

CORPORATE AND EFFICIENT GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee held on Wednesday, 30 September 2009 in the Council Chambers, Clydebank Town hall, Dumbarton Road, Clydebank at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors Jim Brown, David McBride, Ronnie McColl, Craig McLaughlin, Marie McNair, Iain Robertson and Martin Rooney.

Attending: Joyce White, Executive Director of Corporate Services; Alan Douglas, Manager of Legal Services; David Connell, Head of Finance and ICT; Vincent Gardiner, Manager of Exchequer; Gillian McNeilly, Manager of Accounting; Graham Pollock, Manager of Regulatory Services; Patricia Marshall, Manager of ICT; Liz Cochrane, Head of Policy and Performance; Graham McDermott, Policy Officer (Diversity) and Craig Stewart, Committee Officer.

Councillor Craig McLaughlin in the Chair

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Robertson declared a financial interest in the Item under the heading "Printing and Reprographic Solutions", being an owner of a printing company, and advised that he would take no part in the Committee's decision in relation to this item.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting of Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee held on 24 June 2009 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

With reference to the item under the heading "Summary of Voluntary Grants 2008/2009 (Page 2031 refers), it was noted that a copy of the annual monitoring report on grants approved by the Community and Volunteering Service (CVS) for West Dunbartonshire would be provided to the first meeting of the Committee in the new financial year.

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE CULTURAL SUB-COMMITTEE

The Minutes of Meetings of the Corporate Cultural Sub-Committee held on 18 August 2009 were submitted and approved.

With reference to the item under the heading “Clydebank Town Hall War Memorial”, the Committee noted the concerns of Councillor Rooney in relation to the decision taken at the meeting of the Sub-Committee to exclude the names of 80 persons from the wall. It was agreed that the concerns raised would be intimated to the Sub-Committee at the next ordinary meeting.

FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2009/10 TO 2018/19

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive seeking approval for the Council’s Financial Strategy 2009/10 to 2018/19.

After discussion and having heard the Executive Director of Corporate Services in elaboration and in answer to Members’ questions, the Committee agreed to approve the Financial Strategy 2009/10 to 2018/19.

REVENUE AND BENEFITS SERVICE PLAN 2009 – 2013

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services seeking approval of the Revenue and Benefits Service Plan 2009 – 2013 attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

After discussion and having heard the Manager of the Exchequer in further explanation and in answer to Members’ questions, the Committee agreed to approve the Revenue and Benefits Service Plan 2009 – 2013.

RENEWAL OF BANKING CONTRACT

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services advising on the current situation regarding the tendering process for appointment of the Council’s bankers.

After discussion and having heard the Manager of Exchequer in further explanation and in answer to Members’ questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to approve the proposal to extend the current contract for one year until 31 March 2011; and
- (2) to note that a full tendering exercise would commence during 2010/11 for a new banking contract for the three year period from 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2014, with an option to extend for a further two years until 31 March 2016.

FORMER TENANT RENT ARREARS – QUARTERS 1 & 2 2009/10

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services seeking approval for rent arrears write-offs for quarters 1 and 2 of 2009/10.

The Committee agreed to approve the cases submitted for write-off totalling £23,711.79.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Robertson declared a financial interest in the Item under the heading “Printing and Reprographic Solutions”, being an owner of a printing company, and advised that he would take no part in the Committee’s decision in relation to this item and left the meeting.

PRINTING AND REPROGRAPHIC SOLUTIONS

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services seeking approval to design a specification to ensure that the printing and finishing services currently provided by Finance & ICT and Legal, Administrative and Regulatory Services could be measured, benchmarked and assessed competitively.

After discussion and having heard the Executive Director of Corporate Services and the Manager of ICT in further explanation and in answer to Members’ questions, it was agreed:-

- (1) to approve the design of a specification to allow the Council to benchmark the competitiveness of the in-house printing, finishing and reprographic services;
- (2) to note that a report, detailing the outcome of this benchmarking exercise, would be submitted to the Committee in the last quarter of 2009/10; and
- (3) that the decision at this stage related only to agreement to benchmark the services and that any decision on whether to competitively tender or outsource would be determined at a future meeting.

Note: Councillor Robertson returned to the meeting.

CASUAL WORKER POLICY

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services providing an update on the development of a “Casual” Workers Policy and Guidance for Managers which would replace the Employment of Occasional Workers Policy.

After discussion and having heard the Executive Director of Corporate Services in further explanation and in answer to Members’ questions, the Committee agreed to approve the ‘Casual’ Workers Policy.

CHRISTMAS PAYMENTS TO ELDERLY PEOPLE'S ORGANISATIONS

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services seeking approval to make Christmas payments to elderly people's organisations.

The Committee agreed to approve the Christmas contribution to elderly people's organisations for 2009/2010 as shown in Appendix A to the report.

PUBLIC HEALTH ETC. (SCOTLAND) ACT 2008 AND THE PUBLIC HEALTH ETC. (SCOTLAND) ACT DESIGNATION OF COMPETENT PERSONS REGULATIONS 2009

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services requesting the Committee to consider delegating authority to the Chief Officer of Environmental Health to maintain a list of Competent Persons for the purposes of the Public Health etc. (Scotland) Act 2008.

After discussion and having heard the Manager of Regulatory Services in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) that authority be delegated to the Chief Officer of Environmental Health to establish, maintain and review the list of competent persons for the purposes of the Public Health etc. (Scotland) Act 2008; and
- (2) otherwise to note the report.

GRANTS UPDATE

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services:-

- (a) providing an update on grants to voluntary organisations from the Dumbarton Common Good and Community Council budgets; and
- (b) providing an update on grant applications identified and assessed as Council Strategic Partners.

After discussion and having heard the Executive Director of Corporate Services and the Manager of Accounting in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to approve the undernoted recommendations:-
 - (a) Community Councils (2009/2010) – £5,882.85;
 - (b) Strategic Partners (2009/10) - £15,000; and
 - (c) Dumbarton Common Good (2009/10) - £500 (Armed Forces Veterans Association).

- (2) to note the delegated approval given of a grant of £1,038.30 to the Scottish Maritime Museum, for the reason outlined in the report;
- (3) to approve the award of a grant of £953.33 to Bowling and Milton Community Council; and
- (4) to note that the Strategic Partners schedule in the report would be reformatted in future to include information as to which department was involved in each grant application along with appropriate officer contact details.

DISABILITY EQUALITY AND GENDER EQUALITY SCHEMES – FINAL REPORT

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive summarising the final report on the Disability and Gender Equality Schemes.

After discussion and having heard the Head of Policy and Performance in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the progress made under the existing Disability and Gender Equality Schemes; and
- (2) that the existing scheme provided a sound basis for the forthcoming Equality Scheme 2009 - 12.

REVIEW OF WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE NEWS

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive recommending changes to the frequency and format of the West Dunbartonshire News publication in order to maximise the cost effectiveness of the publication.

After discussion, Councillor McLaughlin, seconded by Councillor Robertson, moved:-

That the Committee agrees to continue consideration of this item pending a report being prepared giving further detailed cost options.

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

That the Committee agrees to approve Option 2 contained in the report (i.e. produce an online version of the Council Newspaper only).

On a vote being taken, 2 Members voted for the amendment and 5 for the motion which was accordingly declared carried.

ANNUAL EFFICIENCY STATEMENT 2008/2009

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services providing a copy of the Annual Efficiency Statement for 2008/2009 prepared by the Council and providing an update on the aggregated national position with regard to efficiencies achieved by Local Government.

After discussion and having heard the Executive Director of Corporate Services and the Head of Finance and ICT, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note, with satisfaction, the efficiency gains achieved by the Council in the Efficiency Statement for 2008/2009 as detailed in Appendix 1 of the statement;
- (2) to note that a copy of a schedule that had been omitted from the report, but which had been included in the Annual Efficiency Statement, would be emailed to Members for their information; and
- (3) otherwise to note the key areas to be targeted for efficiencies in 2009/2010 as detailed in Section 6 of the statement.

TREASURY UPDATE (1 APRIL 2009 – 15 AUGUST 2009)

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services advising on interest rates and treasury transactions of the Council which have taken place during the period 1 April 2009 to 15 August 2009.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

CORPORATE SERVICES BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT: PERIOD 4 2009/10

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services advising of the performance of the Corporate Services budget for the period to 15 August 2009.

After discussion and having heard the Executive Director of Corporate Services in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note, with satisfaction, the contents of the report; and
- (2) to commend the officers involved for their hard work and effort in achieving this satisfactory result.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT: PERIOD 4 2009/10

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services advising of the performance of the Chief Executive budget for the period to 15 August 2009.

The Committee agreed to note, with satisfaction, the contents of the report.

NATIONAL NON DOMESTIC RATES – COMPLETION NOTICES

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services providing an update on the new requirement to establish when a newly erected, but unoccupied building was deemed to become unoccupied and liable to National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR).

After discussion and having heard the Manager of Exchequer in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the procedures adopted to comply with the legal requirement to serve a Completion Notice to owners of newly constructed but unoccupied properties.

UPDATE ON FINANCE REVENUES PERFORMANCE 2009/10

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services providing an update on the billing and collection of local revenues and the administration of housing and council tax benefits.

The Committee agreed to note that the 2009/10 in-year collection rates for Council Tax and National Non Domestic Rates were on track to meet performance levels.

DUMBARTON COMMON GOOD FUND – MONITORING REPORT TO 15 AUGUST 2009

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services providing details of income and expenditure on the Common Good Fund Account to 15 August 2009.

After discussion and having heard relevant officers in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the Statement of Income and Expenditure to 15 August 2009.

PROVISION OF CONSULTANCY TO DELIVER A CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services on the tendering process for consultancy with regard to developing a Customer Engagement Strategy.

After discussion and having heard the Executive Director of Corporate Services in elaboration and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note that invitations to quote would be sought from a range of suppliers thus providing a competitive and transparent option to deliver a Customer Engagement Strategy.

RENEWAL/RE-TENDERING OF INSURANCE CONTRACTS ON 1 AUGUST 2009

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services providing information on the renewal/re-tendering of the Council's Insurance Contracts on 1 August 2009.

The Committee agreed to note the arrangements which have been made regarding the renewal of the Council's various Insurance Contracts within the terms of existing Long Term Agreements and the award of the Engineering Insurance Programme (Engineering Insurance/Inspection and Hired in Plant Contracts) following a re-tendering exercise to Allianz Engineering.

The meeting closed at 11.03 a.m.