

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

At a Hybrid Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held in the Civic Space, 16 Church Street, Dumbarton on Wednesday, 19 June 2024 at 4.05 p.m.

Present: Provost Douglas McAllister and Councillors Jim Bollan, Ian Dickson, Diane Docherty*, Fiona Hennebry, Gurpreet Singh Johal, Daniel Lennie, David McBride, Jonathan McColl, Michelle McGinty, June McKay, John Millar, James McElhill, Karen Murray Conaghan, Lauren Oxley, Chris Pollock, Martin Rooney, Gordon Scanlan, Hazel Sorrell, Clare Steel and Sophie Traynor.

*Arrived later in the meeting.

Attending: Peter Hessett, Chief Executive; Alan Douglas, Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration (Legal Officer); Laurence Slavin, Chief Officer – Resources, and Section 95 Officer; Beth Culshaw, Chief Officer – Health & Social Care Partnership; Peter Barry, Chief Officer – Housing and Employability; Amanda Graham, Chief Officer – Citizen, Culture and Facilities; Gail Macfarlane, Chief Officer – Roads and Neighbourhood; Victoria Rogers, Chief Officer – People and Technology; Carol Alderson, Finance Manager; Alison Bowers, Senior Education Officer – Early Learning and Childcare; Michelle Lynn, Assets Co-ordinator; Kirsty Connor, Education Support Officer – Staffing; Carol-Ann Burns, Senior Democratic Services Officer; and Scott Kelly, Committee Officer.

Also Attending: Tom Reid, Audit Director, Forvis Mazars.

Apology: An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor Lawrence O'Neill.

Provost Douglas McAllister in the Chair

STATEMENT BY CHAIR

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

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Scanlan declared an interest in relation to the item 'Motion by Councillor Chris Pollock – Dumbarton Football Club', being a member of the club's coaching staff.

RECORDING OF VOTES

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

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held on 24 April 2024 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

OPEN FORUM

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

CLYDEBANK CENTRAL WARD BY-ELECTION RESULT

The Chief Executive provided a verbal update on the result of the Council by-election which had been held on 13 June 2024 in the Clydebank Central Ward (Ward 5).

In so doing, he formally advised Council that the result of the by-election was that Fiona Henneby had been elected for Scottish Labour at the fourth stage of the count and that the full results of the by-election were available on the Council's website. On behalf of officers, he offered his congratulations to Councillor Henneby and welcomed her to her first Council meeting.

In response, Councillor Henneby thanked everybody who had voted for her and stated that she looked forward to working constructively with everyone within the Council.

The Council noted the update which had been provided.

REVIEW OF INTEGRATION SCHEME

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer, Health & Social Care Partnership seeking the Council's approval for the Integration Scheme between West Dunbartonshire Council and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde.

Having heard the Chief Officer in further explanation, the Council agreed to continue consideration of this item to a future meeting of Council.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Resources providing an update on the financial challenges facing the Council and the estimated 2025/26 to 2029/30 revenue budget gaps.

Having heard the Chief Officer in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Council agreed:-

- (1) to note the updated position regarding projections for the Council's estimated revenue budget gaps in 2025/26-2029/30, and in particular the updated mid-range 2025/26 budget gap of £9.235m as summarised in paragraph 4.11 of the report;
- (2) the 3 year strategy to replenish the Council's reserves using the additional £1.129m of recurring Revenue Support Grant funding, the increased benefit associated with the reduction in the employer's Strathclyde Pension Fund contribution rate and the release of £0.860m of earmarked funding to the General Fund;
- (3) to note the preliminary discussions between the Section 95 officers of Inverclyde Council, Renfrewshire Council and West Dunbartonshire Council in relation to a potential future delivery model for Internal Audit and Fraud Services and agree these discussions should be further progressed with a report being brought back to Council with options at an appropriate time;
- (4) to transfer £100,000 from the General Fund to the Cost of Living Fund; and
- (5) to transfer £5,000 to West Dunbartonshire Kinship Carers.

EXTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Resources presenting a progress report from the Council's external auditors, Forvis Mazars.

Having heard the Audit Director, Forvis Mazars, and the Chief Officer in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Council agreed to note the Council's external auditors' progress report on the audit of the Council's 2022/23 annual accounts and planning for the 2023/24 audit.

UNAUDITED 2023/24 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

It was noted that it had not been possible for a report on the Unaudited 2023/24 Annual Accounts to be provided in time for the present meeting and that this report would instead be submitted to the next meeting of Council on 28 August 2024.

NOTICE OF MOTIONS

(a) Motion by Councillor Chris Pollock – Dumbarton Football Club

Councillor Pollock moved:-

Council recognises and congratulates Dumbarton Football Club, the players, fans, staff and management on gaining promotion to Scotland's League One of football. Moving through the playoffs undefeated the sons clinched victory against Spartans in Edinburgh, on May 17th with a 4-3 aggregate win.

Founded in 1872 Dumbarton is one of Scotland's oldest football clubs. The club is well supported and popular with locals. The location of the stadium beneath Dumbarton Rock has been described as one of the world's most iconic football grounds.

Gaining promotion is an excellent achievement for the area's biggest and most successful club. Council wishes the club and the fans all the best for next season.

The motion was unanimously agreed by the Council.

Note: Councillor Docherty entered the meeting during consideration of this item.

(b) Motion by Councillor Gordon Scanlan – Early Years Physical Activity Programme

Councillor Scanlan moved:-

Council recognises the unique importance of developing physical literacy alongside traditional literacy within our early learning centres.

The leisure trust's early years physical activity programme has been operating for the last 2 years from covid recovery funding which has come to an end and this will stop the programme from running at the end of this school term.

Unless action is taken to fill this gap, this programme will cease to run and no physical activity provision will be delivered from the leisure trust.

Council will provide £50,000 from free reserves to run this programme for a further year and give the service time to find further funding so that the service does not simply cease to operate.

As an amendment, Councillor Rooney moved:-

Council notes the motion and agrees that a report comes to a future meeting of the relevant committee for consideration.

The Corporate Services Committee agreed to approve the 2021/22 West Dunbartonshire Leisure Trust Business Plan including the efficiencies and management adjustments.

The funding ceased on 17 February 2021 under the previous SNP Administration.

Council notes that the leisure trust's early years physical activity programme has been operating for the last 2 years from covid recovery funding which has come to an end.

Council also notes that all Early Learning settings would now be able to identify a physical activity champion who could lead in this area and continue to extend and develop children's physical skills within their own setting.

Councillor McColl then seconded the motion and Councillor McGinty seconded the amendment.

On a roll call vote being taken, 11 Members voted for the amendment, namely Provost McAllister and Councillors Hennebry, Johal, Lennie, McBride, McGinty, McKay, Millar, Rooney, Sorrell and Steel, and 10 Members voted for the motion, namely Councillors Bolland, Dickson, Docherty, McColl, McElhill, Murray Conaghan, Oxley, Pollock, Scanlan and Traynor. The amendment was accordingly declared carried.

The meeting closed at 5.05 p.m.