WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

At the Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held in the Council Chambers, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton on Wednesday, 21 December 2011 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, John Millar, Lawrence O'Neill, Iain Robertson, Martin

Rooney and May Smillie.

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 and 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; Tricia O'Neill, Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development; Stephen West, Head of Finance & Resources; Vincent Gardiner, Client

& Support Manager and Christine McCaffary, Senior Democratic

Services Officer.

Provost Denis Agnew in the Chair

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor McNair declared a financial interest, as an employee of St. Margaret's Hospice, in Item No. 12 – 'Possible Venues for Council Meetings being held in Clydebank from 1 January to 30 April 2012', and advised that she would leave the meeting during consideration of the report.

VARIATION IN ORDER OF BUSINESS

After hearing Provost Agnew and the Head of Legal, Democratic & Regulatory Services, the Council agreed to vary the order of business as hereinafter recorded.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held on 26 October 2011 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

MINUTES OF THE AUDIT & PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE

(a) Ordinary Meeting held on 12 October 2011

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Audit & Performance Review Committee held on 12 October 2011 were submitted and all decisions contained therein were approved.

(b) Special Meeting held on 19 October 2011

The Minutes of the Special Meeting of Audit & Performance Review Committee held on 19 October 2011 were submitted and all decisions contained therein were approved.

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE HELD ON 19 OCTOBER 2011

The Minutes of Meeting of the Community Participation Committee held on 19 October 2011 were submitted and all decisions contained therein were approved.

MINUTES OF THE WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COMMUNITY HEALTH AND CARE PARTNERSHIP HELD ON 16 NOVEMBER 2011

The Minutes of the Meeting of the West Dunbartonshire Community Health and Care Partnership held on 16 November 2011 were submitted and noted.

OPEN FORUM

The following questions were submitted to the Council for consideration:-

(a) Rose Harvie – Meals and Wheels

I am a volunteer with the WRVS, delivering Meals and Wheels in the Dumbarton area to approximately 17 elderly and disabled clients each day. On Tuesdays and Wednesdays the meals are collected from Willox Park residential home, on Thursdays and Fridays they are collected from Dalreoch residential home. When the meals are collected from the kitchens of both homes, it is evident that freshly cooked, attractive, and good quality meals are being prepared for the residents. The WRVS meals from Willox Park are also freshly cooked, and generally of good quality. However, those from Dalreoch have been bought in frozen from a factory in Wales, re-heated in Dalreoch, and are generally of very poor quality. We receive constant verbal complaints from our clients about the meals from Dalreoch. When we, as volunteers, have questioned this difference, we have been told that cost is the deciding factor at Dalreoch - i.e. it is cheaper to buy in meals than to provide them freshly cooked. We have also been told that all the WRVS meals for clients in the Vale of Leven and Clydebank are freshly cooked in local schools, and are of excellent quality.

Question

Why is it not possible to provide freshly cooked meals of a similar high quality from both residential homes, to all our clients every day? Surely economies of scale in preparing meals at Dalreoch could cancel out the cost of buying in and transporting ready prepared meals?

Councillor R. McColl responded in the following terms:-

The current arrangements for meal provision across West Dunbartonshire have been in place for a number of years. We regularly review the meals provided and seek the opinion and views of our clients on the quality and variety of meals. The overall results of these have been positive.

A number of factors are taken into account in relation to securing the most appropriate source for hot meal provision to our clients, in addition to being mindful of associated costs.

It should be noted that the kitchens in our residential units were designed to meet the needs of the residents in the home (and day care attenders) and do not have the capacity to provide large numbers of additional meals on a daily basis.

In order to minimise the impact of the provision of meals for residents of the care homes and those attending day care within the establishments, the hot meals delivery service operates using various alternatives, including the preparation and provision of meals from a supplier utilised by many Scottish local authorities whose meals meet nutritional and dietary requirements.

The preparation of meals within school settings is dependent on capacity within individual schools, and also presents challenges with regard to alternative arrangements for provision during school holiday periods.

In 2010 a small working group comprising of Home Care Managers and community representatives was set up to look at hot meal provision across the authority. This group concluded that the meals provided whether fresh or frozen were of good quality and gave good choice to clients of the service.

As a result of this question being raised an independent snapshot survey was undertaken in November 2011. The results were very positive regardless of the meal type that was delivered or the kitchen who supplied them.

In regard to cost there would be no saving in providing fresh meals locally as the frozen meals are very competitively priced.

We have a monitoring system in place with the WRVS to ensure that any issues with the quality of meals can be addressed.

Despite the assertion that they receive "constant verbal complaints", this issue has not been raised through this monitoring system but officers will work with our colleagues in the WRVS to address and resolve all concerns that are raised about the quality of meals provision.

The following supplementary question was then asked by Ms Harvie:-

If it is indeed necessary to bring frozen meals from Wales, is it at least possible to use a local, Glasgow or Scottish supplier, thus saving on transport and improving sustainability.

Councillor R. McColl responded in the following terms:-

The Council is keen to procure locally and a Members' Business Day will discuss this in the near future. Following on that a report will come to Committee for a Members' decision on how we procure a whole range of services.

(b) Brian Hatfield - Dalmonach C.E. Centre, Bonhill

Why when West Dunbartonshire Council purports to care for disadvantaged communities with large elderly and disabled populations, do they consider closing Dalmonach C.E. Centre, the only meeting facility which has a high and increasing usage rate particularly amongst the client groups mentioned above?

Councillor J. McColl responded in the following terms:-

Despite what you have been told by non-SNP Elected Members wishing to score party political points, this Administration and this Council has not been seeking to close Dalmonach C.E. Centre.

Myself and the Leader of the Council, along with Councillors May Smillie and Jim Bollan attended a meeting in the C.E. Centre.

At this meeting, the Leader and myself clearly explained that the review of all of the Council's halls and C.E. Centres would be looking to ensure that every community had a suitable facility available for public use and to seek expressions of interest from groups who wanted to take on the ownership and running of local centres.

I agree with every point you make in your submission, which is why Dalmonach C.E. Centre is not and never was under threat of closure.

The following supplementary question was then asked by Mr Hatfield:-

Can Council confirm that the new Leisure Trust will keep Dalmonach open over the next 5 years?

Councillor J. McColl responded in the following terms:-

Council cannot confirm the position over 5 years, although Council has no intention to close Dalmonach. The idea behind the Leisure Trust was to protect these facilities, whose buildings need the tender loving care which the Leisure Trust can hopefully provide.

(c) Cecilia McIlhone – Dalmonach C.E. Centre, Bonhill

In order to comply with Key Area 1 of Community Development National Occupational Standards is it not the responsibility of West Dunbartonshire Council to promote equality, anti-discrimination, social justice and community empowerment by providing a central meeting place for our elderly residents, people with drug and alcohol issues, disabled people, lone parents and the 125 nursery children who use the Centre three days a week? All these groups without the Centre will surely face deeper isolation and poverty.

Councillor J. McColl responded in the following terms:-

No group will be disadvantaged as the centre will not close. In fact, the decision taken on Monday to transfer Dalmonach C.E. Centre into the new Leisure Trust not only secures its future, but will enable much needed investment in the facility.

The following supplementary question was then asked by Ms McIlhone:-

If it is transferred into a Trust will that not put the expense up for people who use it?

Councillor J. McColl responded in the following terms:-

I don't see that. The creation of a charitable trust will allow extra funds to be brought in and bring more people in, increasing usage of the centre.

(d) Lorraine Cameron – Dalmonach C.E. Centre, Bonhill

Massive cuts are being made to public services which will result in many vulnerable client groups being further isolated and disenfranchised. Would the Council not agree that given the reduction in many local services community facilities like this Centre will have an even more critical support role to play in the future for the most vulnerable in our communities?

Councillor J. McColl responded in the following terms:-

Across Scotland the cost of living is rising and services are being cut, reduced or made more expensive. Greed has caused our fragile, flawed system to collapse and it is local people in communities across the country that are suffering.

This is why the Administration of this Council wants to make sure that every community has access to public facilities. As I have said, Dalmonach C.E. Centre is here to say.

The following supplementary question was then asked by Ms Cameron:-

Would the Leisure Trust work in conjunction and consultation with the management group of the centre?

Councillor J. McColl responded in the following terms:-

Yes, absolutely.

LETTING OF EXTERNAL SPORTS PITCHES AT ST PETER THE APOSTLE HIGH SCHOOL – REQUEST FOR DEPUTATION

Provost Agnew informed the Council that he had received a request from residents of the Morar Estate, Clydebank to address Council in connection with the letting of the external sports pitches at St. Peter the Apostle High School, Clydebank.

In accordance with Standing Order No. 17, the Council agreed to hear the deputation and also allow a DVD of footage of external lessees of the pitches to be shown to Members. Accordingly, Provost Agnew invited Mr Murray McPherson and Mr Joe Sheridan to come forward and address the Council.

Mr McPherson circulated a copy of an extract noise condition contained in a planning permission and expressed the residents' concerns with external lets and the effect these were having on their home lives and properties.

The Executive Director of Educational Services was heard in response, advising that the Council was trying to address the issues in a way that would alleviate the problems to the residents of the Morar Estate whilst ensuring that the residents of West Dunbartonshire and wider communities could benefit from the excellent sports facilities.

Members then viewed the DVD footage of the pitches being used by external lessees which had been filmed by Mr Sheridan from his home.

Provost Agnew thanked Mr McPherson and Mr Sheridan for their contributions and they returned to the public gallery.

ADJOURNMENT

After hearing Councillor R. McColl, the Council agreed to adjourn for a period of 5 minutes.

The meeting reconvened at 7.05 p.m. with all those Members shown on the sederunt in attendance.

LETTING OF EXTERNAL SPORTS FACILITIES AT ST PETER THE APOSTLE HIGH SCHOOL, CLYDEBANK

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Educational Services providing an update on the letting of external sports facilities at St Peter the Apostle High School, Clydebank and seeking a decision on the future arrangements for the letting of these facilities.

Councillor McAllister moved that Option 3 of the report be adopted, namely:-

- (1) community lets of the hockey and 3G football pitches at St Peter the Apostle High School be reinstated for a trial period of 6 months from January 2012;
- (2) lets will only be offered to supervised groups of users under the age of 18;
- (3) the pitches will only be let between the hours of 6.00pm and 8.00pm;
- (4) it will be made clear to all groups using the facilities that any proven antisocial behaviour will result in the cancellation of the let:
- (5) during the trial period, independent external noise consultants, will monitor the noise impact on the residents of the Morar Estate; and
- (6) a further report will be brought to a future meeting of Council giving details of the outcome of the 6 month trial and making recommendations for the future letting arrangements of the facilities.

Councillor R. McColl asked Councillor McAllister if he would be willing to accept as an addendum that officers be instructed to continue to seek solutions to noise and lighting issues and that all lets beyond 6 p.m. be monitored more closely than in the past.

Councillor McAllister indicated that he was willing to accept the addendum to his motion, which was then seconded by Councillor R. McColl.

As an amendment Councillor Black, seconded by Councillor Bollan, moved that the sports pitches remain exclusively for school use.

On a vote being taken, 6 Members voted for the amendment and 16 for the motion which was accordingly declared carried.

GENERAL SERVICES CAPITAL BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2011 (PERIOD 6)

A report was submitted by the Interim Executive Director of Corporate Services providing an update on the General Services Capital Plan for 2011/12 and seeking approval of specified virements.

Following discussion and having heard the Head of Finance & Resources and Executive Director of Housing, Environmental & Economic Development in answer to Members' questions, the Council agreed to:-

- (1) approve the virements as noted in Appendix C of the report; and
- (2) note the position to date as outlined in Appendices A and B of the report.

REVISION TO FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

A report was submitted by the Interim Executive Director of Corporate Services seeking approval to a number of amendments in the Financial Regulations.

The Council agreed to:-

- (1) approve the amended Financial Regulations as detailed in the Appendix to the report; and
- (2) note that, under paragraph T1, the Section 95 Officer would review the Financial Regulations as circumstances demanded and submit proposals for alterations to Council for approval, as required.

REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES 2011

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive seeking approval of a proposed Scheme of Polling Districts and Polling Places for parliamentary elections.

The Council agreed:-

- (1) to continue with the existing polling arrangements for WD23, i.e. the use of Dalmuir Barclay Parish Church as the polling place;
- (2) to approve the Scheme of Polling Districts and Places as detailed in the appendices to the report, subject to (1) above; and
- (3) that the final Scheme be published no later than 31 December 2011.

Note: Having declared an interest in the following item of business, Councillor McNair left the meeting at this point.

POSSIBLE VENUES FOR COUNCIL MEETINGS BEING HELD IN CLYDEBANK FROM 1 JANUARY TO 30 APRIL 2012

A report was submitted by the Interim Executive Director of Corporate Services seeking a decision on the venues to be used for Council meetings due to be held in Clydebank from 1 January to 30 April 2012.

Following discussion, the Council agreed:-

- (1) to continue using the Education Centre, St. Margaret's Hospice for the 8 remaining Committee meetings;
- (2) that a portable PA system be tried out at the Education Centre, St. Margaret's Hospice and Abbotsford Church Hall:

- (3) that officers enquire if the air-conditioning unit in the Education Centre can be switched off so as to improve audibility in the room; and
- (4) to continue using the Abbotsford Church Hall for the 2 remaining Council meetings, and that the protocol whereby Members stand when addressing the Council be relaxed for both meetings.

APPOINTMENT OF LAY MEMBERS TO THE AUDIT & PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive advising of the outcome of the process to select Lay Members to be appointed to the Audit & Performance Review Committee.

The Council agreed the appointment of the following three individuals:-

M Ward S J Doogan E Haynes

CORPORATE PLAN 2012/17 – PIS AND TARGETS

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive seeking agreement on the PIs previously identified for monitoring the progress towards the Corporate Plan 2012/17 objectives.

Note: Councillor McNair re-entered the meeting at this point.

Having heard the Chief Executive and Executive Director of Housing, Environmental & Economic Development in answer to Members' questions, Council agreed to continue the report to a future meeting to allow officers to further develop the PIs and include the figures for 2011/12.

SHORT LIFE ABSENCE MEMBER/OFFICER WORKING GROUP

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing an update on the findings and recommendations from the Absence Member/Officer Working Group.

Following discussion and having heard the Chief Executive and Head of Legal, Democratic & Regulatory Services, the Council agreed:-

- (1) to continue the report and in the meantime to refer the Work Plan, as shown as Appendix 1 to the report, to the Joint Consultative Forum (JCF) for consideration;
- (2) thereafter the report, together with the JCF's comments be submitted to a future meeting of Council; and

ANNUAL REVIEW OF CORPORATE ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental & Economic Development providing an update of the progress made in relation to the Corporate Asset Management Strategy and seeking approval for annual update reports.

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

- (1) to note the progress being made in delivering the Asset Management Strategy; and
- (2) that future annual reports be submitted to Council.

COUNCIL TAX ON LONG TERM EMPTY PROPERTIES – RESPONSE TO SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION PAPER

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services recommending a response to the Scottish Government consultation paper regarding council tax on long term empty properties and the Housing Support Grant.

Following discussion and after hearing the relevant officers in answer to Members' questions, the Council agreed that the responses contained within Appendix 2 of the report be forwarded to the Scottish Government, with the additional comment that Councils should be able to exempt Housing Associations from an additional charge.

APPOINTMENT OF LAY PERSONS ON HMP LOW MOSS – VISITING COMMITTEE

A report was submitted by the Interim Executive Director of Corporate Services requesting consideration of a nomination to the HMP Low Moss Visiting Committee.

The Council agreed to:-

- (1) note that, following a decision by Council on 26 October 2011, Councillors George Black and Jim Brown had been nominated to serve on the HMP Low Moss - Visiting Committee and that their details had been passed to the Scottish Prison Service;
- (2) recommend that Lisa Hamilton be nominated to serve as a non-elected member on the HMP Low Moss Visiting Committee, subject to a satisfactory report from Disclosure Scotland and references being received;
- (3) note that there remains one vacancy for a non-elected person from West Dunbartonshire to serve on the HMP Low Moss Visiting Committee; and

(4) note that, given the recent announcement by the Scottish Government on the future of Prison Visiting Committees, officers should take no further action to recruit an additional lay person to serve on the Visiting Committee.

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT 2011/12

Reports were submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental & Economic Development providing updates on the financial performance of the Housing Revenue Accounts for (a) Period 6 – 30 September and (b) Period 7 – 31 October.

Following discussion, the Council agreed to note the contents of the reports.

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2011/2012

Reports were submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental & Economic Development advising of the progress of the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme 2011/12 for (a) Period 6 – 30 September and (b) Period 7 – 31 October 2011

The Council agreed to note:-

- (1) the reduction in anticipated capital receipts;
- (2) the likely slippage in the capital programme; and
- (3) the position to date as outlined in the appendices to the report.

GENERAL SERVICES REVENUE 2011/12

Reports were submitted by the Interim Executive Director of Corporate Services advising of the performance of the General Services revenue budget for (a) Period 6 – 30 September and (b) Period 7 – 31 October 2011.

Following discussion, the Council agreed to note the contents of the reports and the favourable variances to date.

GENERAL SERVICES CAPITAL BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT TO 31 OCTOBER 2011 (PERIOD 7)

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

Following discussion the Council agreed to note:-

(1) the position to date as outlined in the appendix to the report; and

(2) the position regarding the anticipated insurance receipt in relation to the demolition works at the former St. Eunan's Primary School.

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE REPROVISION OF AUCHENTOSHAN DAY CENTRE

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing an update on the reprovision of Auchentoshan Day Services.

Having heard Councillor J. McColl, the Council agreed to:-

- (1) note that the rescheduled consultation event would be held on 1 February 2012; and
- (2) otherwise, to note the contents of the report.

SOUTH DRUMRY STRUCTURAL WORK POTENTIAL UNDERSPEND

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental & Economic Development advising on the potential underspend of the Housing Revenue Account in relation to structural work to properties in South Drumry, Clydebank.

Having heard the Executive Director in further explanation of the report, the Council agreed to note:-

- (1) the revised budget for South Drumry Structural Works of £0.200m for 2011/2012 and the proposed budget of £0.500m for 2012/13; and
- (2) that the scope of works, as carried out at Jean Armour Drive, had been identified by review as the best way forward and it was proposed to restart the remainder of Phase 1 works in January 2012 with target completion in August 2012.

SHARED RISK ASSESSMENT – ASSURANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2011-14

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing an updated Assurance and Improvement Plan (AIP) scorecard report for 2011/12.

Following discussion and having heard the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental & Economic Development in answer to Members' questions, the Council agreed:-

(1) that the report be remitted to a future meeting of the Audit & Performance Review Committee for consideration: and

(2) to otherwise note the contents of the report.

NOTICES OF MOTION

(a) Motion by Councillor Geoff Calvert – Road Traffic – Dumbarton High Street

This Council is aware of the high level of dissatisfaction of the travelling public, bus drivers, taxi drivers and pedestrians caused by the current chaotic traffic situation in Dumbarton High Street. This Council accepts that the current traffic chaos has stemmed from the flawed Council decision to re-open the High Street to two-way car traffic.

Therefore, this Council requests the Executive Director of Housing, Economic and Environmental Services to bring forward a report to the December meeting of the Council if feasible, otherwise the January 2012 meeting that will outline what steps the Council should take, both legal and physical, in order to reinstate bus and taxi only traffic in Dumbarton High Street. In addition, this report should include an opinion by the Council's Roads Traffic and Engineering professional officers as to whether or not a return to a bus/taxi only situation would be supported.

This Council is aware that significant work is to be carried out on the Artizan Bridge in 2012 and that considerable disruption to traffic is unavoidable. This Council is concerned that the current traffic chaos in the High Street does not compound the disruption that is to come.

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

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

Following the publication of Councillor Calvert's motion, Council notes that Elected Members have been contacted by concerned traders, who have seen a significant rise in footfall since this Council re-opened the High Street, and do not wish the blanket ban on vehicles reinstated.

Council also notes that the Leader of the Council has been in discussion with La Salle regarding the future of the Artizan Centre and that the new owners are extremely concerned about the prospect of Councillor Calvert's motion passing.

Council agrees that congestion is a significant problem and understands that discussions are currently on-going between the Town Centre Working Group, local traders, the Council and Dumbarton Chambers of Commerce.

Any solution to this problem must be to the benefit of both local residents who use the Town Centre and the traders who depend on their business.

As such, Council agrees to continue this matter until the Dumbarton Town Centre Working Group's discussions are complete and their recommendations can be presented to Council for consideration.

On a vote being taken, 12 Members voted for the amendment and 10 for the motion. Accordingly the amendment was declared carried.

(b) Motion by Councillor George Black – Grit bins

This Council is of the opinion that the criteria for placing additional grit bins has been met in relation to the request for an additional grit bin in Lennox road Milton as requested by Councillor George Black.

Any requests for additional grit bins should meet the following criteria:

- (a) The proposed location will be (or will service) a public road or footpath.
- (b) Any location will only be considered where there is a clear and significant benefit to road users or pedestrians if the location were to remain untreated for a length period within the framework of the Council's gritting procedures.
- (c) The proposed location should have a steep gradient or topographical feature which merits consideration.
- (d) The proposed location must service and be of benefit to several properties (applications will not normally be considered where only an individual property is being serviced)
- (e) Any location which has historically displayed poor drainage locations
- (f) The proposed location must be accessible for cleaning and filling the grit bin.
- (g) Grit bins will only be provided where a specific location cannot be accommodated within the Council's existing gritting route procedures.
- (h) Siting of a grit bin shall be at the discretion of the Council after inspection of the site, and where appropriate in liaison with adjacent residents.

West Dunbartonshire Council reserves the right to remove a grit bin at any time for whatever reason. The Council will maintain the grit bins, i.e. refill, clean the bins of refuse and repair or replace damaged bins as resources permit. Grit bins will remain in position all year, only in exceptional cases where it is established that they are being subjected to vandalism would consideration be given to removing them, outwith the winter period.

Accordingly Members agree that an additional bin be sited at or near this location.

Council unanimously agreed the Motion.

COMPLIMENTS OF THE SEASON

Provost Agnew wished all Members of the Council and officers a happy Christmas and best wishes for the New Year.

The meeting closed at 9.05 p.m.