

## **WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

At a meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held by video conference on Wednesday, 23 June 2021 at 2.02 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, David McBride, Jonathan McColl, Iain McLaren, John Millar, John Mooney, Lawrence O'Neill, Sally Page, Martin Rooney and Brian Walker.

**Attending:** Joyce White, Chief Executive; Angela Wilson, Chief Officer – Supply, Distribution & Property; Beth Culshaw, Chief Officer, West Dunbartonshire Health & Social Care Partnership; Peter Hessel, Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration (Legal Officer); Stephen West, Chief Officer – Resources and Section 95 Officer; Victoria Rogers, Chief Officer – People & Technology; Peter Barry, Chief Officer – Housing & Employability; Richard Cairns, Strategic Adviser; Malcolm Bennie, Chief Officer – Citizen, Culture & Facilities; Laura Mason, Chief Officer – Education; Gillian McNeilly, Finance Manager; George Hawthorn, Manager – Democratic & Registration Services and Christine McCaffary, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

**Also Attending:** Christopher Gardner, Senior Audit Manager, Audit Scotland and Paul Kilby, Regional Partnership Manager, Glasgow City Region, Programme Management Office.

**Apologies:** Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Douglas McAllister and Marie McNair.

### **Depute Provost Karen Conaghan in the Chair**

The Depute Provost, Karen Conaghan, welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked that the Council agree to adjourn the meeting to allow technical issues being experienced by Provost William Hendrie to be resolved.

The Council agreed to adjourn the meeting until 2.25 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 2.25 p.m. with all those listed in the sederunt present and Provost William Hendrie took the Chair.

## **Provost William Hendrie in the Chair**

### **EMERGENCY MOTION AND URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS**

The Provost advised the Council that he had accepted a request from Councillor McLaren for an emergency motion concerning the recent vandalism of Silverton Play Park to be heard and that the item would be considered after the business shown on the agenda. The terms of the motion were then circulated by email to the Elected Members present.

The Provost also advised that the Council's Section 95 Officer had requested that an urgent item of business concerning school clothing grant payments be considered. The Provost advised that this item would be considered immediately after Item 8 – Open Forum.

### **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.

### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Bollan declared a non-financial interest in Item 11 – Leamy Foundation, being a member of the Board, and stated that he would leave the meeting and take no part in the discussion on the item.

Councillor Docherty declared a financial interest in Item 15(e) – Motion by Councillor Sally Page – Development of West Riverside, Balloch (Flamingo Land), being a member of the Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Authority, stating that she would leave the meeting and take no part in the discussion on the item.

### **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 May 2021 were approved, subject to the minute for Response to Motion to Council – 3 March 2021 Kilpatrick Hills being amended to include an additional paragraph (4), namely:-

- (4) that the Roads Section review the TTRO in place at Cochno Road and include Cochno Road up to the radial barrier to the South of Wester Cochno Farm.

## **MINUTES OF AUDIT COMMITTEE**

The Minutes of Meeting of the Audit Committee held on 10 March 2021 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

### **GLASGOW CITY REGION CITY DEAL UPDATE AND CABINET PRESENTATION**

A presentation on the Glasgow City Region – Home Energy Retrofit Programme was given by Paul Kilby, Regional Partnership Manager, Glasgow City Region, Programme Management Office.

Following questions from Members on the Retrofit Programme, thanks were extended to Mr Kilby for his very informative presentation.

A report was also submitted by the Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration providing an update on the Glasgow City Region City Deal.

Following discussion and having heard officers in answer to Members' questions, the Council agreed:-

- (1) to note the progress of the Glasgow City Region (GCR), and
- (2) to note progress of the Council's City Deal project for the Exxon site.

Note:- Mr Kilby left the meeting at this point.

### **OPEN FORUM**

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

### **URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS - SCHOOL CLOTHING GRANTS**

The Section 95 Officer advised that a Council decision was required to update the School Clothing Grant Policy to take account of additional funding that was expected from the Scottish Government in the near future.

Following questions from Members, Councillor Dickson moved:-

Council agrees the proposal from the Section 95 Officer and delegates authority to increase school clothing grant payments in line with the Scottish Government's proposals. Council also believes that we should provide parity between primary and secondary school payments and agrees that a report will come to August Council with costs to allow Members to take a decision on how to fund an increase in the clothing grant for primary school children to £150 with the intention to make the top-up payment in advance of winter.

The motion was agreed by the Council.

Note:- Councillor Casey left the meeting at this point.

### **DRAFT STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2020/2021**

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Resources providing a copy of the draft Statement of Accounts for 2020/2021 together with information as to the outturn per the draft accounts.

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

- (1) to note the contents of the report and the attached draft Statements of Accounts, subject to the understanding that the draft accounts may change depending upon the audit of the accounts undertaken by the Council's external auditors;
- (2) to note the information provided in relation to the financial performance of the Council's services and capital plan for 2020/21;
- (3) to note the current position regarding the Council's reserves;
- (4) to note that a report on the audited accounts would be submitted to either Council or the Audit Committee by 30 November 2021 for approval as identified at paragraph 4.17 of the report;
- (5) if required to meet the timetable for submission, Council agrees to delegate authority to the Audit Committee to formally approve the audited accounts by November 2021, prior to submission to the Accounts Commission; and
- (4) to note the draft 2022/23 budget timetable.

Note:- Councillor Millar left the meeting at this point.

### **COVID-19 UPDATE**

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing an update in relation to COVID-19 in West Dunbartonshire since the previous update report to Council in May 2021.

Having heard the Chief Executive and Chief Officers in answer to Members' questions, the Council agreed:-

- (1) to note the information provided on COVID-19 in West Dunbartonshire since the update provided to the May 2021 Council; and
- (2) to note the information provided in relation to the additional support and advice that the Council was providing to communities and businesses across West Dunbartonshire to help alleviate the impact of COVID-19.

Note:- Councillor Walker left the meeting during consideration of the above item.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The Council agreed to adjourn for a short time for a comfort break.

The meeting reconvened at 5.30 p.m. with all those shown in the sederunt present, with the exception of Councillors Gail Casey, John Millar and Brian Walker.

Note:- Councillor Bollan left the meeting at this point.

## **LEAMY FOUNDATION**

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer detailing the work that the Leamy Foundation performed and how that work was funded.

Councillor Dickson moved:-

Council agrees the recommendations with the following changes:-

Recommendation (c) will now read, Council confirms that we hope to consider the Leamy Foundation a Strategic Partner and Council officers will engage with the Leamy Foundation to continue to identify approaches to working together on shared goals; and

Recommendation (d) will now read, that a report will be brought back to Council no later than September to detail the approaches to working together on shared goals although, these would all be subject to overcoming the significant challenges in terms of Procurement Law.

The motion was agreed by Council.

Note:- Councillor Bollan returned to the meeting at this point.

## **DELIVERY OF SERVICES DURING PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY**

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Citizens, Culture and Facilities on the above.

Council agreed to note the contents of the report.

## **VOLUNTARY GRANTS – USE OF 2021/21 UNDERSPEND**

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Resources providing an update of the planned approach to distributing unspent voluntary sector grants following a decision of Corporate Services Committee on 19 May 2021

Councillor Dickson moved:-

That the report recommendations be agreed subject to lower limit for grants being £250 rather than £500; the fund to be branded as the 'Community Matters Fund' and that fund applications be invited from 1 July to 1 December.

The motion was agreed by the Council.

## **COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE TIMETABLE – OCTOBER 2021 TO JUNE 2022**

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration seeking approval of a committee timetable from October 2021 to June 2022.

The Council agreed that consideration of the report be continued to the meeting of Council on 26 August 2021.

## **NOTICE OF MOTIONS**

### **(a) Motion by Councillor Jim Bollan – Free Let of Renton Primary School**

Councillor Bollan moved:-

Council agrees to provide a free let on one evening per week, Wednesday, to the AA organisation, of Renton Primary School for the purposes of their meetings.

Suitable times to be arranged with the organisation.

No other suitable accommodation is available in the Village. Education has been unable to agree to the request which was first raised on 19 April 2021, hence the request is being put to WDC for decision.

Councillor McColl asked if Councillor Bollan would accept the following addendum to his motion:-

In agreeing this motion, Council is not setting a precedent of funding free lets in our Primary Schools. As much as we would like to be able to provide free lets for everyone who asks, this would not be affordable. There is a clear, specific need in this case with no other availability in Renton, and given the high incidence of addiction in West Dunbartonshire we are compelled to act to assist. Agreement of the free let is subject to Scottish Government rules and

guidance on COVID-19 being followed and AA being willing to take up a suitable offer elsewhere in the village should the opportunity arise.

Councillor Bollan confirmed his acceptance of the addendum and the motion with addendum was then agreed by the Council.

**(b) Motion by Councillor John Mooney – Deprivation and Funding for Education**

Councillor Mooney moved:-

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation is the Scottish Government's standard approach to identify areas of multiple deprivation in Scotland.

It can help improve understanding about the outcomes and circumstances of people living in the most deprived areas in Scotland.

It can also allow effective targeting of policies and funding where the aim is to wholly or partly tackle or take account of area concentrations of multiple deprivation.

Council acknowledges that the pandemic has affected deprived areas such as West Dunbartonshire more severely, including access to education.

For example, Clydebank Central is the sixth most deprived ward in Scotland according to SIMD.

Therefore, Council agrees that any further funding for education to compensate for the effects of the pandemic should be allocated to local authorities according to SIMD, and asks the Chief Executive to write to the Education and Finance Cabinet Secretaries to this effect.

The Council agreed the motion.

**(c) Motion by Councillor Karen Conaghan – Tackling Racist and Sectarian Behaviour**

Councillor Conaghan moved:-

Scotland is an increasingly diverse and multi-cultural society where all of its peoples should expect to be treated with equal respect whatever their background, ethnicity, heritage and beliefs.

Sadly anti-Catholic and anti-Irish discrimination appears to be an area which is not being adequately called out or tackled. Sectarianism is a blight on our society and the time is long overdue to tackle this.

Accordingly this Council condemns all such hateful attacks whether verbal or physical, whether against people or property.

Council asks that a report be brought to the next meeting of Council on what education we offer within our schools on this issue, and on what policies and procedures we have for our staff to protect them and our citizens from sectarian behaviour. A report around the issues surrounding all marches is also requested, with particular regard to their routing.

Council calls upon Councillor McColl, Leader of the Council together with Councillor Rooney, Leader of the Opposition to write to the First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon and the Cabinet Secretary for Justice, Keith Brown, asking them to address this issue at a national level within the Scottish Parliament urgently.

Furthermore this Council calls upon the Council Leader to write to the Leaders of the other 31 Local Authorities in Scotland making them aware of this motion, and asking them to also request the Scottish Parliament addresses directly the issue of anti-Catholic and anti-Irish discrimination.

Following discussion, Councillor Conaghan agreed to accept the following three addendums to her motion from Councillors Bollan, Caroline McAllister and Docherty respectively:-

- (1) that the word 'discrimination' in paragraph 2 be changed to 'racism';
- (2) that Equalities Minister, Christina McKelvie, be included in the mailing list and that all MSPs be reminded while exercising government duties of the Public Sector Equality Duty to pay due regard to fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it; and
- (3) that all party leaders in the Scottish Government be copied into the letter to be sent.

The Council then agreed the motion with the addendums.

**(d) Motion by Councillor David McBride – Local Government Pay Claim**

Councillor McBride, seconded by Councillor Rooney moved:-

Council endorses the views expressed by COSLA in relation to the SJC pay claim and notes:-

1. The extraordinary lengths local government staff have gone to in order to maintain services and support individuals and communities over the course of the pandemic and expresses our appreciation of their continuing efforts;



2. The erosion of pay levels within local government over the past 13 years;
3. Our disappointment that the Cabinet Secretary for Finance twice declined the formal request to meet with COSLA Leaders to discuss funding of an enhanced pay offer to local government staff;
4. That based on the current local government settlement, councils across Scotland have indicated that an enhanced pay offer is unaffordable and would lead to cuts in services and jobs;
5. The concerns raised by the SJC local government trade unions, their rejection of the current pay offer and the urgency of a meeting with Scottish Government to discuss the funding of an enhanced offer:

Council resolves:

6. To write to the Scottish Government supporting COSLA's request for additional baselined funding from Scottish Government to match the 4% offer to health staff (£168m) and non-recurring funding to make a £500 recognition payment to local government staff who have not received such a payment (£84m).

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

Council notes that the wording of the motion agreed unanimously by SNP, Labour, Liberal Democrat, Conservative and Independent Council Leaders at COSLA on behalf of Local Government reads as follows:

"Leaders express their extreme disappointment with the delay in response from the First Minister and the Cabinet Secretary for Finance to our repeated requests for an urgent meeting to discuss additional Scottish Government funding to support an enhanced pay offer to local government staff in line with the offer to health staff.

Leaders note that should this failure to provide adequate additional funding by the Scottish Government result in industrial action by local government workers then not only will this affect vital local services at this critical point in the recovery from the pandemic, but it will compromise local government's ability to deliver on many of the Scottish Government's commitments that rely on local government for implementation.

Leaders further note the contribution made by council staff during the pandemic which is recognised in the report by Audit Scotland which concludes that Scotland's councils reacted quickly, working alongside communities and partners, to address the unprecedented challenges created by Covid-19.

Leaders therefore instruct the President and the Spokesperson for Resources to continue to press the Scottish Government strongly for an urgent meeting between Ministers and all Leaders on this issue."

West Dunbartonshire Council fully endorses the position of the SNP, Labour, Conservative, Liberal Democrat and Independent Council Leaders at COSLA and agrees that we must continue to present a united front to the Scottish Government. We must not undermine efforts being made by Council Leaders across Scotland on an all Party basis on behalf of our staff. These negotiations with Trades Unions and the Scottish Government are delicate and must be handled carefully if we are to deliver on the reasonable aspirations of not only our staff, but local government employees across Scotland.

Council agrees that the Council Leader will write to the First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance endorsing the COSLA position, and mandates him to continue to push for the funding required to give our staff a pay rise commensurate with that given to NHS staff by the Scottish Government. Council also agrees that the Scottish Government should recognise the efforts of all public sector staff who have delivered vital services to our citizens throughout the pandemic emergency, not just those involved in the direct provision of health and care services; this point will also be made clear in the letter.

On a roll call vote being taken 10 Members voted for the amendment, namely Provost Hendrie, Bailie Agnew and Councillors Brown, Conaghan, Dickson, Docherty, Finn, Caroline McAllister, McColl and McLaren and 7 Members voted for the motion, namely Councillors Bollan, Lennie, McBride, Mooney, O'Neill, Page and Rooney. The amendment was declared carried.

**(e) Motion by Councillor Sally Page – Development of West Riverside Balloch (Flamingo Land)**

Note:- Councillor Docherty left the meeting at this point.

Councillor Page moved:-

This Council agrees that when and if a full planning application is lodged for the development of West Riverside, Balloch (Flamingo Land) the requisite time and resources will be committed to submit a full response from West Dunbartonshire Council as a statutory consultee; to include an assessment of the project against the Council's climate change aspirations, and to ensure that any concerns are communicated to the relevant planning authority (Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park), and that a debate on the application will be scheduled at a Full Council meeting to enable all elected members to give proper consideration.

Councillor Mooney asked if Councillor Page would accept the following addendum to the motion:-

That after 'the Council's climate change aspirations' the words 'and the Council's regeneration objectives' be included.

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

Note:- Councillor Docherty returned to the meeting at this point.

### **URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS - SILVERTON PLAY PARK**

Councillor McLaren moved:-

Council is appalled by the heinous act of vandalism at the children's play park in Silverton and resolves to repair/replace as required the play equipment and ground surfaces. Given the school holidays are about to start, Council authorises the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and local elected members for Dumbarton, to spend free reserves to bring the facility back into use as quickly as possible for the benefit of children in Silverton.

Council also calls on anyone in the community who knows anything about the vandalism to come forward and speak to the Police, even if the report is anonymous, to help find and bring to justice the criminals who did this and help prevent a repeat event.

Councillor O'Neill referred to similar vandalism that had occurred at play parks in Milldam Road, Carleith Primary School and Auchnacraig Early Learning Centre and asked if Councillor McLaren would include these in his motion.

Councillor McLaren accepted Councillor O'Neill's addendum and the motion and addendum was agreed by the Council.

The meeting closed at 7.58 p.m.