AUTHORITY GRANT PROCESS (Pages 101 - 141)

Submit report by the Director of Corporate Services providing an update on the Council's grants process and recommending changes to help improve the Council's accountability for grant management.

12. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2004/2005 AND THE PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2004/05 TO 2006/07 (Pages 143 - 156)

Submit report by the Director of Corporate Services recommending approval of the Treasury Management Strategy for the year to 31 March 2005 and the Prudential Indicators for 2004/2005 to 2006/2007.

13. AMENDMENTS TO FINANCIAL REGULATIONS (Page 157)

Submit report by the Director of Corporate Services seeking approval of an alteration to the Council's Financial Regulations in respect of the virement of capital expenditure.

14. THE LOCH LOMOND AND TROSSACHS NATIONAL PARK - LOCAL AUTHORITY NOMINATIONS TO THE NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY BOARD (Pages 159 - 166)

Submit report by the Director of Corporate Services seeking two nominations in respect of the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority Board.

15. BYELAWS GOVERNING THE EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN
(Pages 167 - 176)

Submit report by the Director of Corporate Services notifying the Council of the drawing up of new Byelaws governing of the Employment of Children in West Dunbartonshire and seeking authority to revoke existing Byelaws and create new Byelaws.

16. WRITE-OFF OF NON-DOMESTIC RATES **(Pages 177 - 185)**

Submit report by the Director of Corporate Services seeking approval to write-off debts in respect of Non-Domestic Rates

17. HOUSING & COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT OVERPAYMENTS – WRITE-OFFS
(Pages 187 - 189)

Submit report by the Director of Social Work and Housing Services seeking approval to write-off the Housing and Council Tax Benefit overpayments for 2003/2004.

18. FORMER TENANT ARREARS - WRITE-OFFS **(Pages 191 - 203)**

Submit report by the Director of Social Work and Housing Services seeking approval to write-off the Former Tenant Arrears for 2003/2004.

19. WRITE-OFF OF MISCELLANEOUS INCOME SUNDRY DEBTORS
(Pages 205 - 208)

Submit report by the Director of Corporate Services recommending that the Council approves the write-off of certain miscellaneous income sundry debtors.

20. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (Page 209)

Council is asked to approve the undernoted Resolution:-

“In terms of Section 50 (A) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1973 that the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting as the following items of business involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Act.”

21. WRITE-OFF OF MISCELLANEOUS SUNDRY DEBTORS – DECEASED PERSONS (Pages 211 - 212)

Submit report by the Director of Corporate Services recommending that the Council approves the write-off of certain miscellaneous income sundry debtors.

22. FORMER TENANT ARREARS (DECEASED & UNREASONABLE TO PURSUE) – SUMS IN EXCESS OF £500 (Pages 213 - 216)

Submit report by the Director of Social Work and Housing Services seeking approval to write-off the Former Tenant Arrears in excess of £500 for 2003/2004 that fall into the categories of deceased and unreasonable to pursue.

For information on the above agenda please contact George Hawthorn, Senior Administrative Officer, Legal and Administrative Services, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton, G82 3PU on Tel: (01389) 737204 or e-mail: george.hawthorn@west-dunbarton.gov.uk.