

## **WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

At a Hybrid Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held in the Civic Space, 16 Church Street, Dumbarton on Wednesday, 26 October 2022 at 4.05 p.m.

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

**Attending:** Peter Hissett, Chief Executive; Alan Douglas, Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration (Legal Officer); Laurence Slavin, Chief Officer – Resources and Section 95 Officer; Peter Barry, Chief Officer – Housing and Employability; Beth Culshaw, Chief Officer – West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership, Amanda Graham, Chief Officer – Citizen, Culture and Facilities; Laura Mason, Chief Education Officer; Victoria Rogers, Chief Officer – People and Technology; Sylvia Chatfield, Head of Mental Health, Learning Disability and Addictions; Lesley James, Chief Social Work Officer; Michelle Lynn, Assets Co-ordinator; George Hawthorn, Manager – Democratic and Registration Services and Christine McCaffary, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

**Also Attending:** Christopher Gardner and Sanya Ahmed, Audit Scotland.

**Apologies:** An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor Craig Edward

**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**

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

## **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.

## **URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS**

### **MOTION BY COUNCILLOR SOPHIE TRAYNOR – BIG DISABILITY GROUP**

The Provost advised that he had received a request from Councillor Traynor for the Council to consider an urgent item of business concerning the Big Disability Group.

Councillor Traynor relayed the terms of her motion to the Council, and the Provost advised that it would be considered after the last item of business on the agenda.

## **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held on 31 August 2022 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

## **MINUTES OF AUDIT COMMITTEE**

The Minutes of Meeting of the Audit Committee held on 15 June 2022 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.

## **GLASGOW CITY REGION CITY DEAL UPDATE**

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration noting the progress with the implementation of the Glasgow City Region, City Deal and seeking approval to agree expenditure on the Western Underpass design and construction on the Exxon site ahead of the Final Business Case approval by Glasgow City Region, which was anticipated in June 2023.

Councillor Rooney, seconded by Councillor McGinty moved:-

That the Council agrees:-

- (1) to note the progress of the Glasgow City Region programme; and

- (2) to approve expenditure of £5.74M on design and construction of the Western Underpass prior to approval of the Full Business Case, anticipated to be in June 2023.

The motion was agreed by the Council.

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

### **ARMED FORCES COVENANT**

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – People and Technology providing a summary of the work being undertaken in support of the Armed Forces Covenant and future activity to maintain the Gold Award.

After discussion, the Council agreed to note the update provided.

### **COST OF LIVING – CAPITAL FUND**

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Resources providing details of the proposed Cost of Living Capital Fund to support organisations that required funding for Cost of Living focused initiatives and seeking approval of the process to review applications.

Councillor McGinty, seconded by Councillor Steel moved:-

This Council agrees the recommendations at 2.1 of the report to:

- Approve the guidance and the application form;
- Approve the process to manage the cost of living capital fund - including delegating powers to the Chief Officer Resources to approve or reject applications;
- Approve the launch on 31st October and close on 9th December for the initial bids; and
- Approve the overall cap of £250,000 to be applied to the fund for the next four years

The process that we are being asked to agree is that:

- Bids are submitted and assessed against the criteria by the Chief Officer Resources.
- Bids that meet the criteria are presented to the Cost of Living Working Group with a recommendation from the Chief Officer.
- The Working Group consider the bid and inform the Chief Officer of their views.
- The Chief Officer Resources makes a final decision taking account any risks to the council.

The recommendations and the process mean that funding will be available to help local people over the next four years and will allow there to be a quick response to requests that meet the bid criteria.

This Council has taken a cross-party approach to the Cost of Living with the establishment of the Working Group in May. Since then we have progressed a number of initiatives such as:

- Summer activities for young people such as free gym, swim and sports camps;
- Support to Antonine for sports activities;
- Support to Foodbanks £1,000 per week for a food subsidy;
- Set up a £250,000 energy fund;
- Organised Cost of Living Conference;
- Introduced free activities for October week (978 swim and gym sessions were taken up by children)

The above initiatives give us a strong basis for providing support to local families.

- We still have considerable capital funds to spend £1m spread over 4 years;
- The energy funds will start to be paid out beginning of November;
- We have plans for activities that will be centred around our libraries (e.g. arts and crafts, IT skills, book clubs and tea dance for elderly in Clydebank Town Hall);
- Partner organisations and businesses are responding to the call to help others; and
- Other public organisations like HSCP will be bringing forward their own ideas and initiatives.

The Cross-Party Working Group realise that they still have a lot of work to do and have another meeting planned for the beginning of November to discuss other initiatives that will help those who are struggling through this unprecedented cost of living crisis.

They have been heartened by the amazing response of the fantastic community groups, churches and volunteers who have once again rolled their sleeves up and got on with the hard work of helping others, such as Old Kilpatrick Food Parcels and St Patrick's Church.

It's important that we continue to plan and phase out our uncommitted resources so that we can respond to new initiatives and issues over the coming months and years as the Cost of Living Crisis is unlikely to disappear overnight.

As an amendment Councillor Bolland seconded by Councillor Dickson moved:-

That the Council agrees the recommendations in the report and that we introduce a right of appeal for any application that is refused.

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

### **ADVISORY BRIEFING REPORT RELATING TO MOTION BY COUNCILLOR KAREN CONAGHAN – SUICIDE RATE IN WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE**

A report was submitted by the Head of Mental Health, Learning Disability and Addictions providing information on a range of possible approaches that could be followed to address the motion from Councillor Conaghan relating to suicide rates in West Dunbartonshire.

Having heard the Head of Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Addictions in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Council agreed to note the contents of the report, the linked suicide prevention activity and the local action plan.

### **CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT 2022-22**

A report was submitted by the Chief Social Work Officer providing information on the statutory work undertaken, including a summary of governance arrangements, service delivery, resources and workforce.

After discussion and having heard the Chief Social Work Officer in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Council agreed:-

- (1) to note the content of the Annual Report 2021-22; and
- (2) to approve its submission to the Office of the Chief Social Work Advisor to the Scottish Government.

### **FAIR TAX DECLARATION**

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer –Resources providing information on the adoption of the Fair Tax Declaration.

Councillor Johal seconded by Councillor Sorrell moved:-

That the Council agrees:-

- (1) to note the information gathered on the Fair Tax Declaration pledge;
- (2) to note that under the current Procurement Regulations, the Council can only exclude any economic operator from participating in Council tenders if that operator has not met all of its obligations relating to the payment of taxes;

- (3) to note the possible implications for the Council and its services should the Fair Tax Declaration pledge be adopted;
- (4) that whilst the Council is not able to fully adopt the Fair Tax Declaration pledge, it can promote and support key elements of it; and
- (5) that Council officers meet with officers from the Fair Tax Declaration.

The motion was agreed by the Council.

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

### **ALLOCATION OF RESIDENTIAL CARE COSTS**

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Resources providing a recommendation on the split of residential care costs between the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) and Education budgets, and providing an update on the one off 2022/23 increase in residential care costs to be funded from HSCP COVID funds.

The Council agreed:-

- (1) that residential care costs for children under 16, or those in full time education beyond that age, be allocated on a 72% HSCP / 28% Education basis in 2022/23 and on a recurring basis;
- (2) that the one off 2022/23 budget assumption, approved when Council set the 2022/23 revenue budget, that £725k of 2022/23 residential care costs for children under 16 should be funded by the HSCP should be amended so that the Council's Education budget is allocated 28% of it (£203k) with the balance of £522k (72%) funded by the HSCP; and
- (3) that the £203k Education share of the one-off £725k element in 2022/23 be funded from general COVID funds.

### **REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS**

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration recommending changes to the Council's Standing Orders.

Councillor Rooney seconded by Councillor McGinty moved:-

That the Council agrees:-

- (1) the changes to the Standing Orders proposed in Appendices 1 and 2 to the report, with effect from 14th November 2022; and

- (2) that the Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation be reviewed and, where necessary, amended to reflect the terms of the revised Standing Orders.

As an amendment, Councillor Conaghan seconded by Councillor McColl moved:-

Council agrees the recommendations at 2.1 and 2.2 of the report with the following exception:

- Council agrees to defer making changes to levels of delegated limits of expenditure under Standing Order 36(4), outlined at page 196 of the report. A report will be brought to the December Council meeting with information on other Councils' delegated levels of expenditure for context, and some narrative from officers on the benefits of such a large increase in delegated authority.

The Administration previously intimated they would reconsider political balance on Committees when Standing Orders were reviewed.

To that end and to ensure Council is adhering to the principles of democracy, openness, and transparency with its political makeup of committees, Council agrees the following changes to the decision made at the statutory meeting:

Educational Services Committee	-	8 Admin	6 Opp
Audit Committee	-	3 Admin	5 Opp
Community Alliance	-	2 Admin	1 Opp
Community Planning Board	-	2 Admin	1 Opp
Shared Services Joint Committee	-	3 Admin	1 Opp
WDHSCP	-	2 Admin	1 Opp
Dumbarton Educational Trust	-	2 Admin	1 Opp
Lomond and Clyde Care and Repair	-	1 Admin	1 Opp

The Leader of the Opposition will liaise with Community Party and SNP Councillors and appoint members to opposition positions in the normal manner. Any spaces remaining will be offered back to the Administration to fill.

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

## **WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2021/22**

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Citizen, Culture and Facilities providing West Dunbartonshire Council's Annual Performance Report 2021/22 and supporting performance information.

The Council agreed to note the Annual Report and the supporting performance information provided.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2027**

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Citizen, Culture and Facilities presenting the Council's Strategic Plan for 2022-2027 for approval.

After discussion and having heard the Chief Officer in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Council agreed to approve the Strategic Plan, including the supporting performance framework.

## **TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22**

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Resources providing an update on treasury management during 2021/22.

The Council agreed:-

- (1) to note the content of the Annual Report; and
- (2) that the report be submitted to the Audit Committee for further scrutiny.

## **SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER 20**

Having heard the Provost and the Legal Officer, the Council agreed to suspend Standing Order 20 to allow consideration of the following item of business.

## **GENERAL SERVICES BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT TO 31 AUGUST 2022 (PERIOD 5)**

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Resources providing an update on the General Services revenue budget and the approved capital programme to 31 August 2022 and seeking approval for the use of capital receipts received in 2021/22 on COVID spend.



The Council agreed:-

- (1) to note a current projected annual adverse variance on the revenue account of £0.661m (0.26% of total budget);
- (2) to note that projected expenditure on the capital account was lower than the 2022/23 budget by £15.731m (23.98% of budget), made up of £14.072m (21.46% of budget) of project slippage, and an in-year net underspend of £1.659m;
- (3) to approve the activation of the Scottish Government approved financial flexibility 'Loans Fund Principal Holiday' during 2021/22;
- (4) to approve the activation of the Scottish Government approved financial flexibility 'Use of Capital Receipts to fund COVID expenditure' to the value of £1.454m; and
- (5) to delegate authority to the Audit Committee to formally approve the audited accounts by 30 November 2022, prior to submission to the Accounts Commission.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The Provost adjourned the meeting for a short recess. The meeting reconvened at 7.03 p.m. with the Elected Members listed in the sederunt present.

## **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT TO 31 AUGUST 2022 (PERIOD 5)**

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Resources providing an update on the financial performance to 31 August 2022 of the HRA revenue and capital budgets for 2022/23.

The Council agreed:-

- (1) to note that the revenue analysis showed a projected annual favourable variance of £0.006m; and
- (2) to note that the net projected annual position in relation to the capital plan was highlighting an in-year adverse variance of £2.245m (3.42%) which was made up of slippage of £2.564m (3.91%) and overspend of £0.319m (0.49%) as detailed in Appendix 4 of the report.

## **TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REPORT 2022/23**

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Resources providing an update on treasury management to 31 August 2022.

The Council agreed:-

- (1) to note the treasury management stewardship information appended to the report;
- (2) to approve the 2022/23 revised estimates of treasury and prudential indicators as advised within Tables A, B, C, D, E, F, H, L and N of the appendix to the report; and
- (3) that the report be remitted to the Audit Committee to ensure further scrutiny takes place.

### NOTICE OF MOTIONS

#### (a) Motion by Councillor Jim Bollan – External Care Placements

Councillor Bollan moved:-

Council notes there are 137 individuals on external care placements from West Dunbartonshire. The weekly cost to WDC is £240,000. The costs for external care placement of children alone is £141,000.

Added to the cost is the difficulty these external placements create for families who have family members placed outside the area, with the distances required to travel to some placements to visit their family members. Council believes these services should be provided in West Dunbartonshire and work should start to achieve this, where possible.

Council requests the Health & Social Care Partnership provides a report to a future Council meeting regarding the benefits/consequences of bringing these services in house.

As an amendment, Councillor McGinty moved:-

This Council notes that in common with other local authorities, West Dunbartonshire makes use of both internal and external care provision to meet the needs of children and adults in receipt of care services.

Providing appropriate support to those with an identified need of external care costs West Dunbartonshire £12.67m per year as identified below:

- 31 clients receive external Children's support which includes secure and specialist disability placements costing **£7.348m** per year.
- 69 clients receive external Older People support which includes both Residential and Nursing Home placements costing **£2.516m** per year.
- 8 clients receive external Learning Disability support costing **£1.060m** per year.
- 12 clients receive external Mental Health support costing **£786,000** per year.

- 14 clients receive external Physical Disability support costing **£760,000** per year.
- 3 clients receive external Addiction support costing **£200,000** per year.

Council recognises that some of these external placements will be the result of client or family exercising their right to choose; some of them will be statutory care placements; and others may reflect the fact that the specialist help and support required may not be available within the local authority area.

The number one priority should always be for the Council and HSCP to meet the needs of the person receiving care, while recognising the importance of support from family and friends in maintaining the wellbeing of the cared for person.

This Council agrees to bring forward a report setting out all of the details, including the advantages and disadvantages for service users and families, who are using the existing external care services and additionally the report should identify any opportunities for the Council and Health & Social Care Partnership (HSCP) to consider options a local provision of care services where it is appropriate.

Councillor Bollan advised that he was prepared to accept Councillor McGinty's amendment. Councillor McGinty's amendment therefore became the motion and was agreed by the Council.

**(b) Motion by Councillor Clare Steel – Raising Awareness Days and Flag Raising Events**

Councillor Steel moved:-

Council acknowledges the current practice of lighting up public buildings such as Council Offices at Church Street in Dumbarton and the Titan Crane on Queens Quay in Clydebank.

This simple act of recognition and support by the Council is very much appreciated by individuals, families and groups who often have first-hand experience of managing life changing conditions or their lived experience.

- In October the Council marked World Cerebral Palsy Day by lighting up Church Street Office green;
- In October the Council Office was lit up purple to mark Mental health awareness day; and
- In November to Mark Armistice Day and Remembrance Day the Council will light up the Council Offices red to commemorate the sacrifices of past generations

Council also acknowledges that the Provost also organises a number of flag raising days to mark key events such as:-

- Holocaust Memorial;
- Armed Forces Day; and
- Support to Ukraine.

Awareness raising is clearly a key element of acknowledging, understanding and normalising discussions about important issues which essentially invites the wider community to become more informed and better engaged in the subject matter.

Council thanks all those involved and wishes them continued success with their endeavours.

Given the above, this Council asks the Chief Executive to consider the production of a comprehensive list of awareness days for the calendar year starting in January 2023, to help support and raise awareness to the wider community so that those with a particular interest can become more involved.

Councillor McColl asked if Councillor Steel would accept the following addendum to her motion:-

Council asks, where possible, that any requests to the Provost from an Elected Member for a day of recognition not already in the calendar involving flag raising or lighting-up Council premises should be submitted 28 days in advance of the requested day.

Councillor Steel confirmed her acceptance to the addendum and the motion with addendum was agreed by the Council.

**(c) Motion by Depute Provost John Millar – Celebrating 150 years of Vale of Leven Football and Athletic Club (1872 – 2022)**

Depute Provost Millar moved:-

This Council acknowledges the strong history of its professional and amateur football clubs and the pride and joy that they have brought to our communities over many years.

We have celebrated the success of Clydebank FC and Dumbarton FC many times in the recent past, including most recently acknowledging the 150th anniversary of Dumbarton Football Club.

Council notes that this year also marks the 150th anniversary of the Vale of Leven Football & Athletics Club. (1872 – 2022).

The club's home is the heart of the Vale of Leven community and is based in the heart of the Vale at Milburn Park, in Alexandria.

The club's strength and successes include the following:

- The Vale won the Scottish Cup three times in succession in 1877, 1878 and 1879.
- They were runners-up 1883, 1884, 1885 and 1890.
- They won the Scottish Qualifying Cup in 1909 and 1937.
- They also won the Scottish Junior Cup in 1953.

The full list of honours is attached to this motion.

As well as its success on the pitch the club played an important part in Scottish Football history and the Vale of Leven was a founder member of the Scottish Football League when it was formed in 1890.

Important as it is, football is not just about sport and competition, it is about people, the fans and the communities that support and share in their successes. Without a dedicated board, committed players and coaching staff and of course the fans, the club would not have been able to persevere over the past 150 years.

The Council asks the Provost to consider the best way to appropriately celebrate the 150 years of the Vale of Leven Football Club, such as hosting a Civic Reception within their commemorative year.

### **Roll of Honours**

#### Scottish Cup

- Winners 1877, 1878, 1879
- Runners-up 1883, 1884, 1885, 1890

#### Scottish Qualifying Cup

- Winners 1909, 1937

#### Glasgow Merchants Charity Cup

- Winners 1882

#### Dunbartonshire Cup

- Winners 11 times

#### Celtic Society Cup (shinty)

- Winners 1879

#### Scottish Junior Cup

- Winners 1953

#### Central Junior Football League

- A Division winners 1946–47
- B Division winners / overall champions 1969–70
- C Division winners 1978–79

#### Central District Third Division

- Winners 2007-08

Evening Times Cup Winners Cup

- Winners 1947, 1970

Kirkwood Shield

- Winners 1951, 1954, 1958, 1965

Dunbartonshire Junior Cup

- Winners 1940, 1965

Dunbartonshire Junior Charity Cup

- Winners 1943, 1946, 1947, 1953, 1954

Erskine Hospital Charity Cup

- Winners 1970

The motion was agreed by the Council.

**(d) Motion by Councillor Lawrence O'Neill – BBC Scotland and River City Productions**

Councillor O'Neill moved:-

Council recognises and congratulates BBC Scotland and River City Productions on their recent 20th Year Anniversary based within their Dumbarton Studios and welcomes the benefits that this achievement and show brings to the area.

Council asks the Chief Executive to formally convey our thanks and best wishes to them, the cast and all the staff on their successes to date and in future endeavours.

The motion was agreed by the Council.

**(e) Motion by Councillor Lauren Oxley – International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls**

Councillor Oxley moved:-

Council agrees to:-

Mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls (IDEVAWAG) on 25 November 2022.

Understand that whilst men and women are both potential victims and perpetrators of violence, that sex and gender-based violence is disproportionately experienced by women.

Acknowledge and praise the great work of organisations across West Dunbartonshire, such as Clydebank Women's Aid, Dumbarton District Women's Aid, and Rape Crisis, all of which provide vital support to local survivors of abuse.

Ask West Dunbartonshire Council's Communication Team to recognise the IDEVAWAG on social media, as well as raising awareness of the subsequent 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence that follows the event.

The motion was agreed by the Council.

**(f) Motion by Councillor Karen Conaghan – Uprating of Benefits**

Councillor Conaghan seconded by Councillor Scanlan moved:-

West Dunbartonshire Council recognises the terrible impact the Cost of Living Crisis is having on those who are least able to bear it. Accordingly, we call upon the UK Government to apply at least an inflationary uplift to all benefits to help protect, in some part, those who are in need of welfare assistance from ever-increasing costs for energy and food. Council asks the Chief Executive to write to the relevant UK Government minister impressing on them the urgency of this increase to benefits which will assist those most vulnerable in our community.

As an amendment, Councillor Rooney seconded by Councillor McGinty moved:-

Following the budget in March this year the SNP Administration left West Dunbartonshire Council with no free reserves and a £13.8 million budget deficit to be closed by March 2023.

Unfortunately, due to a number of factors such as: increasing energy costs and higher pay cost, the budget gap increased to a whopping £18.3 million by the summer.

These are extremely difficult financial times and the previous SNP administration left West Dunbartonshire totally unprepared for the challenges ahead.

Furthermore, the SNP Scottish Government has indicated that Scottish Councils would see their budget decrease by 7% in real terms over the next three years.

All of the above puts additional pressure on hard-pressed Council services.

Accordingly, the Chief Executive is asked to write to the Cabinet Secretary for Finance calling on the Scottish Government to provide fair funding for West Dunbartonshire to help protect public services and jobs.

In addition, this Council notes that despite the triple lock being government policy and the inflation being 8.3% last October, the UK Government only increased pensions by 3.1%. This represents a real terms cut for pensioners.

The expectation was that pensioners would see an inflationary uplift in 2022. Given that inflation was 10.1%, the expectation is that the State Pension would increase from April 2023 to reflect the cost of living.

Council further notes that between 2015 and 2020, working age benefits were subject to a four-year freeze and their value has reduced over time plunging many households into poverty.

Council is concerned about the welfare of our citizens as they struggle with the cost of living with rising food prices and rising household energy prices.

Therefore, this Council asks the Chief Executive to write to the UK Government calling on the Chancellor to increase pensions and all benefits to at least the rate of inflation so that households on a fixed income are better able to manage particularly over the winter where there will be greater demand for heating.

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

### **URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS**

#### **MOTION BY COUNCILLOR SOPHIE TRAYNOR – BIG DISABILITY GROUP**

Councillor Traynor seconded by Councillor McElhill moved:-

Council recognises the fantastic contribution made by local charity The Big Disability Group. This organisation plays a vital role in providing support to the residents of West Dunbartonshire.

Since moving into their new premises earlier this year the group have brought back benefit services to the area which runs alongside their own services providing support for all disabilities and long term conditions for individuals of all ages.

Council notes that the organisation have applied to several funders for funding covering rent for the group, however they are not due to hear back from these funders until next year and there is no guarantee that they will get these requests granted.

In order to ensure the continued running of this organisation during their funding gap, Council agrees to provide the group with funding support from Dec 2022 - May 2023. The funding required for this is £3125 and Council



asks officers to identify an appropriate budget and to pay the sum of £3125 to the Big Disability Group.

This motion calls on the council to come together to support this local organisation in their time of need.

As an amendment, Councillor Steel seconded by Councillor McGinty moved:-

This Council recognises the excellent work of all our community groups and will always offer assistance where required.

It's disappointing to learn that the Big Disability Group has a funding gap of £3,125 which potentially puts their service at risk.

Council notes that the Big Disability Group provides support for all disabilities and long-term conditions for individuals of all ages and these groups are particularly affected by the cost of living crisis.

Therefore, this Council agrees that the £3,125 funding gap can be paid out of the cost of living working group revenue funding.

Council therefore asks the Chief Officer of Resources to arrange for a bid for funding and a recommendation to be presented to the next Cost of Living Working Group.

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

The meeting closed at 8.20 p.m.