

## **WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

At a Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held by Video Conference on Wednesday, 24 June 2020 at 6.02 p.m.

**Present:** Provost William Hendrie, Bailie Denis Agnew and Councillors Jim Bollan, Jim Brown, Gail Casey, Karen Conaghan, Ian Dickson, Diane Docherty, Jim Finn, Daniel Lennie, Caroline McAllister, Douglas McAllister, David McBride, Jonathan McColl, Iain McLaren, Marie McNair, John Millar, Lawrence O'Neill, Sally Page, Martin Rooney and Brian Walker.

**Attending:** Joyce White, Chief Executive; Angela Wilson, Strategic Director – Transformational & Public Service Reform; Richard Cairns, Strategic Director – Regeneration, Environment & Growth, Beth Culshaw, Chief Officer, Health & Social Care Partnership, Peter Hessett, Strategic Lead – Regulatory (Legal Officer); Stephen West, Strategic Lead – Resources; Jim McAloon, Strategic Lead – Regeneration; Peter Barry, Strategic Lead – Housing & Employability; Victoria Rogers, Strategic Lead – People & Technology; Malcolm Bennie, Strategic Lead – Communications, Culture & Communities; Laura Mason, Chief Education Officer; Gillian McNeilly, Finance Manager; Alan Douglas, Legal Manager; George Hawthorn, Manager – Democratic & Registration; and Christine McCaffary, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

**Also Attending:** Clair Coyle, Charity Manager, West Dunbartonshire Community Foodshare; Richard Puttock, Director and Dougie McDonald, Regional Director, Stantec, Neil McDougall, Structured Property Consultants and Richard Smith, Senior Audit Manager and Zahrah Mahmood, Senior Auditor, Audit Scotland;

**Apologies:** An apology for absence was intimated on behalf Councillor John Mooney.

**Provost William Hendrie in the Chair**

### **PROVOST'S OPENING REMARKS**

I would like to welcome everyone to our first full Council meeting since lockdown began three months ago. I would remind you that this meeting is being live

streamed, and I will read the full audio streaming statement in due course, but I want to say a few words about the current situation first for the record.

We are not meeting in ideal circumstances, but as difficult as holding this meeting may be, it is nothing compared to the suffering felt throughout our community.

So many people continue to be in isolation, families have been kept apart and many lives have been lost, not just in West Dunbartonshire, but around the world.

As we slowly and carefully come out of lockdown, some of the suffering will ease, but for many families who have paid the highest cost, the sense of loss will be felt for a very long time.

I would ask Members now to please join me, bow our heads, and pause for a minute's silence to pay our respects to those who have lost their lives to this terrible virus.

Thank you all. In amongst such darkness there has been light. The Council, other public bodies, private companies, community groups and individuals have come together to help everyone in need in our area.

As the Civic Head of West Dunbartonshire, I have been heartened by the unrelenting spirit shown by our people, helping each other to get through this as best we can.

Every day activities that we take for granted have become difficult or even impossible, and through it all, key workers, essential workers and volunteers have kept our community and country going.

Even as the virus hit its peak, these brave individuals went out, day after day, risking their own health and that of their household to get supplies and services where they were needed most.

All of us have relied on these modern-day heroes to keep the lights on, the water running and our fridges full, and we will never be able to thank them enough.

It is an honour and a privilege being Provost and First Citizen of such a caring community and I am humbled by the devotion and acts of kindness by people across West Dunbartonshire.

I invite colleagues to join me in applauding the wonderful people of West Dunbartonshire.

### **STATEMENT BY CHAIR**

The Provost advised that the meeting was being audio streamed and broadcast live to the internet and would be available for playback.

## **URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS**

The Provost referred to a request received from Councillor Douglas McAllister for the Council to consider an urgent motion on School Attendances and Quality Education for all of our Children. Councillor McAllister advised that in view of the Scottish Government's statement yesterday relating to the return of schools he intended withdrawing his request.

The Provost then gave notice that if the meeting had not finished by 9 p.m. the item of business being considered at that time would be concluded and the meeting would be adjourned to 2.30 p.m. on Thursday, 25 June 2020.

## **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

It was noted that there were no declarations of interest in any of the items of business on the agenda.

## **RECORDING OF VOTES**

The Council agreed that all votes taken during the meeting would be done by roll call vote to ensure an accurate record.

## **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held on 26 February 2020 (Ordinary Meeting) were submitted and approved as a correct record subject to the following correction:-

The deletion of Bailie Agnew's name from the notes showing which councillors left and re-joined the meeting before and after consideration of the item on the Independent Resource Centre.

The Minutes of Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held on 4 March 2020 (Budget Meeting) were submitted and approved as a correct record.

## **MINUTES OF AUDIT COMMITTEE**

The Minutes of Meeting of the Audit Committee held on 20 November 2019 were submitted for information and ratification where necessary, subject to the correction that Councillor Mooney's name be included in the sederunt.

## **OPEN FORUM**

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

## **DRAFT STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2019/20**

Having heard the Chief Executive, Strategic Lead – Resources and Senior Audit Manager, Audit Scotland in answer to Members' questions, the Council noted that due to the considerable work involved in the preparation of the Draft Accounts and officers' involvement in urgent business related to the COVID-19 pandemic the Draft Accounts would not be presented to Council until the next Council meeting, which remains within the legislative timescale.

### **WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COMMUNITY FOODSHARE**

A report was submitted by the Strategic Lead – Housing & Employability providing an update on the above. The Provost welcomed Ms Clair Coyle, Charity Manager, West Dunbartonshire Community Foodshare to the meeting. Ms Coyle provided the Council with an update on the charity's activities during the Covid-19 crisis and its financial position up to 2022.

Councillor Caroline McAllister moved:-

Council thanks West Dunbartonshire Community Foodshare (WDCF) AND Food for Thought for working hand in glove with the Council to ensure planned and emergency food and essential supplies deliveries are getting to those who needed them.

Council continues to support WDCF and endorses the decision taken by officers under delegated authority to provide them with £30,000 during this pandemic crisis.

Council agrees the recommendations to continue making the contingency fund available to WDCF and recommits to urgently working with WDCF to develop their plans for long term sustainability.

An update report will be brought back to August Council.

Councillor McAllister declined a request from Councillor O'Neill for an addendum to her motion.

Councillor Dickson asked if Councillor McAllister would accept the following addendum to her motion:-

To acknowledge the work carried out by Old Kilpatrick Food Parcels and Faifley Foodshare and other neighbourhood foodbanks, and ask for a report to be brought back to August Council or soon thereafter providing an update on officers' discussions with these other foodbanks.

Councillor McAllister agreed to accept the Councillor Dickson's addendum, and the motion with addendum was then agreed by the Council.

## COVID-19 UPDATE

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive on the above.

After discussion and having heard the Chief Executive and Strategic Leads in answer to Members' questions, Councillor McColl seconded by Bailie Agnew moved:-

- (1) to note the actions and decisions taken under the revised governance arrangements put in place following the Government lockdown on 24 March 2020;
- (2) to note the update on the organisational and financial impact of Covid-19;
- (3) to agree the provision of a letter of comfort to the West Dunbartonshire Leisure Trust;
- (4) to note the information provided in relation to the approach to future service provision through the recovery phases and the strategic objectives in recovery; and
- (5) to note that further reports will be provided to Members on impacts of Covid-19 both in financial terms and in relation to service recovery, including weekly briefings and the opportunity to post questions via the Covid FAQ facility.

As an amendment, Councillor Douglas McAllister seconded by Councillor McBride moved the recommendations contained in the report with the addition:-

This Council is dismayed by the actions of the Scottish Government in relation to the proposal announced by the Education Secretary, John Swinney, yesterday. This Council calls on the Scottish Government to apologise to parents, pupils and all school staff for the appalling mismanagement of the plan to allow our school children to return to schools by August and Council calls on the Scottish Government to give a clear indication to West Dunbartonshire Council what additional funding will be allocated specifically for education to allow a safe return to schools on August 12<sup>th</sup> for all our staff and pupils at West Dunbartonshire.

On a roll call vote being taken 8 Members voted for the amendment, namely Councillors Douglas McAllister, Bolland, Casey, Lennie, McBride, Millar, O'Neill and Rooney and 12 Members voted for the motion, namely Provost Hendrie, Bailie Agnew and Councillors Brown, Conaghan, Dickson, Docherty, Caroline McAllister, McColl, McLaren, McNair, Page and Walker.

The motion was accordingly declared carried.

## **ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ENERGY SUPPLY COMPANY COMPANY (ESCO) FOR THE WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE DISTRICT HEATING NETWORK**

A report was submitted by the Strategic Lead – Regeneration proposing the establishment of a Limited Liability Partnership as the Energy Services Company (ESCO) that will be responsible for the commercial operation and ongoing management of the heat network and highlighting the requirement for a further capital spend in the necessary infrastructure works of £1.058m and for a £1.0m working capital facility which will enable the ESCo to begin operations.

After discussion and having heard the Strategic Lead - Regeneration in answer to Members' questions, the Council agreed:-

- (1) to approve the establishment of "West Dunbartonshire Energy" as a Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) with Clydebank Property Company (CPC) as the other partner as described in the report;
- (2) the management structure of West Dunbartonshire Energy identified in Paragraphs 4.4 to 4.15 of the report;
- (3) to note suggestions that Councillors Daniel Lennie and Marie McNair be nominated to sit on the Strategic Management Board in accordance with the proposal in Paragraph 4.12 of the report, and await confirmation of nominations from the relevant groups;
- (4) to provide a further £1.058m capital funding to the project to enable the completion of the Energy Centre;
- (5) that the Council provides the ESCo with up to £1.0m working capital and allow the project to begin operations with appropriate funds through Council's approved Treasury Strategy through temporary investment in the company; and
- (6) to note that any future expansion plans that require capital financial support from the Council will be subject of future reports to Council.

The Provost adjourned the meeting at 9.10 p.m. and advised that it would reconvene at 2.30 p.m. on Thursday, 25 June 2020.

## **WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

At the Reconvened Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held by Video Conference on Thursday, 25 June 2020 at 2.30 p.m.

**Present:** Provost William Hendrie, Bailie Denis Agnew and Councillors Jim Bollan, Jim Brown, Gail Casey, Karen Conaghan, Ian Dickson, Diane Docherty, Jim Finn, Daniel Lennie, Caroline McAllister, Douglas McAllister, David McBride, Jonathan McColl, Iain McLaren, Marie McNair, Lawrence O'Neill, Sally Page, Martin Rooney and Brian Walker.

**Attending:** Joyce White, Chief Executive; Angela Wilson, Strategic Director – Transformational & Public Service Reform; Richard Cairns, Strategic Director – Regeneration, Environment & Growth, Beth Culshaw, Chief Officer, Health & Social Care Partnership, Peter Hessel\*, Strategic Lead – Regulatory (Legal Officer); Stephen West, Strategic Lead – Resources; Jim McAloon, Strategic Lead – Regeneration; Laura Mason, Chief Education Officer; Victoria Rogers, Strategic Lead – People & Technology; Alan Douglas, Legal Manager; George Hawthorn, Manager – Democratic & Registration; and Christine McCaffary, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

\* arrived later in the meeting

**Also Attending:** Zahrah Mahmood, Senior Auditor, Audit Scotland; Richard Puttock, Director and Dougie McDonald, Regional Director, Stantec.

**Apologies:** Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf Councillors John Millar and John Mooney.

**Provost William Hendrie in the Chair**

### **STATEMENT BY CHAIR**

The Provost welcomed everyone to the reconvened meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council and advised that the meeting was being audio streamed and broadcast live to the internet and would be available for playback.

## **EXXON MOBIL COMMERCIAL AGREEMENT**

A report was submitted by the Strategic Lead – Regeneration seeking Council's agreement to complete the transfer of the land owned by Esso Petroleum Company Limited and their affiliates at Bowling to the ownership of the Council and to note the refreshed timetable for the procurement of a lead contractor to deliver the City Deal project and the expected overall project completion timeline.

After discussion and having heard the Strategic Lead – Regeneration and Mr Richard Puttock, Stantec in answer to Members' questions, the Council agreed:-

- (1) the transfer of ownership of land currently owned by Esso Petroleum Company Limited and its affiliates, at Bowling to the Council. The Council also give Delegated Authority to the Strategic Lead Regeneration and the Strategic Lead Regulatory to agree final terms for the transfer of the land to the Council on terms commensurate with this report;
- (2) to note that Officers will re-examine and assess the Environmental Insurance market and propose possible solutions to Council prior to the completion of the land transfer;
- (3) to note the refreshed timetable for the procurement of the lead Infrastructure Contractor for the overall project; and
- (4) to note the refreshed overall project completion timeline.
- (5) to note that the additional £6.153m funding requested by the Council has yet to be approved by the Glasgow City Region City Deal Cabinet.

Councillor Bollan, having failed to find a seconder for a proposed amendment, requested that his dissent be recorded in respect of this item.

## **COMMITTEE TIMETABLE – SEPTEMBER 2020 TO SEPTEMBER 2021**

A report was submitted by the Strategic Lead – Regulatory seeking approval of a Committee Timetable for the period September 2020 to September 2021.

After discussion and having heard the Chief Executive in answer to Members' questions, the Council agreed:-

- (1) to approve the timetable attached as the Appendix to the report;
- (2) that once meetings no longer require to be held remotely that they will be held in 16 Church Street, Dumbarton to allow adequate social distancing to be observed; and
- (3) that the alternating of meeting venues between Dumbarton and Clydebank will be reintroduced as and when social distancing rules are relaxed.



## NOTICE OF MOTIONS

### **(a) Motion by Councillor Jim Bollan – Esso Site, Bowling**

Councillor Bollan read out his proposed motion, as previously detailed on the agenda. Having failed to find a seconder he requested that his dissent be recorded in respect of this item.

Note: Peter Hissett, Strategic Lead – Regulatory (Legal Officer) joined the meeting during discussion of the next item.

### **(b) Motion by Councillor Gail Casey – Formal Record of Thanks to the Communities of West Dunbartonshire**

Councillor Casey moved:-

In times of adversity, we need to pull together and it is in these moments that we see the best in our fellow citizens.

The COVID-19 Pandemic has brought out the best in all of us.

Overnight we have seen our key workers in the public, voluntary and private sector turn into superheroes. Whether it's caring for our sick and vulnerable; providing our communities with the basics of daily living, food, shelter, warmth and safety; or lifting our spirits in times of sadness and worry. This was more than just a job it was a lifeline for many.

Therefore, it's important as a Council that we publicly acknowledge what they have done for our communities.

- To the carers and medical staff who at their own risk, selflessly protected and comforted us in our hour of need, we say thank you.
- To the shop workers who made sure that we had our daily bread and sometimes something a bit stronger, we say thank you.
- To the workers who continued to empty our bins, keep our streets clean and cut our grass, we say thank you.
- To the voluntary groups who tirelessly collected and distributed food to those shielding at home or those who were struggling to make ends meet, we say thank you.
- To the people in organisations who kept the services going and kept us all informed throughout a fast moving and changing environment, we say thank you.

- To all those many individuals and groups who went out of their way to keep our spirits up, singing, dancing and piping to entertain us in our time of need, we say thank you.
- To all those who raised money for charities, donated to foodbanks or who sent food to key workers, we say thank you.
- To all of those friends and family members who took on the additional burden to help others day in and day out during the pandemic, we say thank you.
- To all those support groups who daily telephoned vulnerable people just to let their neighbours know they cared, we say thank you.
- To those parents and carers who have been housebound looking after dependent children and dependent adults, we say thank you.
- To everyone else who has done their bit to break the spread of this infection, those who stayed in doors self-isolating and shielding and all of those neighbours who stepped up to the challenge to help others, we say thank you.

The kindness of strangers has helped many in our community through the worst of times. For a lot of people this pandemic has meant they have had to put their lives on hold to help others. They didn't need to be asked; they were self-motivated and fuelled by kindness.

This Council acknowledges the fantastic effort of all of our communities in responding to the COVID-19 emergency. Our motto is strength through community and our citizens have shown us all in no uncertain terms what this actually means.

So for pulling together, helping each other, and going the extra mile just to get things done that needed done, we say thank you.

Following a request from Councillor Docherty<sup>1</sup>, Councillor Casey accepted the following addendum to her motion:-

Council thanks all Council staff who have gone above and beyond to deliver vital services to our communities throughout this crisis.

The Council agreed the motion with addendum and noted that a report would be brought to a future meeting of Council on a proposal to erect a memorial to recognise the key workers from West Dunbartonshire Council who have died during this difficult time.

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<sup>1</sup> Amended by West Dunbartonshire Council at its meeting on 30 September 2020

**(c) Motion by Councillor David McBride – Making our Schools Covid Safe**

Councillor McBride seconded by Councillor Douglas McAllister moved:-

This Council notes that a return to school for pupils and adults will be a worrying time for pupils teachers and adults.

The worry will not be restricted to the schools as the parents and other adults will be concerned not just about the safety of pupils and staff but of the risk of the children unwittingly becoming infected and bringing that infection back home.

Therefore, it is vital that we put in place the necessary arrangements to keep everyone safe.

Council notes that the way that our schools have operated will need to change to make them Covid-safe. This means risk assessments must be reviewed; unsafe ways of working must be changed; safe systems of work must be put in place; shared spaces must be managed and controlled to minimise risk; hand cleaning hygiene measures need to be in place; and social distancing which has become the new norm in our communities and our workplaces must also be introduced and adhered to in our schools.

In the hierarchy of control in schools PPE must be the last resort. We must make our schools safe and our procedures safe, but we should also include a PPE strategy to ensure safety in our schools.

Infection control measures should also be in place in our schools and these should be widely advertised to raise awareness and there should be clear written instructions for staff to follow in the event of individual displaying Covid 19 symptoms.

To support all of this our schools should also have enhanced cleaning and maintenance to minimise the risk of cross contamination. The cleaning regime need to be regular and must use approved cleaning products that are effective against Covid-19.

We need to build confidence in our arrangements in our schools to keep our people safe, so as well as managers fulfilling their role to conduct risk assessments and put in place measures to minimise risk, the trades unions must be fully involved in the process to make sure that they have a real say in making our schools safe.

In addition, Council is greatly concerned that deprived young people have been unable to make use of online learning.

Therefore, we agree that summer schools should be expanded to give these children enhanced transitions to the new term.

Council is encouraged by the use of telephone and online resources to support young people's mental health during lockdown.

Council agrees that the new resources for mental health in schools should be launched in the new term to deal with the anticipated increase in demand for these services in schools.

These services should include not only counselling, but also mental health awareness for young people, families and staff, and mental health first aid training for staff.

We all want what is best for our children and this means working together to make our schools safe not just as part of the transitions but when the whole school returns for the new academic year in August.

This is our common endeavour and transparency and openness, about our new system of education; will help to reduce the stress, anxiety, and fear that has gripped our school communities.

Any costs associated in this motion should where possible be claimed from the Scottish Government but if funding is not available should be from free reserves.

As an amendment Councillor Conaghan, seconded by Bailie Agnew moved:-

Council welcomes the announcement yesterday by the Deputy First Minister John Swinney about a full return to school in August for all pupils should the health conditions allow this.

This Council recognises the challenges faced by every one of us due to Covid-19, in particular the challenges faced by education and recognises especially the huge impact on our children and young people. We wish to put on record our thanks to our children and young people for how well they have engaged in their learning in a strange new world. Most especially we want to thank all parents and carers who have juggled the demands of caring responsibilities and working from home with the task of helping their children to learn.

All of our Education staff, officers and teachers are owed a debt of gratitude for the way they have taken on board the challenges presented by this pandemic. We thank them wholeheartedly for this. For those who choose to work in Education it is more than just a job, they are truly invested in the children and young people in their care and throughout this period of lockdown this has been absolutely clear.

A return in August to the physical school environment, to face to face teaching and learning, will undoubtedly cause worry for our staff, our young people and their families. With that in mind, we recognise the sterling work carried out as a collective effort, over the last 3months and more, within our education hubs.

The smooth and safe running of these hubs is a testament to the hard work and collegiate approach of our dedicated employees. Education officers, head teachers, classroom teachers, learning assistants, facilities staff, our cleaners and janitors, our Trade Union representatives have all worked together tirelessly to ensure a safe environment. They have gone above and beyond all we might expect of them and are deserving of our appreciation.

The return in August to all of our learning establishments being open is a stepping up of the same careful and considered approach of working together through every possible scenario we can envisage to provide a safe learning environment.

We thank our staff for their care in working through; risk assessments, infection control measures, good hygiene practices, social distancing measures, thorough cleaning, strategies around PPE and many other considerations necessary to facilitate a safe return to all of our schools.

These plans will continue to be kept up to date as we keep abreast of the scientific evidence and health guidance that may necessitate some restrictions if a second wave of uncontrolled virus occurs. We will continue to work in partnership with the Trade Unions and Scottish Government to ensure a safe working environment for all pupils and staff.

Some of our children and young people have faced and continue to face greater challenges in their education not least through lack of access to online learning. We recognise and thank our education officers for their efforts in providing not only devices such as Chromebooks but also internet access where necessary.

Our teachers and education officers know our young people and continue to develop individual plans to allow as much support for learning as possible for those who are in most need. Our hub model will operate throughout the summer holidays and will support those most in need. At the heart of everything we do in West Dunbartonshire is the knowledge that near half of our pupils come from economically disadvantaged households and that is what always makes our core offering the best and most supportive it can be for all.

We will continue to provide access to distance learning on an ongoing basis as we appreciate some pupils may well need to take advantage of this model as their health and family circumstances dictate.

Health and Wellbeing is the responsibility of all within our Curriculum for Excellence and it is within this context that we note the efforts that have been made to support the mental health of our pupils over the lockdown period.

Pastoral care teachers have been continuing to reach out to pupils, our psychological services have provided support and all who care for our young people have been doing all they can to help pupils to cope with these extraordinary circumstances.

We commend the work that is being done and are assured this will continue with the necessary stepping up of support and continued promotion and communication to all of this support.

The financial challenges of delivering education in a global pandemic are significant and this council recognises the greatly increased spend necessary at this time.

We welcome the DFM's announcement of additional monies and as a council with a specific demographic of greater need, we agree to continue lobbying the Government both directly and through Cosla for as much additional resource as necessary.

On a roll call vote being taken 13 Members voted for the amendment, namely Provost Hendrie, Bailie Agnew and Councillors Brown, Conaghan, Dickson, Docherty, Finn, Caroline McAllister, McColl, McLaren, McNair, Page and Walker and 7 Members voted for the motion, namely Councillors Bolla, Casey, Lennie, Douglas McAllister, McBride, O'Neill and Rooney.

The amendment was accordingly declared carried.

**(d) Motion by Councillor Rooney – Regular Testing of Care Home Staff**

Councillor Rooney seconded by Councillor O'Neill moved:-

Council notes with great regret and sorrow the large number of deaths in our care homes.

It is a matter of further regret that there is such a relatively high death rate in West Dunbartonshire, both in care homes and in the community.

The decision to discharge a large number of elderly people into care homes without testing should be the subject of a public enquiry in due course.

Council is encouraged that regular testing of all care home staff has now been put in place.

It is, however, regrettable that this was delayed for several weeks. Again, this should be the subject of a public enquiry in due course.

Council commends our Health & Social Care Partnership key workers for working in very challenging circumstances to protect our elderly and vulnerable residents. Council encourages the HSCP to take a pro-active role going forward, in the absence of timeous national guidance.

As an amendment Councillor McNair, seconded by Bailie Agnew moved:-

This Council's deepest sympathies are with the families and staff of those who have died as a result of the global pandemic Covid-19 in care homes in West

Dunbartonshire. The Council is thoroughly aware that care home staff have felt each loss deeply and we will continue to support them and help them manage their grief. Council is indebted to our front-line staff who day in and day out have shown a resolute and passionate commitment to caring for those in greatest need. At the heart of this commitment is a massive endeavour to protect, support and provide a safe environment for residents and all our citizens who need this assistance.

Council notes with concern that care homes across the country, and indeed the world have sadly been greatly affected by this global pandemic. All across the world our most vulnerable citizens live in care homes, and they are the people most vulnerable to this virus.

The relatively high death rate in both care homes and in the community in West Dunbartonshire is very saddening. It has been shown that more deprived communities have suffered a greater loss as a result of Covid-19 and this Council calls on all tiers of Government to put this at the heart of the response to the global pandemic both now and in the future.

This Council is absolutely immersed in doing everything possible at this time to assist our most vulnerable citizens by putting in place the most responsive and supportive services possible. Council condemns the sickening efforts by some to use this global pandemic for their own political gain. This type of behaviour is repulsive and shameful, but the Council will not be deflected from focussing on achieving the best possible response to the massive challenges caused by this global pandemic.

Councillor Rooney advised that, with Councillor McNair's agreement, he was prepared to accept her amendment as an addendum to his motion.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The Council agreed to adjourn for a short time until 5.00 p.m. to allow Councillor McNair to consider Councillor Rooney's offer.

The meeting reconvened at 5.00 p.m. with all those shown in the sederunt present.

Councillor McNair advised that she was unable to accept Councillor Rooney's offer.

Note: Due to technical difficulties Councillor O'Neill left the meeting at this point.

On a roll call vote being taken 11 Members voted for the amendment, namely Provost Hendrie, Bailie Agnew and Councillors Brown, Conaghan, Dickson, Docherty, Finn, Caroline McAllister, McColl, McLaren and McNair and 8 Members voted for the motion, namely Councillors Bolland, Casey, Lennie, Douglas McAllister, McBride, Page, Rooney and Walker.

The amendment was accordingly declared carried

Note: Councillor O'Neill re-joined the meeting during early consideration of the next item.

**(e) Motion by Councillor McBride – Hybrid Council Meetings**

Councillor McBride seconded by Councillor Bollan moved:-

Council commends the great work of our officers to allow Council Meetings to proceed by remote means.

Going forward, it will be necessary to transition back to having physical meetings. Public access is crucial, and there are also matters of practicality, facility, and equality to be considered.

Therefore, Council instructs officers to work up a project and report back on hybrid Council Meetings by August 2020. This means that meetings will have a physical base, and there will also be the facility to join remotely.

Council agrees to fund from free reserves all resources necessary for successful completion of this project.

As an amendment, Councillor McColl seconded by Bailie Agnew moved:-

Council notes that it will not be until stage four of lockdown relaxation that the instructions from the Scottish Government change from, 'Remote working remains the default position for those who can.' to, 'Remote and flexible working remains encouraged.'

Council agrees that we will continue to comply with the Scottish Government's instructions, based on medical and scientific advice, and will continue to deliver services digitally by default and not unnecessarily require our employees to attend workplaces where it is not absolutely imperative to do so for the provision of services to the public.

Council thanks our staff for the great lengths they have gone to, to enable home working for not just Councillors, but other staff across the organisation. We note that at this time, the Chief Executive has advised the three main group leaders that officers need to remain focussed on maintaining and expanding this capability, to allow us to bring more services back quicker, for the benefit of our communities.

Council agrees that when government guidance allows and officers have the capacity to look at how we can enable some Councillors to be physically present for meetings, they should do so and bring a report back to the Cross Party Group and Council at the earliest opportunity thereafter. All elected members will be consulted on plans, to enable officers to consider everyone's needs before writing their report.



On a roll call vote being taken 11 Members voted for the amendment, namely Provost Hendrie, Bailie Agnew and Councillors Brown, Conaghan, Dickson, Docherty, Finn, Caroline McAllister, McColl, McLaren and McNair and 9 Members voted for the motion, namely Councillors Bolla, Casey, Lennie, Douglas McAllister, McBride, O'Neill, Page, Rooney and Walker.

The amendment was accordingly declared carried

The meeting closed at 6.04 p.m.