

CORPORATE AND EFFICIENT GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee held on Wednesday, 24 March 2010 in Meeting Room 3, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton at 10.00 a.m.

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

Attending: Joyce White, Executive Director of Corporate Services; Andrew Fraser, Head of Legal, Administrative & Regulatory Services; David Connell, Head of Finance and ICT; Gillian McNeilly, Manager of Accounting; Karen Shannon, Section Head – Exchequer, Finance & ICT; Dorothy Farquhar, Section Head – ICT & Business Development; Alison Wood, Corporate Procurement Team Leader; Kevin McGrath, Corporate Procurement Officer; Tracy Keenan, Senior HR Officer, Wellbeing and Attendance and Craig Stewart, Committee Officer.

Apologies: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Margaret Bootland and Iain Robertson.

Councillor Craig McLaughlin in the Chair

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting of Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee held on 27 January 2010 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE CULTURAL SUB-COMMITTEE

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Corporate Cultural Sub-Committee held on 16 February 2010 were submitted and approved as a correct record. With reference to the item relating to “Events 2010”, paragraph (6), it was agreed that officers had delegated authority to invite representatives from Beauvoisin to attend the Scottish Pipe Band Championship on 22 May 2010, subject to consultation with the Provost.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Having taken advice from the Legal Officer, Councillor McBride declared a non-financial interest in the following item of business, being the spouse of someone involved in Dumbarton Senior Citizens' Committee, and intimated that he would stay in the meeting and would take part in any decision.

OLD PEOPLE'S WELFARE GRANT FUNDING

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services providing an update regarding the grant funding for elderly welfare organisations.

A presentation was given by Chief Inspector Malcolm MacCormick from Strathclyde Police who gave an update on the annual distribution of cash payments to old people in the Clydebank and Old Kilpatrick areas. A copy of a briefing paper by the Police on this issue was circulated for Members' information.

Following a question and answer session, the Committee thanked Chief Inspector MacCormick for his informative presentation. In reply, Chief Inspector MacCormick thanked the Committee for the opportunity to give his presentation.

After discussion and having heard the Head of Finance & ICT and the Head of Legal, Administrative and Regulatory Services in answer to Members' questions, Councillor McLaughlin, seconded by Councillor McColl, moved:-

That the Committee agrees:-

- (1) to the West Dunbartonshire Community Volunteer Service (CVS) completing an independent survey of the elderly welfare organisations receiving grant funding; the individuals benefiting from the grant funding and any other key stakeholders (e.g. police); and
- (2) to note that a report would be brought back to Committee in May 2010 with an update and recommendations based upon the findings.

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

That the status quo should remain and that the organisations from Dumbarton and the Vale of Leven should be removed from the survey by the CVS, as feedback from these groups indicated that they were content with the arrangements currently in place.

On a vote being taken, 3 Members voted for the amendment and 4 for the motion. The motion was accordingly declared carried.

Chief Inspector MacCormick left the meeting at this point.

PUBLIC HEALTH ETC. (SCOTLAND) ACT 2008 – JOINT HEALTH PROTECTION PLAN

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services seeking approval of the NHS Glasgow & Clyde Joint Health Protection Plan.

After discussion and having heard the relevant officers in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to approve the NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Joint Health Protection Plan 2010-2012.

LOCAL PROCUREMENT POLICY

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services advising of a Local Procurement Policy (attached to the report) that has been produced in response to the "Improving Council" Action Plan and Scottish Government guidance.

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 Local Procurement Policy and the corresponding actions.

NATIONAL CONTRACT FOR POSTAL SERVICES

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services requesting approval for the Council to participate in the national contract agreement for postal services developed by Procurement Scotland. This would result in TNT being the Council's preferred supplier for 2nd Class mail services.

After discussion and having heard the Corporate Procurement Officer and relevant officers in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed that, subject to any procurement law issues, officers should make contact with Royal Mail to ascertain whether they would lower their prices to the TNT rates detailed in the report. If not the Committee agrees:-

- (1) that the Council sign up to the Procurement Scotland contract agreement to use TNT as the Council's contract provider for 2nd Class mail services;
- (2) that priority be given to promoting the use of TNT's 'Flex' Service for mail that would normally be sent first class; and
- (3) to encourage Council services to improve mailing practices and procedures and that TNT be given permission to facilitate 'Local Mailing Awareness Sessions' where appropriate.

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

IN-HOUSE REPROGRAPHICS AND PRINTING & FINISHING COMPETITIVENESS TESTING

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services providing an update on the outcome of the benchmarking/competitiveness testing exercise carried out on the Council's in-house reprographics and printing and finishing services which are currently provided by Legal, Administrative & Regulatory Services and Finance & ICT respectively.

After discussion and having heard the Executive Director of Corporate Services and the Head of Legal, Administrative and Regulatory Services in elaboration and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note that the conclusion of the benchmarking exercise remained unclear;
- (2) that the Executive Director of Corporate Services be authorised, in consultation with the Chief Executive, to amalgamate the Council's printing and reprographics services to achieve efficiencies;
- (3) to retain the service in-house and to recommend that Council fund the capital purchase of new printing machinery to replace the present obsolete machinery, where appropriate in a phased way.
- (4) that a further benchmarking exercise should be completed within five years.

ADJOURNMENT

After hearing the Chair, Councillor McLaughlin, the Committee agreed to adjourn for a short period.

The meeting reconvened at 11.25 a.m. with all Members listed in the Sederunt in attendance.

PRUDENTIAL RESERVES POLICY

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services reviewing the calculation methodology of the current general services prudential reserves policy approved by the Council on 25 June 2003.

The Committee agreed that the prudential reserve be calculated at 2% of the Council's net budget (excluding requisitions), with immediate effect.

CONSULTATION ON THE WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Educational Services on the draft West Dunbartonshire Corporate Parenting Strategy and seeking Members' views on the Strategy.

The Committee agreed:-

- (1) to approve the final draft of the Corporate Parenting Strategy; and
- (2) to note that the Strategy would be submitted to Council for approval in due course.

VARIATION IN ORDER OF BUSINESS

After hearing Councillor McLaughlin, the Committee agreed to vary the order of business as hereinafter recorded in these minutes.

WRITE OFF OF MISCELLANEOUS INCOME DEBTOR ACCOUNTS

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services recommending the write off of debts in respect of miscellaneous income debtor accounts.

The Committee agreed to approve the write off of miscellaneous income debtor accounts totalling £136,479.70.

WRITE OFF OF NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services recommending the write off of debts in respect of National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR).

The Committee agreed to approve the write off of NNDR accounts totalling £607,512.75.

DUMBARTON COMMON GOOD FUND – MONITORING REPORT TO 15 FEBRUARY 2010

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 February 2010.

It was noted that the Appendix to the report was incorrect and a copy of the correct Appendix giving the Statement of Income & Expenditure was circulated at the meeting.

The Committee agreed to note the Statement of Income and Expenditure to 15 February 2010.

DUMBARTON COMMON GOOD FUND - 2010/11 DRAFT BUDGET

A report was submitted by Executive Director of Corporate Services providing a draft budget for 2010/2011.

After discussion and having heard the Manager of Accounting in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) that officers should investigate the possibility of utilising the fund for the benefit of other community projects such as sports pitches, etc.; and
- (2) otherwise to approve the draft budget for 2010/2011.

OVERTOUN HOUSE CHRISTIAN CENTRE

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services seeking approval to recognise the value of the ground maintenance work carried out at the above location and to approve a proposal that this should be applied to partially offset the annual property insurance charge levied on the property.

After discussion and having heard the Head of Legal, Administrative and Regulatory Services in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed that the Committee does not accept a revised minute of agreement and that the status quo should remain in respect of this matter.

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

CHIEF EXECUTIVE BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT: PERIOD 10 2009/10

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive advising on the performance of the Chief Executive departmental budget for the period to 15 February 2010.

The Committee agreed to note the report.

CORPORATE SERVICES BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT: PERIOD 10 2009/10

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services advising on the performance of the Corporate Services budget for the period to 15 February 2010.

After discussion, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note, with satisfaction, the contents of the report; and
- (2) that the relevant officers be commended for their prudent financial management in achieving this satisfactory outcome.

GRANT APPLICATIONS

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services providing an update on grants to voluntary organisations from the Trust Fund and Dumbarton Common Good budgets.

After discussion and having heard the Manager of Accounting in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to approve the Vale of Leven Trust Fund grant application in the amount of £4,100; and
- (2) to continue the application by Knowetop Community Farm from the Dumbarton Common Good Fund in the amount of £10,000, pending further information being obtained with regard to possible withdrawal of funding from the Farm's strategic partners.

TREASURY UPDATE (1 APRIL 2009 – 15 FEBRUARY 2010)

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 February 2010.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

SICKNESS ABSENCE REPORTING - QUARTER 3 (2009/10)

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Corporate Services advising on the levels of employee sickness absence for the third quarter (October, November & December) of 2009/10.

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

- (1) to note the contents of the report; and
- (2) that it would be useful to have some form of Members' Briefing on the measures being taken to address the introduction of 'Fit Notes'.

The meeting closed at 11.55 a.m.