

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held within the Council Chambers, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton on Wednesday, 27 September 2000 at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Provost Alistair Macdonald (LAB) Councillors James McElhill (SNP), Mary Campbell (LAB), Daniel McCafferty (LAB), John Syme (LAB), Andrew White (LAB), Anthony Devine (LAB), Mary Collins (LAB), John McDonald (SNP), Duncan McDonald (LAB), John McCutcheon (SNP), Linda McColl (LAB), Iain Robertson (SNP), Geoffrey Calvert (LAB & CO-OP), James McCallum (LAB & CO-OP), John Trainer (LAB), James Bollan (SSP), Ronald McColl (SNP), Margaret McGregor (SNP) and James Flynn (LAB).

Attending: Tim Huntingford, Chief Executive; Ian McMurdo, Director of Education and Cultural Services; Eric Walker, Director of Corporate Services; Dan Henderson, Director of Economic, Planning and Environmental Services; Alexis Jay, Director of Social Work and Housing Services; David McMillan, Director of Commercial and Technical Services and Stephen Brown, Head of Legal and Administrative Services.

Apologies: Apologies for absence from the meeting were intimated on behalf of Councillors Craig McLaughlin (SNP) and Connie O'Sullivan (LAB).

Provost Alistair Macdonald in the Chair

ADDITIONAL ITEMS OF BUSINESS

Provost Macdonald advised that, in view of the urgency involved, he had agreed to include the following three additional items on the agenda: Planning Application WP00/126 – Retail Development by Allied Distillers Ltd at Castle Street, Dumbarton: (remitted from the Planning and Economic Development Committee of 27 September 2000); HRA Capital Programme 2000/2001 and 2001/2002 (remitted from the Housing Committee of 27 September 2000), and briefing note by the Director of Corporate Services on the Scottish Spending Review 2000.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

In terms of Standing Order 6 Provost Macdonald determined that a presentation to Dumbarton Youth Quiz Team and a presentation by the Director of Public Health should both be taken at this point in the meeting, followed by the additional items mentioned above. It was further determined that the Notice of Motion appearing on the agenda as item 5 would be heard at the end of the meeting.

PRESENTATION TO DUMBARTON YOUTH QUIZ TEAM

Provost Macdonald welcomed the members of the Dumbarton Youth Quiz Team, their parents and teachers to the meeting. Having congratulated the team members on their success as National Champions of the United Kingdom in the Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers Association (CACFOA) National Fire Safety Youth Quiz, only the third Scottish team to win this award since its inception, the Provost presented a plaque to the team members in recognition of their achievement. He also commended the Council's two members of the Fire Board, Councillors Linda McColl and Geoff Calvert, on the considerable support which they had given to the team. After the presentation, the party withdrew from the meeting and there was a brief recess after which the Council resumed with the same sederunt.

PRESENTATION BY THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH

At this point in the meeting Provost Macdonald welcomed Dr Lesley Wilkie, Director of Public Health of the Argyll and Clyde Health Board; Ken Thomson, Public Health Manager; Dr Alison Burlison, Senior Information Officer and Dr Katriona Smith to the meeting.

Dr Wilkie then made a presentation on the contents of the annual report, copies of which were distributed to members at the meeting. Dr Wilkie was heard in answer to members' questions. On behalf of the Council, Provost Macdonald thanked Dr Wilkie and her team for their informative and thought-provoking presentation and expressed his regret that it had not been possible to discuss the presentation at more length. Dr Wilkie welcomed the suggestion that a further meeting might be held with members of the Council which would allow them to consider local health issues in greater depth. The representatives of the Health Board then withdrew from the meeting.

DECLARATIONS OF NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST

Councillor John Trainer declared a non-pecuniary interest in the following item, but reserved his right to contribute to the debate and vote on the matter.

Councillor Iain Robertson similarly declared a non-pecuniary interest but reserved his right to contribute to the debate and vote on the matter. He advised his declaration of an interest at the earlier meeting of the Planning and Economic Development Committee should have been that of a non-pecuniary interest.

PLANNING APPLICATION WP/126 – DEMOLITION OF INDUSTRIAL AND OFFICE BUILDINGS, INFILLING OF TIDAL BASIN AND ERECTION OF CLASS 1 RETAIL UNITS WITH ASSOCIATED ROADS, CAR PARKING AND LANDSCAPE WORKS AT LAND TO NORTH AND SOUTH OF CASTLE STREET, DUMBARTON

There was tabled minute extract from the meeting of the Planning and Economic Development Committee held earlier that day in relation to the above application, together with the relative planning application report and update report thereon by the Director of

Economic, Planning and Environmental Services. Councillor McCallum, seconded by Councillor White, moved the recommendation of the report, namely that outline planning permission be granted, subject to conditions 1-25 listed in the report and contained within Appendix 1 to this Minute.

As an amendment, Councillor Calvert, seconded by Councillor Robertson, moved as follows:

- “1) that the EDAW consultants submission beginning on page 39 of the Draft Dumbarton town Centre Action Plan relating to the Allied Distillers site be accepted in principle.
- 2) that the recommendation for planning permission be granted with the exception of Condition 23, that is, that the tidal basin is not infilled.”

As a second amendment, Councillor Bollan, seconded by Councillor McGregor, moved that the matter be continued until the Council could commission and consider an independent and fully up-to-date hydrological survey of the River Leven, together with a survey of retail issues in Dumbarton, the Vale of Leven and Clydebank.

On a vote being taken between the second and first amendments, 5 members voted for the second amendment and 5 for the first amendment. The Provost exercised his casting vote in favour of the second amendment, which was carried.

On a vote then being taken between the successful amendment and the motion, 9 members voted for the amendment and 10 for the motion which was carried.

ADJOURNMENT

The Council then had a brief adjournment and resumed at 8.45 p.m. with the same sederunt.

HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME

There was submitted for ratification extract minute of the Housing Committee held earlier that day in respect of the above item which was outwith the delegated powers of that Committee. The Council unanimously approved the recommendation of that minute, namely to approve the amendments to the HRA Capital Programme for 2000/2001 and the commitments into 2001/2002 as detailed in the Appendix to the minutes of the Housing Committee. It was noted that the Housing Committee had agreed that a letter of explanation would be sent to all tenants affected by the proposed delays to Capital Programme Works due to difficulties in connection with owner occupiers.

SCOTTISH SPENDING REVIEW – LOCAL GOVERNMENT

There was tabled a briefing note by the Director of Corporate Services detailing the key policy priorities identified in the Scottish Executive's statement of 20 September 2000 and detailing projected revenue and capital support for Scottish local authorities in financial years 2000/2001 to 2003/2004.

The Council noted the following points arising from the statement:

- 1) Support for local government will increase by nearly £1.2 billion over the next three years. This means an increase of about 10.5% in real terms.
- 2) Support for capital investment will increase by 57% in real terms, including the increase in the Public Transport Fund announced in July.
- 3) Local government's share of Scottish Executive investment will be maintained at 37% despite a very substantial increase in the assigned budget and the previous decisions on Health Services allocations.
- 4) Provision is being made for the predicted effect of inflation on Local Authority pay and prices.
- 5) Ministers will be making specific announcements about their own portfolios over the coming days.
- 6) The position regarding the potential costs arising from the McCrone Committee's recommendations is unclear, as discussions regarding implementation of the recommendations are still ongoing.

The Council agreed that the Director of Corporate Services issue further advice, as appropriate, on specific announcements by Ministers in relation to local government spending.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The minutes of meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held on 30 August 2000, were submitted and approved on the motion of Depute Provost Calvert, seconded by Councillor White.

MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES

Housing Committee - 2 August 2000 reconvened on 6 September 2000

The minutes of meeting of the Housing Committee adjourned from 2 August 2000 and reconvened on 6 September 2000 were submitted for approval.

The minutes were approved on the motion of Councillor Flynn, seconded by Councillor White, whilst noting that the item on the HRA Capital Programme 2000/2001 (**Volume page 6087 refers**) had previously been approved at meeting of Council on 30 August 2000.

In relation to a question by Councillor McCutcheon on the recording of a vote on pages 6109-6110, it was noted that it was not current practice to record abstentions from voting.

Education Committee - 30 August 2000

The minutes of meeting of the Education Committee held on 30 August 2000 were submitted and approved on the motion of Councillor McCafferty, seconded by Councillor White.

Planning and Economic Development Committee - 30 August 2000

The minutes of meeting of the Planning and Economic Development Committee held on 30 August 2000 were submitted and approved on the motion of Councillor Linda McColl, seconded by Councillor McCutcheon, subject to clarification in relation to the item on Overtoun House (**volume page 6123 refers**). In this connection, the Council noted that it had been agreed that the Director of Economic, Planning and Environmental Services bring forward a report to the appropriate meeting on other applicants to develop Overtoun House.

Special Environmental Protection and Leisure Services Committee - 4 September 2000

The minutes of meeting of Special Environmental Protection and Leisure Services Committee held on 4 September 2000 were submitted and approved on the motion of Councillor Campbell, seconded by Councillor Ronald McColl.

Finance Committee - 13 September 2000

The minutes of meeting of the Finance Committee held on 13 September 2000 were submitted and approved on the motion of Councillor Devine, seconded by Councillor Trainer. In relation to recommendations on page 6140 that certain grants be submitted for consideration to a future meeting of the Committee, Councillor Ronald McColl reminded members that the Council would be moving to a new decision-making system and that it was not anticipated that there would be any further meetings of the Finance Committee. Having heard the Director of Corporate Services in clarification, the Council agreed unanimously that the Grants Working Group meet again to consider these applications and that they be determined by the Council at its next meeting on 25 October 2000.

Policy and Resources Committee - 13 September 2000

The minutes of meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 13 September 2000 were submitted and approved on the motion of Councillor White, seconded by Councillor Devine.

Information Services Committee - 13 September 2000

The minutes of meeting of the Information Services Committee held on 13 September 2000 were submitted and approved on the motion of Councillor McCallum, seconded by Councillor White.

**RESPONSE TO QUESTIONNAIRE ISSUED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT
COMMITTEE OF THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT ON THE REPORT OF THE
RENEWING LOCAL DEMOCRACY WORKING GROUP,
(THE KERLEY COMMITTEE)**

There was submitted report by the Chief Executive proposing a response to the questions asked of all local authorities by the Local Government Committee of the Scottish Parliament, relating to specific recommendations in the recent report of the Renewing Local Democracy Working Group. A copy of the draft response was attached to the report. The Council approved the terms of the response and Councillors White and Ronald McColl thanked the officers concerned for their efforts in preparing the submission.

MODERNISING GOVERNMENT FUND

The Director of Economic, Planning and Environmental Services having advised that he was unable at this time to submit his report on the Modernising Government bid being led by East Dunbartonshire Council because of lack of information, the Council agreed to continue this item for further consideration.

**COMMUNITY COUNCIL REPRESENTATION ON THE
LOCH LOMOND AND TROSSACHS INTERIM COMMITTEE**

There was submitted and approved report by the Director of Economic, Planning and Environmental Services recommending endorsement of the appointment of Jeffrey Scott of Kilmaronock Community Council and Chrissie Stobo of Buchanan Community Council as the new representatives of the Association of Community Councils on the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs Interim Committee.

**CONVENTION OF SCOTTISH LOCAL AUTHORITIES (COSLA) -
CENTRAL/LOCAL 21ST CENTURY GOVERNMENT FORUM**

It was reported that a request had been received from COSLA seeking expressions of interest from Councils who wished to participate in the Central/Local 21st Century Government Forum and that as the first meeting had been held on 11 September 2000, Councillor White had forwarded Councillor McCallum's name for consideration and now sought homologation for that action. The Council homologated the nomination.

NOMINATION OF MEMBERS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

There was submitted report by the Director of Corporate Services advising of the resignation of Councillor Syme from the Strathclyde Passenger Transport Authority and its various Committees and the Scottish Accident Prevention Council and seeking a replacement nominee. Councillor White, seconded by Councillor McCallum, moved that Councillor Devine or substitute be nominated to the vacancies. As an amendment, Councillor Ronald McColl, seconded by Councillor McCutcheon, moved Councillor John McDonald or substitute be nominated to the vacancies. On a vote being taken, six members voted for the

amendment and fourteen for the motion which was carried. Councillor White asked that the Council express its appreciation of Councillor Syme's service on these bodies.

ASBESTOS AWARENESS EXHIBITION

There was submitted letter from the Clydebank Asbestos Group intimating that they were holding an Asbestos Awareness Exhibition" in Clydebank in November 2000 and inviting the Council to make a contribution towards the sponsorship of the event. The Council unanimously agreed to make a financial contribution of £500 and agreed that the Directors of Education and Cultural Services and Corporate Services respectively investigate other forms of support which their particular departments could offer the event.

CONFERENCES ETC.

(a) Officers and Members in the New Structures

There was submitted invitation from the Scottish Local Government Information Unit, (SLGIU) for the Council to be represented at a conference to be held on Tuesday 24th October 2000 in Glasgow to explore the impact with new structures on the roles of officers and members and on the relationship between them. It was agreed that any member be authorised to attend.

(b) 2nd Middle East International HR, Training and Education Exhibition and Conference - Bahrain, 3rd -6th October, 2000

There was submitted letter from 3x Limited extending an invitation to Provost Macdonald to represent the Council at the conference to be held in Bahrain from 3rd to 6th October 2000. It was noted that all travelling and subsistence and accommodation costs would be met by 3x Limited. The Council approved acceptance of the invitation.

PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE: AMENDMENT TO CHILDCARE CHARGING POLICY

There was submitted report by the Director of Education and Cultural Services seeking approval for an amendment to the charging policy in respect of childcare for pre-school children.

The Council, having considered the options contained in the report, approved the second option, namely that West Dunbartonshire Council provides a free place for all children in ante-pre-school education from their third birthday until the start of the term in which Government funding is available. This provision would be limited to those establishments where vacancies presently exist or become available in future and would be limited to those children whose birthday falls between 1 September and 28 February in each qualifying period.

The Council, having heard Councillor McCafferty, further agreed that the Director of Education and Cultural Services convene a corporate working group to consider matters arising from the policy. It was noted that the implications of the Working Family Tax Credits would be considered by the group.

NOTICE OF MOTION

A motion received from Councillor John McDonald was submitted in the following terms:-

“This Council acknowledges the hardship being imposed on staff by the complete smoking ban throughout Council premises.

This ban has caused a regular gathering of staff outside Council buildings who smoke, which has led to an unsympathetic image for the Council.

To assist to alleviate the problem this Council instructs the Chief Executive to prepare a report identifying a designated, properly ventilated, smoking area/room within each Council building, where there are identified smokers.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor White.

As an amendment, Councillor Trainer, seconded by Councillor McCafferty, moved as follows:

“Council notes the problems which have been experienced following the implementation of the non-smoking policy.

Council recognises that not all smokers would wish to cease smoking and therefore instructs the Chief Executive to bring forward a report identifying, where possible, appropriate properly ventilated smoking facilities within Council buildings.

Council reaffirms that the policy to provide support to those who wish to cease should continue and be promoted extensively.

Council further instructs the Chief Executive to examine the implementation within Community Education Centres.”

On a vote being taken, nine members voted for the amendment and eleven for the motion which was carried.

The Meeting finished at 9.20 p.m.