

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton G82 3PU

22 February 2008

MEETING: WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

**WEDNESDAY, 27 FEBRUARY 2008
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
COUNCIL OFFICES
GARSHAKE ROAD
DUMBARTON**

Dear Member,

Please attend a Meeting of **West Dunbartonshire Council** to be held in the **Council Chambers, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton, on Wednesday, 27 February 2008 at 7.00 p.m.**

The business is as shown on the attached agenda.

Yours faithfully

DAVID MCMILLAN

Chief Executive

Distribution:-

All Members of West Dunbartonshire Council.

Chief Executive

Executive Director of Corporate Services

Executive Director of Educational Services

Executive Director of Social Work and Health

Executive Director of Housing, Environmental & Economic Development

For information on the following agenda please contact Craig Stewart, Legal, Administrative and Regulatory Services, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton, G82 3PU on Tel: (01389) 737251 or e-mail: craig.stewart@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY, 27 FEBRUARY 2008

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES

2. VALE OF LEVEN HOSPITAL - DEPUTATION

In accordance with the terms of Standing Order No. 14, the Council is asked whether it wishes to hear a deputation from representatives of the Vale Hospital Watch on the future of the Vale of Leven Hospital.

3. OPEN FORUM

Mr Edward Gray, 38 Abbott Crescent, Whitecrook, Clydebank
Issues relating to laminate flooring in Council housing

As I have raised the issue of laminated flooring at a previous question time meeting and as yet am waiting on a response I will repeat the question to councillors and officers with a small Add on regarding safety and insurance for anyone, staff or otherwise who injure themselves due to slippages or trips.

- a) Will this Council show some real responsibility as a landlord and employer and take action about this very serious issue and its impact regarding anti-social behaviour and a possible risk to workers?
- b) Will this Council look at the probabilities of insurance claims in relation to this possible hazard via loss of workforce due to slippages, accidents or injuries on wet or unchecked laminate flooring (no control over how this material is installed)?

Considering that the Council as a landlord has no obvious insurance data to ensure that tenants have to be held accountable for the wages or sick pay for workforce who may sustain injury and would quite possibly be entitled to seek compensation from their employer i.e. (the Council) in an era where injury claims are part of every day life.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Submit for approval as a correct record, the undernoted Minutes of Meetings of West Dunbartonshire Council:-

- (a) Ordinary Meeting held on Wednesday 30 January 2008; and
- (b) Special Meeting held on Thursday 14 February 2008.

5. MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE ON 13 FEBRUARY 2008

Submit for information, and where necessary ratification, the Minutes of Meeting of the Audit and Performance Review Committee held on 13 February 2008.

6. AUDIT OF BEST VALUE AND COMMUNITY PLANNING – PROGRESS REPORT JANUARY 2008

Submit report by the Chief Executive presenting the Progress Report on the Audit of Best Value and Community Planning in West Dunbartonshire.

7. RESPONSE TO AUDIT SCOTLAND PROGRESS REPORT – JANUARY 2008: PROPOSED STRUCTURE FOR MANAGEMENT OF BEST VALUE IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITY

Submit report by the Chief Executive proposing a revised method for the project management of the Best Value Improvement Plan.

8. WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP – KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Submit report by the Chief Executive providing an update on key developments within West Dunbartonshire Community Planning Partnership (CPP).

9. COMMITTEE VACANCIES

Council is requested to consider making one Member nomination for each of the following Committee vacancies:-

- (1) Licensing Committee
- (2) Schools Procurement Sub-Committee

Previously it was agreed that these vacancies be filled by 2 Members from the opposition (other).

10. REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS

Submit report by the Chief Executive requesting approval of a revised set of Standing Orders.

11. DEVELOPMENT OF A SPORTS STRATEGY AND A SPORTS PITCH STRATEGY FOR WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Submit report by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development providing an update to Council on the development of a Sports Strategy and Sports Pitch Strategy for West Dunbartonshire Council.

12. REVIEW OF CONSTITUENCY BOUNDARIES FOR THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

Submit report by the Chief Executive advising of the Boundary Commission for Scotland's provisional proposals for the review of Scottish Parliament Constituencies and recommending the making of representations to these proposals.

13. ARCHITECTURAL LIGHTING OF DUMBARTON CASTLE AND ROCK

Submit report by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development providing an update of the work undertaken to identify an improved scheme of architectural lighting of Dumbarton Castle and Rock and seeking agreement to the allocation of funds to commission a feasibility study to determine the most appropriate lighting design and costs associated with the project.

14. RENTON COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTRE

Submit report by the Chief Executive providing a further update in relation to progress with the disposal of Renton Community Education Centre.

15. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT 2007/2008 BUDGETARY CONTROL STATEMENT TO 15 JANUARY 2008 (PERIOD 9)

Submit report by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development providing an update on the financial performance of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to the period ended 15 January 2008.

16. HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2007/2008 BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT TO 15 JANUARY 2008 (PERIOD 9)

Submit report by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development on the progress of the HRA Capital Programme 2007/2008.

17. GENERAL SERVICES BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT: PERIOD 9 (2007/2008)

Submit report by the Executive Director of Corporate Services advising of the performance of the General Services Budget for the period to 15 January 2008.

18. GENERAL SERVICES CAPITAL BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT: PERIOD 9 (2007/2008)

Submit report by the Executive Director of Corporate Services providing an update on the General Services Capital Plan for 2007/2008.

19. PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2007/08 TO 2010/11 AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2007/08 TO 2010/11

Submit report by the Executive Director of Corporate Services advising of the proposed:

- (a) Prudential Indicators for 2007/08 to 2010/11; and
- (b) the Treasury Management Strategy for 2007/08 to 2010/11.

20. GENERAL SERVICES CAPITAL PLAN 2008/2009

Submit report by the Executive Director of Corporate Services providing the General Services Capital Plan for 2008/09 as recommended by the Corporate Management Team (CMT).

21. HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2008/2009, 2009/2010, 2010/2011

Submit report by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development seeking approval for the 2008/2009 HRA Capital Programme together with in principle approval for draft 2009/2010 and 2010/2011 proposals.

22. QUESTION

Question to Councillor William Hendrie from Councillor David McBride

What guarantees will the Convenor give to the residents affected by the Knowle Burn Flood Prevention scheme that the change in funding mechanisms imposed by the SNP Government will not delay implementation of the Project and that the total amount of money available under the previous financial scheme will not be cut?

23. NOTICES OF MOTION

The Council is requested to consider the undernoted motions which have been submitted in accordance with Standing Order No. 8:-

(a) Motion by Councillor George Black – Motorcycles

This Council calls upon the Scottish Government to examine the results of the survey carried out by Traffic for London on the effects of permitting motor cycles to use bus lanes.

Although we do not have Bus lanes within our local Authority area at the present time as strategies continue to develop to improve traffic management we feel that we should have a view on this subject.

Given the traffic problems experienced in and around cities in Scotland at the present time this survey should be utilised within any strategic report or review of transport policy locally and nationally.

(b) Motion by Councillor Patrick McGlinchey – Unfunded Burdens in Education

This Council notes with satisfaction that, following elected member scrutiny, the Education & Lifelong Learning budget has been brought under control by the Department and it now looks like the 2007/2008 estimated outturn of £85.2m shall not be exceeded.

However Council notes that the 2008/2009 Education budget contains a number of unfunded burdens as follows:

- An increase is required in the Pre 5 budget for staff absence cover **£118,637**
- An increase is required in the Primary budget for travel costs for the network team **£7,000**
- The balance of the increase in SQA fees is required in Secondary Education of **£3,000**
- An increase is required in the travel budget for Sports Development due to re-location **£4,000**

This Council requests the Executive Director of Educational Services to bring forward a report to the next meeting of the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee detailing how he will incorporate these additional and unfunded burdens within his Department's Budget.

(c) Motion by Councillor Geoff Calvert – 'Fairer' Scotland Fund being NOT FAIR to West Dunbartonshire!

This Council notes that the new 'Un-Fairer' Scotland Fund, replacing as it does the existing ring fenced funds of:-

- (i) The Community Regeneration Fund;
- (ii) The Working for Families Fund;
- (iii) The Not in Education; Employment or Training Fund;
- (iv) The Financial Inclusion Fund;
- (v) The Workforce Plus Fund; and
- (vi) The Community Voices Fund

has resulted in a totally unjustified CUT in funding for West Dunbartonshire of £1.29m over the next three years.

This means an immediate cut from the Council's 2008/9 allocation by £250,000, an even greater cut of £439,000 in 2009/10 and then topped off by an even bigger cut of £440,000 in 2010/11.

This Council believes that these unjustified, unnecessary and unfair CUTS imposed on the poorest residents of West Dunbartonshire by the SNP Government at Holyrood must be challenged.

The SNP claims that there is now in Scotland a new, open and transparent relationship, based on mutual respect, between Councils and the Scottish Government. In such an atmosphere of mutual respect, this Council believes that it would be unthinkable for the SNP Government not to rectify this glaring mistake.

Therefore, this Council instructs the Leader of the Council to meet with relevant Scottish Ministers, not excluding the First Minister himself. The Leader is encouraged and expected to argue and win the case to have these cuts reversed in the first instance. Having done so, it is logical that a modest inflationary increase that will ensure that services to the most vulnerable will not be cut, would be granted.

Given the urgency of the situation, and that these cuts will take effect from 1st April, the Leader of the Council is asked to report his success back to the March meeting of the Council.

(d) Motion by Councillor David McBride – SNP Additional 1% Cut in Departmental Budgets

This Council notes that the SNP Budget approved by Council on 14th February included the following commitment under Departmental Achievement Opportunities:- ***'... I am therefore asking the council to agree that the respective departmental Executive Directors are tasked with; ... '33. To reduce departmental annual revenue expenditure by 1% by April 2009.'***

Given that this 'tasked objective' is in addition to the cuts already imposed by this SNP Administration, and on an Annual Budget of £236 million, this equates to another cut of up to £2.36 million, this Council therefore requests that the Chief Executive brings forward a report to the March Council meeting indicating what the effects of this additional SNP cut of £2.36million will have on departmental services.

(e) Motion by Councillor Geoff Calvert – 'Sold Properties'

This Council notes that common repairs to owner-occupiers of 'Sold Properties' in tenemental and flatted-type accommodation that is shared by Council tenants are charged out to owner-occupiers on a pro-rata basis.

This Council also notes that there is great unease among owner-occupiers when receiving bills that there is no clarity that they are being charged the correct pro-rata amount. Bills currently include a brief description of the work done, the date, the relevant work number and the amount to be charged to the individual property. There is no breakdown of how the costs were arrived at, nor the total cost of the work for the repair and how the individual's allocation is calculated.

This Council accepts the principle that anyone being expected to pay a bill is entitled to know what the bill is for, what work was covered, how the costs are arrived at and how their own share is calculated.

Therefore, this Council is to ensure that all future bills to owner-occupiers will include the current information AND a full breakdown of how costs are calculated and the justification for the individual share.

(f) Motion by Councillor Rooney – Supporting People Funding

Council notes that the intentional under funding of West Dunbartonshire by the SNP Government means that the Supporting People spending has been reduced from £15.535 to £13.7m. Council also notes that the previous Labour Administration had carried forward a balance of £1.475m and that £1.175m of these balances has been applied this year to meet the current contract values. Council recognises that the contract values may reduce further during this year through negotiations with providers.

This means that there is an unallocated surplus of £300,000 for next year. Given this Council's commitment to openness and transparency it is agreed that a full report detailing the spending of supporting people funds in 2007/2008 and the planned spend for 2008/2009; 2009/10; and 2010/11 is brought to the March Council meeting.

The report should highlight the expected efficiencies that will be achieved through renegotiating contracts; and the expected risks including intentional reductions in Supporting People spending from the Scottish Government. The report should also highlight the changes in service provision from 2007/8 to the service provision in 2008/9.

(g) Motion by Councillor McGlinchey – Class Sizes

Council notes that parents, pupils and teachers have been seriously misled by the SNP on their promise to reduce class sizes.

Council notes that the promise to reduce class sizes is undeliverable and in the words of government advisers "the scale of the commitment does not allow it to be delivered in the life time of a parliament" and "the commitment will take 8-10 years to achieve."

Council further notes the minutes of a meeting between the government and the Deans of Faculties of Education which states that SNP ministers were told their commitment would require an additional 4,000 student teachers and the doubling of places available on BEd courses neither of which have been actioned.

Council believes that this indicates that the SNP's commitment to class size reduction was nothing more than an empty promise. Council also considers that to state in the concordat that councils must '*as quickly as possible*' to deliver class sizes of 18 is disingenuous, given that the SNP were explicitly told by the government own advisors that it was not deliverable within this three year spending period.

It is clear that unless West Dunbartonshire Council receives significant investment from the Scottish Government then the SNP Administration will fail to deliver the class size reductions that their SNP ministers promised in their manifesto.

The Council therefore instructs officers to cost the full implementation of the SNP promise to reduce class sizes and calls on the Convener of Education & Lifelong Learning to write to the Scottish Government requesting the full funding required for WDC.