

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

At the Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held in the Abbotsford Church Hall, Abbotsford Road, Clydebank on Wednesday, 25 January 2012 at 6.00 p.m.

Present: Provost Denis Agnew and Councillors George Black, Jim Bollan, 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, Lawrence O'Neill, Iain Robertson, Martin Rooney and May Smillie.

* Arrived later in the meeting.

Attending: Joyce White, Chief Executive; David Amos, Interim Executive Director of Corporate Services; Terry Lanagan, Executive Director of Educational Services; Elaine Melrose, Executive Director of Housing, Environmental & Economic Development; Keith Redpath, Director of West Dunbartonshire Community Health & Care Partnership; Lorraine Coyne, Head of Audit, Performance & Strategic Planning; Andrew Fraser, Head of Legal, Democratic & Regulatory Services; Stephen West, Head of Finance & Resources; Peter Barry, Manager of Community Planning & Policy; and Christine McCaffary, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

Apology: An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor John Millar.

Provost Denis Agnew in the Chair

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

It was noted that there were no declarations of interest.

CHAIR'S REMARKS

Provost Agnew, on behalf of Council, passed on condolences to Councillor John Millar following the recent bereavement of a family member.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Minutes of the Special Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held on 15 December 2011 and the Ordinary Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held on 21 December 2011 were submitted and approved as correct records.

MINUTES OF THE AUDIT & PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Audit & Performance Review Committee held on 14 December 2011 were submitted and all decisions contained therein were approved.

MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Community Participation Committee held on 14 December 2011 were approved and all decisions contained therein were approved.

MINUTES OF THE JOINT CONSULTATIVE FORUM

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Joint Consultative Forum held on 16 December 2011 were submitted and all decisions contained therein were approved.

It was noted that the Chief Executive would bring a report to Council detailing the number of employees who would still be in detriment at March 2012.

OPEN FORUM

The Council noted that no open forum questions had been submitted by members of the public.

THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION: TIMING OF ELECTION COUNTS ISSUES PAPER

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive advising of and seeking a response to a paper published by The Electoral Commission on the subject of election counts timing.

The Council agreed that the Chief Executive should respond that this Council wished to continue with election counts immediately after the close of poll at 10 p.m.

Note: Councillor McAllister arrived at this point in the meeting.

VACANCIES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

A report was submitted by the Interim Executive Director of Corporate Services requesting that consideration be given to the vacancies on outside bodies which would occur following the resignation of Councillor Geoffrey Calvert on 27 January.

The Head of Legal, Democratic & Regulatory Services advised of an inaccuracy in the report that Councillor Martin Rooney was the Member appointed to the Highland Reserve Forces and Cadets Association and that only one vacancy existed on the Licensing Committee.

Following consideration, the Council agreed that Councillor Martin Rooney would fill the vacancy on the Housing, Environment & Economic Development Committee and become substitute nominee on the Strathleven Regeneration Company and that the Labour Group be invited to nominate replacements on the other bodies.

GENERAL SERVICES REVENUE BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT TO PERIOD 8 (2011/12) 30 NOVEMBER 2011

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services advising of the performance of the General Services revenue budget for the period to 30 November 2011.

The Council agreed to note the contents of the report.

GENERAL SERVICES CAPITAL BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT: PERIOD 8 (2011/12) 30 NOVEMBER 2011

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services providing an update on the General Services Capital plan for 2011/12.

The Council agreed to note the contents of the report.

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT 2011/12 BUDGETARY CONTROL STATEMENT TO 30 NOVEMBER 2011 (PERIOD 8)

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental & Economic Development providing an update on the financial performance of the HRA to the period ended 30 November 2011.

The Council agreed to note the contents of the report.

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2011/12 BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT TO 30 NOVEMBER 2011 (PERIOD 8)

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental & Economic Development advising on the progress of the HRA Capital Programme 2011/12.

Having heard the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental & Economic Development in answer to a Member's question the Council agreed:-

- (1) to approve the probable outturns included with the updated capital plan, including "quick spend" projects;
- (2) that the Executive Director provide Members with a Briefing Note of the "quick spend" projects; and
- (3) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

REDEPLOYMENT REGISTER

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing the up-to-date position on employees on the Redeployment Register and outlining the process in place to ensure these employees are given the first chance to apply for suitable vacancies.

Having heard the Interim Executive Director of Corporate Services in answer to Members' questions, the Council agreed:-

- (1) to note that the redeployment process would be reviewed as part of the Organisational Change Policy review to ensure the process was effective for both employees and the Council; and
- (2) to otherwise note the contents of the report.

PROPOSED REPLACEMENT AUCHENTOSHAN DAY CENTRE

With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held on 21 December 2011 (Page 4082 refers), Council noted that a detailed report on the outcome of the rescheduled service user consultation event being held on 1 February would be submitted to the February meeting of Council and that recommendations from the Auchentoshan Steering Group would form part of that report.

NOTICES OF MOTION**(a) Motion by Councillor George Black – Dumbarton Academy**

This Council as Education Authority confirms its commitment that the provision of a new build Dumbarton Academy remains its number one educational objective and any additional difficulties or objections raised will be robustly resisted by the Education Authority in order to provide this facility.

Councillor Black was heard in support of his motion which was seconded by Councillor J. McColl.

Councillor Rooney stated that raising attainment was also a main educational objective, which Councillor Black agreed to accept as an addendum to his motion.

The Head of Legal, Democratic & Regulatory Services confirmed that the motion bound the Council as Education Authority, but not as Planning Authority.

The Council unanimously agreed to approve the motion by Councillor Black, as amended.

(b) Motion by Councillor David McBride – Christie Ward – Vale of Leven Hospital

This Council notes with great concern that the Leader of the Council, Councillor Ronnie McColl, in his role as West Dunbartonshire Council's representative on the Board of Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board (GG&CHB) on 18 October 2011 voted to close the Christie Ward at the Vale of Leven Hospital in spite of the overwhelming support within West Dunbartonshire for its refurbishment and retention.

Whilst this Council accepts that Councillor McColl acted within his authority to vote against the wishes of the residents of West Dunbartonshire in order to support the wishes of his own party's Cabinet Secretary, as yet Councillor McColl has given no definitive reasons for his decision to this Council. Therefore, this Council calls on Councillor Ronnie McColl to provide a written statement to the Council for the February Council meeting as to the reasons why he chose to ignore the wishes of those he was elected to represent. This Council believes that such a statement is necessary in order to counteract any suspicions or accusations against Councillor Ronnie McColl that he may have acted in his own Political Party's interests, rather than the interests of residents of West Dunbartonshire .

Should Councillor Ronnie McColl decline to provide a written statement to the February Council meeting, this Council believes that it will require to review its representation to the Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board.

Councillor McBride was heard in support of his motion, which was seconded by Councillor Calvert.

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

Council agrees the request in the motion from Councillor David McBride for a written statement from the Council Leader.

Council notes that written statement which reads as follows:-

This Council should recognise that the future for the Vale of Leven Hospital as we approach the 2012 local government elections is much brighter now than it was as we approached the 2007 elections.

Under the SNP Administration at Holyrood in the last five years we have seen a complete turnaround in the plans for the hospital. In particular we have seen:

- The retention of unscheduled medical care under a new consultant-led model rather than its complete removal as proposed by the former labour-led Scottish Executive
- The retention and development of elderly mental health beds rather than their closure as proposed under the previous Labour-led Scottish Executive.
- The repatriation of thousands of episodes of inpatient, day case and diagnostic appointments either returned to the Vale or established for the first time – again, avoiding thousands of journeys every year to other hospitals in either Glasgow or Paisley.
- Plans to construct a new Health & Care Centre on the Vale site finally coming to fruition and due to commence construction in the next few weeks.

All of this has been and will be to the continued benefit of the residents of West Dunbartonshire.

While the final decision by the Cabinet Secretary for Health, Wellbeing and Cities Strategy not to reinstate Christie Ward may well have disappointed some people in our communities, the facts are that, again under the SNP Administration at Holyrood, West Dunbartonshire now has a comprehensive range of community based health and care services under the direct management of our local Community Health and Care Partnership that provides crisis and on-going support to our citizens who experience mental health problems.

Mental health legislation requires that individuals who need support do so in the least restrictive of settings. The admission to hospital should be because the person needs to benefit from services that can only be supplied within an in-patient setting not because there is an absence of comprehensive community services capable of meeting the needs of most people and situations.

Again, to the benefit of the people in West Dunbartonshire, this has meant that the number of people who require to be admitted to inpatient care has reduced significantly because of the comprehensive range of community services now available to support them.

When they do have to be admitted, they stay for shorter periods of time and community services can support their earlier discharge home.

This is evidenced by the following facts covering the four years between October 2007 and December 2011:

- That monthly admissions to in-patient beds have reduced by approximately 30% (13 to 10)
- That the average number of beds occupied on a daily basis has reduced by 50% (18 to 9)
- That the number of re-admissions within one month of discharge from hospital has reduced by over 50% (2.7 to 1.2)
- That average lengths of stay have reduced by 36% (44 days to 28 days)

In the circumstances where the former Christie Ward has been destroyed by a fire, it would not be sensible to re-provide the ward at a capital cost of over £1m when alternative beds in the new, state-of-the-art Gartnavel Royal Hospital are available to accommodate the reducing number of people who require a hospital admission.

Gartnavel Royal Hospital provides a quality of environment and therapeutic options that would never have been possible to replicate at a re-provided Christie Ward for such a small group of patients.

Since July 2010 when the fire at the Christie Ward required the beds to be moved to Gartnavel Royal, the patients who have used the service have reported positive experiences of their care.

I sit on the Health Board representing the best interests of the people of West Dunbartonshire and I will not support wasting public money on a service that is not used, to the detriment of newly developed, person centred, community based services.

I have today received a copy of the latest mental health services update and I will ensure this is forwarded to all Members for their information and appended to this letter for the record.

All these FACTS demonstrate improvements in the health and care arrangements that are in place to support our citizens here in West Dunbartonshire and speak for themselves as to why I agreed with the proposal by NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde.

For David McBride and the Labour Party to criticise me on Vale of Leven Hospital issues demonstrates astonishing hypocrisy.

Jackie Baillie MSP and Labour Leader and former Social Care Spokesperson Councillor Martin Rooney happily watched and nodded along while the Labour Government salami sliced our hospital, taking away full time maternity and A&E services, and as her reward for her support, Jackie is now Labour's Health Spokesperson.

Further to noting this statement from the Leader, Council agrees that a report be brought to the next meeting of the CHCP to consider how we continue to scrutinise, not just continuing access to inpatient mental health beds, but other issues related to the continued delivery of the Vision for the Vale of Leven Hospital.

Council also agrees that a report be brought back to the CHCP outlining how we can work with our partners to further enhance mental health services for the people of West Dunbartonshire.

On a vote being taken, 10 Members voted for the amendment, 9 for the motion and 2 abstained. Accordingly the amendment was carried.

(c) Motion by Councillor David McBride – Labour's Employability Programme

This Council welcomes the commitment from all elected members to support the investment to tackle unemployment in West Dunbartonshire.

Council notes that both the Administration and the Labour Opposition have committed £2.5 million towards tackling unemployment in West Dunbartonshire.

The details of the Administration's proposals contained in the DRAFT Budget was to create 250 jobs and 200 Apprentices places.

This Council believes that we should maximise every opportunity to work with partner organisations in order to bring forward workable solutions and maximise funding from others.

This Council notes the Labour Oppositions Employability Programme outlined below, which identifies opportunities for maximising involvement from employers and partners, could provide over 1,000 job placements.

Council also notes that all elected members have an interest in job creation and employability projects and instructs officers to bring a report to a future Council meeting following the decisions of the Special Council meeting on Thursday 26th January.

Elected members are invited to provide comments; ideas and suggestions that could further improve on Labours Employability Programme.

West Dunbartonshire Labour Group **Employability Programme 2012**

Executive Summary

West Dunbartonshire Labour Group has developed its Employability Programme to address the unemployment crisis in West Dunbartonshire. Key points are outlined below:

- Labour's Employability Programme would support **1,021** training and job placements.
- We have broken the Employability Programme into a number of key projects.
- The **Job Creation Project** could support **234** jobs
- The **Modernised Wage Subsidy Project** could support **435** jobs
- The **Internal Modern Apprenticeship Project** could provide a sustainable service and provide an extra **78** Modern Apprenticeship places over the next three years.
- The **External Modern Apprenticeship Project** could support up to **73** placements.
- The existing **Get Ready For Work Project** could deliver **150** placements each year.
- The **Get Ready For Work 18 Plus** could provide **51** placements.
- We have committed **£2.5 million** from the Council reserves towards this Employability Programme.
- We have committed **£259,000** of revenue to increase and sustain our Modern Apprenticeship Project.

- Although we have **focussed** our Projects **on young people** we have widened the scope to ensure that all unemployed people can access appropriate training and job opportunities.
- Our approach has been to ensure that we built in as much choice and flexibility to the Employability Programme to ensure we get the **best outcomes** for participants.
- We have built in **flexibility** to allow resources to be moved between projects to meet identified need and the ability to expand projects should additional funding become available.
- We have **incentivised** the various projects to encourage maximum from employers.
- We have **maximised** funding support from partner organisations.

West Dunbartonshire Labour Group
Employability Programme 2012

Background

On 26th October 2011, West Dunbartonshire Council debated the crisis of youth unemployment in West Dunbartonshire. Although the SNP Administration presented an amendment to a Motion from Labour Group Leader Councillor Martin Rooney, there was broad cross party agreement that unemployment, and youth unemployment in particular required the Council to take a leadership role in improving the work and training opportunities for our citizens. A copy of the Motion and Amendment are reproduced below:

Motion by Councillor Martin Rooney – Youth Unemployment

This Council notes with great concern the ever more worrying situation regarding youth unemployment within West Dunbartonshire. Recent figures published of Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) Claimant Count for young people under 18 show that between July and August 2011 whilst the overall Scotland figures showed a 2.1% drop, within West Dunbartonshire, the count ROSE by 14.3%.

Furthermore, in comparison with all other Local Authority areas in Scotland, only North Ayrshire with a youth unemployment rate of 6.9% exceeded the rate of 6.5% within West Dunbartonshire. What is of far deeper significance, however, is the trend over the last 3 years.

For the last three years, the actual number of under 19 year olds registered for JSA has gone from 395 in Aug 2009 to 470 in August 2011, a percentage increase of 20.5%. Only the Scottish Borders with an increase of 28.6% has worse figures within Scotland.

It is clear that things are getting worse for young people in their attempts to join the working population. Whilst this Council would be justified in condemning the Con Dem coalition for axing the Future Jobs Fund, this alone will do nothing to assist our families and young people within West Dunbartonshire.

This Council believes that it is the role of governments, at all levels, to protect citizens and to do whatever possible in order to help them to achieve fulfilling lives. That is the implicit commitment expected of all elected representatives. Government is not just about delivering services.

Therefore, notwithstanding the limited resources at its disposal, this Council agrees that as a matter of principle, it will commit itself to create and provide as many Modern Apprenticeships, in as wide a scope of services as possible, commencing in April 2012.

In preparation for the launch of these new apprenticeships, this Council requests the Chief Executive to bring forward fully costed options prior to setting the budget for 2012 so that Council can select the options it wishes to support and allocate appropriate funds to support them.

Amendment by Councillor Ronnie McColl – Youth Unemployment

This Council notes that West Dunbartonshire has among the worst youth unemployment figures in the Country. Council also notes that West Dunbartonshire has among the worst unemployment stats for all ages as well as a very poor new business start-up rate.

Over the past couple of months, the Leader of the Council has been working with officers to create a Strategic Advisory Board, which will be tasked to come up with a blueprint for West Dunbartonshire to increase training, apprenticeships, employment and business opportunities for the people of West Dunbartonshire.

Members for this Board have been drawn from the public, private and voluntary sectors plus trade unions and our two Constituency MSPs. The first meeting will be held in late November/early December.

Council instructs officers to prepare a report outlining the scale of the problems and to advise members how West Dunbartonshire residents can access the 25,000 new modern apprenticeships and the Scottish Government's Opportunities for All scheme for 16 to 19 year olds announced last Saturday.

Council further instructs officers that the report should include costs associated with the Council creating apprenticeships, which must have the prospect of a full time job at the end. The report must be delivered in time for the budget process to allow members to consider it as part of a strategic, affordable policy.

To date the Council has not received a report as instructed by the Leader of the Council's Amendment. However, the SNP Administration has produced their DRAFT Budget for public consultation which committed £2.5m of non-recurring spend from the reserves to provide 250 jobs and 200 apprenticeships. In addition the Administration plans include increasing the number of existing Council apprentices. The Council will also work with a range of partners such as Skills Development Scotland and the Department of Works and Pensions and expects to receive financial support for the Job Creation Project 2012/13.

West Dunbartonshire Labour Councillors have welcomed the Administration commitment to improving training and job opportunities for young people and have continued to develop their own Job Creation Programme as part of the 2012/13 budget setting process.

Investing in skill; people; and our future

While welcoming the SNP proposals, West Dunbartonshire Labour Group believes that the Council should not limit itself to a one year programme and must develop a sustainable programme which not only benefits young people aged 16 – 24; but provides a range of opportunities for older workers in our community. In addition Labour Councillors want to maximise the training and development opportunities in order to increase the likelihood for participants of securing full time employment. Labour Councillors also recognise that apprenticeship and training placements do not guarantee a job at the end of the participants involvement in the scheme. The Council therefore cannot guarantee employment for apprentices at the end of their training but we are confident that the skills and experience that young people gain from participation in our scheme, will give them the best possible advantage when the economic circumstances improve. Furthermore, the extent of our investment in our citizens will contribute to the development of a highly skilled and motivated workforce and we hope that our investment in our people will encourage potential investors and developers to consider establishing businesses and operating centres in West Dunbartonshire.

Labours Employability Programme

National statistics show that West Dunbartonshire Council has one of the highest levels of Job Seeker Allowance claimants in Scotland. In addition we have a particular problem in relation to Youth Unemployment, where one in three of JSA claimants is aged between 18-24. This group will be the key focus of our Skills & Jobs Programme but we will ensure that there are a range of opportunities for other unemployed people. Our Employability Programme is broken down into a number of specific projects. This will allow us to target resources and provide opportunities for all. It will also help to identify the costs of the programme and allow us to focus on identifying potential funders for the projects and ensure that we involve as many partners as possible.

Labours Job Creation Project:

Support employment through Labours Job Creation Project by committing £1.250m from the reserves towards creating circa **234 jobs**. The main characteristics of the project are as follows: (i) First 3 months 100% of wages paid by Council; (ii) Second 3 months 75% of wages paid by the council; and (iii) The last 6 months of the project 50% of the wage costs are paid by the Council. This support structure would incentivise employers and provide them with a degree of confidence that they would get value for money by investing in the scheme. In addition the Council would be able to ensure maximise participation in the project by local employers. The Job Creation Project is broken down into two groups: (i) Full Time Job Creation Project of **£625,000**; and (ii) Part Time Job Creation Project of **£625,000**. A breakdown of the unit costs is outlined below:

Full Time Job Opportunities Scheme (30 hours per week):

Total cost per week based on £6.20ph is £186.00.
 Councils Contribution Thirteen Weeks at 100%: £2,418
 Councils Contribution Thirteen Weeks at 75%: £1,813.50
 Councils Contribution Twenty Six Weeks at 50%: £2,418
 Total cost per job to WDC is **£6,649.50**
 This project would support **94** full time jobs for 52 weeks.

Part Time Job Opportunities Scheme (20 hours per week):

Total cost per week based on £6.20ph is £124.00.
 Councils Contribution Thirteen Weeks at 100%: £1,612.00
 Councils Contribution Thirteen Weeks at 75%: £1,209.00
 Councils Contribution Twenty Six Weeks at 50%: £1,612.00
 Total cost per job is **£4,433**.
 This project would support **140** part time jobs for 52 weeks.

All calculations in Labours Job Creation Project above are based on an hourly rate of £6.20 which is above the national minimum wage for workers aged 21 and over. The Employability Team will have the flexibility to respond to job opportunities for clients where the employers wage structure is either above or below the £4.60 rate. The employer would be responsible for any additional costs related to their wage structure. For example if the Employability Team approved a job placement with a higher rate of pay or an increased number of hours that required Employer National Insurance payments; then the Employer would be expected to pay for these costs for the duration of the placement.

Modernised Employment Wage Subsidy Project:

Modernise the Council's Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme and commit **£1.050m** from the Council's Reserves towards creating two employment schemes: (i) Full Time Wage Subsidy Scheme; and (ii) Part Time Wage Subsidy Scheme. Each scheme will receive **£525,000** of funding from the Council and assumes match funding of **£350,000** (40%) from the European Social Fund for each of the two schemes bringing the value of each project to **£875,000**. The total overall cost on the Wage Subsidy Project would be **£1,750,000**. This approach would generate an additional **£700,000** for the Modernised Wage Subsidy Project. These two Modernised Employment Wage Schemes could support circa **435 jobs**.

Note 1: The European funding mechanism can be complicated and expert advice would be required from our Accountant and our European Funding Officer. Europe provides 40% of the total cost of any approved project.

Note 2: Based on the projected costs above, if the total cost to deliver 174 full time jobs is **£875,000** and the cost to provide 254 part time jobs was **£875,000** then ESF would expect WDC to meet 60% **£1,050,000** and ESF would contribute 40% **£700,000**. (This would be £350,000 for each of the schemes).

Note 3: Currently the Wage Subsidy initiative has a total projected cost of **£120,000**. WDC and CPP contribute **£72,000**, ESF **£48,000**. There could be a possibility of increasing our total contribution and requesting approval from ESF assuming that we have an overall under spend.

Note 4: The Employability Manager would need to work with our accountant and European Funding Officer to ensure that we maximise support for our projects.

The existing Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme provides:

- The subsidy is attached to the Employer
- The Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme is for 26 weeks
- A wage subsidy of 50% (50% from the Employer and 50% from the Council Scheme)
- The maximum subsidy per week is £140 per week
- The maximum hourly rate of £7 per hour.
- The employee must work between 16 and 40 hours per week in the business.
- Payments are made in arrears at week 13 and week 26
- The Council limits businesses to 3 x employees per eligible employer
- The Council receives funding from the European Social Fund of 40% of the project.

Labour's Modernised Employment Wage Subsidy Project aims to improve the existing scheme as follows:

- The subsidy is attached to the Employer; however the Employability Manager would retain the flexibility to attach the subsidy to the individual in order to allow them to take up a placement outside of West Dunbartonshire. Note around 40% of WDC residents currently work outside of the local authority area.
- The Modernised Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme is for 36 weeks.
- A wage subsidy is incentivised with the Council paying the first 12 weeks at 100%; the next 12 weeks at 75%; and the last 12 weeks at 50%.
- The average subsidy per week over the period would not normally exceed £140.
- The Council Modernised Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme will be more inclusive and offer a range of work options.
- Full time – 30 hours per week. Labour will commit **£525,000** plus 40% funding from ESF giving a total of **£875,000** for this project. Based on 30 hours per week at £6.20 per hour this option could support **174** jobs placements. The annual cost per job placement is **£6,696** which is shared between the employer and the Council. The cost per job to the Council for each participant is **£5,022**. Over the 36 weeks the employer would contribute **£1,674**.
- Part Time – between 16 and 20 hours per week. Labour will commit **£525,000** plus 40% funding from ESF giving a total of **£875,000** for this project. Based on 20 hours per week at £6.20 per hour this project could support **261** job placements. The annual cost per job is **£4,464** which is shared between the employer and the Council. The cost per job to the Council for each participant is **£3,348**. Over the 36 week period the employer would contribute **£1,116**.
- Payments are made in arrears at week 12; 24; 36.
- The Council would limit businesses to 12 x employees per eligible employer.

Notes:

1. There will be some in-built flexibility to allow the weekly hours to be extended to if it is required to meet business needs and sufficient funding is available.
2. The Council receives funding from the European Social Fund for 40% of the project and we currently have ESF funding from July 1 2011 to 30 June 2013 of around **£1.2m**. As the wage subsidy is a six month project the last beneficiaries would receive funding from January 2013.
3. European Block grant funding goes to the Scottish Government and is distributed to a variety of projects. One particular university project was for **£89m** and they were seeking ERDF of **£6.7m** but finding private sector and match funding is proving challenging. Universities throughout Scotland would be seeking far more funding from Europe, but they face the real challenge of finding match funding.
4. Therefore, under spend of the European Block Grant to Scottish Government until Dec 2013 is expected, which provides an opportunity that there should be resources available to support the WDC Scheme. However, timing for bidding is very limited.

5. There are different levels of NMW, depending on your age and whether you are an apprentice. The current rates (from 1 October 2011) are:
 - £6.08 - the main rate for workers aged 21 and over
 - £4.98 - the 18-20 rate
 - £3.68 - the 16-17 rate for workers above school leaving age but under 18
 - £2.60 - the apprentice rate, for apprentices under 19 or 19 or over and in the first year of their apprenticeship
6. All calculations in Labours Employment Wage Subsidy above are based on an hourly rate of £6.20 which is above the national minimum wage for workers aged 21 and over.
7. The Employability officers would be responsible for ensuring that the jobs placements were additional to existing staffing numbers and not a replacement for existing staff.
8. The delivery of the Modernised Wage Subsidy outlined above is dependent on additional support from the European Social Fund. If this was not secured then resources from the Scottish Government Opportunities for All could be utilised to support the project. In the unlikely event that neither Strategic Partners were able to support the Modernised Wage Subsidy to provide 428 jobs for West Dunbartonshire Citizens, then the Council would have to adjust the criteria to increase the average weekly wage subsidy and reduce the project from 36 weeks to 27 (9 weeks at 100%; 9 weeks at 75%; and 9 weeks at 50%). This would mean that the Council could still support 139 full time job placements and 209 part time job placements, giving a total of circa **348** job placements.

Internal - Modern Apprentices Project:

Increase the number of Modern Apprentices in 2011 by 26 at an estimated additional cost of circa **£175,000 (Year 1)** and **£259,000 (year 2)** of revenue per year. Modern Apprentices are funded through a combination of Skills Development Scotland and West Dunbartonshire Council. This, together with the Council's ongoing budgeted commitment to the existing 34 Modern Apprentice posts would support around 60 Modern Apprentices each year on an ongoing basis. Over the three year budget period this provides an overall increase of **78** Modern apprentices. Most importantly, the Modern Apprentice Programme would be on a sustainable basis for future years.

Note 1: A Modern Apprenticeship involves 16-19 year olds undertaking training which includes employability skills; work experience; and vocational qualifications which are designed to give the young person an appropriate skills level and qualification that maximises their employment opportunities.

Note 2: At present the Council has around 50 young people enrolled in its Modern Apprentice Scheme, however between 16 and 18 are due to complete their training during 2012.

Note 3: The Employability Service receives hundreds of applicants for a limited amount of Apprenticeships each year: (i) There are around 300 applicants for Construction Modern Apprenticeships and the Council recruits around 6 per year; (ii) Amenity horticulture Modern Apprenticeship and Motor Vehicle Modern Apprenticeship has around 50 applicants for 4 jobs; and (iii) Administrative Modern Apprentices positions have around 70-80 applications for 12-16 jobs.

Note 4: In order to maximise the opportunities available to our young people the apprenticeship rates of pay could be revised and brought more into line with national rates. Revised rates for apprentices would ensure that the Council could increase the training and development opportunities for young people and improve the sustainability of the service. Any change of rates would need to ensure that existing apprentice's terms and conditions would be maintained for the duration of their training.

Note 5: There are a number of industry advisory boards that suggest pay rates for apprentices. The first year rates vary between **£6,311** and **£7792**. The Council apprenticeship rates exceed the Industry recommendations.

Note 6: Skills Development Scotland (SDS) provides between **£2,500** and **£7,500** towards Modern Apprentices training costs. The rates of subsidy are based on the type of Modern Apprentice and the duration of the apprenticeship. The SDS measure success of apprenticeship is the number of participants who complete the scheme and obtain an appropriate qualification. There is no guarantee of a job following training.

Note 7: The Modern Apprentice Project should be linked to the Council's Workforce Planning model.

External - Modern Apprenticeship Project

Labour proposes to use a further **£200,000** from the reserves towards an external Modern Apprenticeship Project. The project would open up opportunities to increase the number of apprenticeship places available to young people in West Dunbartonshire with large private sector employers such as Babcock's; Aggreko; Diageo; and Housing Associations. The Employability Manager would investigate match funding opportunities with Skills Development Scotland; Construction Skills Scotland; and other potential funders. Based on a first year Modern Apprenticeship wage of **£8,000**, the **£200,000** would pay for the first year costs of the External Modern Apprentices for 1 year only. However, the Council could receive funding from Skills Development Scotland for the training costs of between **£2,500** and **£7,500** depending on the type and duration of the apprenticeship. Assuming that the training costs were 50% then the Council and the employer would share the other 50% costs between them. This would result in the cost per participant to the Council of **£2,000**, which means that **£200,000** could support **73** External Modern Apprentices.

The Employability Team will have the flexibility to respond to job opportunities for clients where the employers wage structure is either above or below the £4.60 rate. The employer would be responsible for any additional costs related to their wage structure. For example if the Employability Team approved a job placement with a higher rate of pay or an increased number of hours that required Employer National Insurance payments; then the Employer would be expected to pay for these costs for the duration of the placement.

Get Ready For Work & Life-skills Project:

Continue to invest in the Councils Get Ready For Work Project to provide **150** placements of 26 weeks duration per year. The Councils Employability Service has been contracted with Skills Development Scotland since 1996 and has delivered 988 courses and 570 of whom have moved on to full time work or full time education. The Get Ready For Work Project (GRFW) is self financing and will continue with existing resources of circa **£500,000** per year and providing training opportunities for young people per year, aged 16 – 18. The Get Ready For Work Scheme costs £110 per participant; the funding comes from Skills Development Scotland and the young person receives £55 per week and the Council receives £55 per week to cover overheads. The Get Ready For Work Project also provides outcome bonuses and the Council currently receives around £50,000 for successful participants who complete the training and either move on to a job or obtain a college placement. The Council receives a further bonus of £200 on behalf of each participant who sustains a job for 26 weeks. The success rate for GRFW project is that 50% of participants find employment. It should also be noted that participants can move from GRFW to the MA or Wage Subsidy programme. This would ensure that some of our most vulnerable young people could benefit from between 15 months and 54 months of support.

Get Ready For Work 18 Plus Project:

Government Policy encourages many young people to remain on at school in order to improve their academic qualifications and practical skills. While at school many young people receive the Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA). However, on completion of their Secondary Education not all of these young people will be in a position to take up the options of a placement in University or College. The existing Get Ready For Work & Life-skills Project tends to focus on the 16 & 17 year old age group as 18 year olds rarely take up the available places. In essence the 18 – 20 age group miss out on the existing training and development opportunities by staying on in full time education but are still faced with the challenges of finding full time employment – no experience equals no job; and no job equals no experience.

The Employability Service should develop an 18 Plus Get Ready For Work Project in order to address this gap in training opportunities and support for the 18 plus age group. There is potential that an 18 Plus Get Ready For Work Project could be funded by The Department of Works & Pensions and Skills Development Scotland. Based on 30 hours per week at £5 per hour this would cost **£150** per participant week. Assuming SDS pay 50% then the DWP / Job Centre Plus could be asked to fund the additional 50%. The total cost of a six month programme would be **£3,900** per participant. Assuming £100,000 was secured from each partner the Council could provide **51** placements per year at nil cost.

Modern Apprenticeship L2 Traineeship Project

The Modern Apprenticeship Level 2 Traineeship national rate is £2.60 per hour. If the Traineeship Project was set at a lower rate in order to maximise available resources then even with a traineeship rate of £5 per hour, for 30 hours per week would provide an apprentice with a wage of £150 per week. There are no specific resources allocated to the Traineeship Project at this stage. However, if there was sufficient demand then this project then the Employability Service could utilise resources from other projects such as the Job Creation Project or the Modernised Employability Project. The Manager of Employability Services would be expected to explore opportunities to generate additional income from partners and reshape Projects to maximise income contributions from partners. Potential partners / funding streams for the Modern Apprenticeship L2 Traineeship Project include: (i) **£100,000** through the delivery of SVQ; **£100,000** from Skills Development Scotland's Employer Recruitment Incentive Scheme; and **£70,000** from Job Centre Plus.

Construction Apprenticeship Project

Many construction companies have not taken on any apprentices for a number of years. Previously the Council had run a Construction Apprenticeship Project for 20 young people. This involved working with Anniesland & Clydebank where the Council paid wages for 6 months for construction apprentices, providing training opportunities for young people. The programme was supported by Construction Skills Scotland and after 6 months College training the Council 'marketed' the apprentices with local employers. Of the 20 participants 19 went on to complete their construction apprenticeship with a local employer. The Council was able to work in partnership with Anniesland and Clydebank Colleges and provide an incentive for employers to take on the participants. No additional funds have been applied to this project but the concept could be repeated using resources from either the Job Creation Project or the Modernised Employability Project. The costs to the Council per participant for 6 months are estimated to be around £8,000 in line with Modern Apprenticeship first year wages. With partnership funding the cost would be reduced to around £4,000.

More Choices More Chances Project

The More Choices, More Chances (MCMC) Project was funded by the Community Planning Partnership Fairer Scotland Fund at £172,000 for 2011/12. It is expected that this funding will continue for future years and provide opportunities for the young people involved in the project. Although no additional funds have been applied to this project the participants should be encouraged to take advantage of the other Employability Projects that would be available to them such as the Job Creation Project and the Modernised Employability Project.

Learning Disability Work Project

The Council's has used the Mental Health Grant to support work opportunities for people with Learning Disabilities. The projects include Cafe Connect and a summer job creation project centred on the Boat House in Balloch as well as individually tailored projects. The Council could consider the possibility of introducing further Learning Disability work projects in the Alexandria Community Education Centre Cafe; and the Concorde Community Education Centre Cafe. No additional funds have been applied to this project but the concept could be developed further using existing Mental Health budgets; resources from either the Job Creation Project or the Modernised Employability Project. Officers should be mindful of the fact that both Community Cafes historically had a considerable income from sales and with a pricing review and partnership funding, there is a possibility of introducing a sustainable service which meets community needs and supports the delivery of a key Corporate Performance Indicator.

Scottish Government Funding – Opportunities For All

In addition to the various partners previously identified, the Scottish Government has committed around **£30m** to its Opportunities For All Programme to address youth unemployment. The Council is estimated to be in line to receive up to **£1m** if the money is directed to Local Authorities as recommended by COSLA. An award of circa £1m from the Scottish Government could also allow the Council to run the programme over an extended period and provide further opportunities for seeking match funding from strategic partners. If the funding is allocated to Local Authorities as expected then the £1m could be used to provide funding for the following projects and boost employment opportunities for our citizens:

- Get Ready For Work 18 Plus Project
- Modern Apprentice L2 Traineeship Project
- Construction Apprenticeship Project
- More Choices More Chances Project
- Learning Disability Work Project

Management & Control of the Employability Programme

The scaling up of the various skills and jobs programme means that some consideration should be given to whether it would be desirable to reconfigure the DRAFT Budget Book so that Employability Service is separated out into a specific Budget Section and costs reallocated on a pro-rata basis to Departments. This would improve visibility of the service and allow for income and costs of the service to be monitored. It would also allow for monitoring and scrutiny of performance against agreed targets. In addition costs incurred in managing the expansion of investment in the Employability Services and its schemes could be apportioned on a pro-rata basis and distributed between the Council Departments. Consideration could also be given to apportioning a charge to each Department to cover the costs of the apprenticeship. If every Department has to pay into this service up front, they would be more inclined to get some pay-back by providing training opportunities for Modern Apprenticeships within their Departments.

Labour's Draft Employability Programme costings are appended.

Councillor McBride was heard in support of his motion, which was seconded by Councillor Calvert.

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

Continuation to tomorrow's Special Meeting of Council in view of the budgetary implications.

On a vote being taken, 11 Members voted for the amendment and 10 for the motion. Accordingly the amendment was carried.

VALEDICTORY

Provost Agnew informed the Council that this would be the last ordinary meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council which Councillor Geoff Calvert would be attending before retiring on 27 January.

The Provost, on behalf of the Council, acknowledged Councillor Calvert's service to the community since his election in 1995 and wished him well in his retirement.

Councillor R. McColl, on behalf of the SNP Group, acknowledged the amount of hard work Councillor Calvert had invested since 1995, stating that he would be a loss to West Dunbartonshire and wished him well in the future.

Councillor McBride, on behalf of the Labour Group, acknowledged the first class service Councillor Calvert had given to the community over his term in office and wished him and his wife a long, healthy and happy retirement.

In response, Councillor Calvert thanked everyone for their kind words. He recognised the honour of having been an Elected Member and referred to a number of issues he had been involved with over the years which he considered were positive achievements. He wished the Council continued success and all Members well for the forthcoming local government elections.

The meeting closed at 7.55 p.m.