

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

At the Special Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held in the Council Chambers, Clydebank Town Hall, Dumbarton Road, Clydebank, on Tuesday, 21 December 2010 at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Provost Denis Agnew and Councillors Jim Bollan, Jim Brown, Geoff Calvert, Gail Casey, Jim McElhill, Jim Finn, William Hendrie, Douglas McAllister, David McBride, Jonathan McColl, Ronnie McColl, Patrick McGlinchey, Craig McLaughlin, Willie McLaughlin, Marie McNair, John Millar, Iain Robertson, Martin Rooney and May Smillie.

Attending: David McMillan, Chief Executive; Joyce White, Executive Director of Corporate Services; Elaine Melrose, Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development; Keith Redpath, Director of West Dunbartonshire Community Health and Care Partnership;); Lynn Townsend, Head of Service (Support); David Connell, Head of Finance and ICT; Gillian McNeilly, Manager of Accounting; Andrew Fraser, Head of Legal, Administrative and Regulatory Services; and Craig Stewart, Committee Officer.

Apologies: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors George Black and Margaret Bootland.

Provost Denis Agnew in the Chair

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

It was noted that there were no declarations of interest.

GENERAL SERVICES REVENUE ESTIMATES 2011/12

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

- (a) presenting Council with details of the proposed financial settlement for 2011/12 from the Scottish Government together with the draft revenue estimates for 2011/12 and the remaining saving options which will allow for their consideration and consultation prior to the Special Council Meeting on the 27 January 2011; and

- (b) providing details of the indicative funding gaps for 2012/13 and 2013/14 which would require to be closed by a combination of efficiencies, balances and council tax. In this respect, a package of savings options had been prepared for Members' consideration by the Corporate Management Team (appended to the report) in order to assist with closing the gaps for 2011/12 and thereafter.

It was noted that a copy of the draft Revenue Estimates book for 2011/12, as referred to in the aforementioned report, had already been circulated to Members.

At this point, Councillor C. McLaughlin circulated the SNP Group's Budget proposals entitled 'Revenue Budget Proposals 2011/2012 Shaping Our Future' which would go out to full public consultation (shown as Appendix 1 to these Minutes).

Councillor C. McLaughlin moved:-

That the Council agrees to authorise the Leader of the Council to accept, in principle, the additional funding of £8.551 million that was available to West Dunbartonshire Council in 2011/12 on condition of the delivery of the commitments outlined in paragraph 3.5 and Appendix 3 to the report.

That Members are asked to indicate by 7 January 2011 on any options that they would wish to consult on that would necessitate the closure of a service and/or buildings.

That the Chief Executive be requested to draft a letter for signature by the Leader of the Council and Leader of the Opposition, to the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Sustainable Growth expressing the Council's concerns and disappointment at the budget allocation to West Dunbartonshire Council.

As an amendment, Councillor McBride moved:-

Council notes the SNP draft budget for 2011/12.

In doing so we condemn the SNP Government's further attack on West Dunbartonshire Council funding.

After suffering amongst the lowest budget settlement for the last three years we are further disadvantaged by a savage cut of 4.53% to funding after being advised to expect a cut of 2.6%.

The people of West Dunbartonshire reject the SNP Council and Government's continued attacks on the poor and disadvantaged in our community.

This Council agrees that we have been forced into an impossible position and left with no option but to accept the poor settlement under threat of an even greater cut.

In addition we restate the decision of the Community Participation Committee that any and all potential service closures must be subjected to community consultation.

At this point Councillor Rooney seconded the amendment by Councillor McBride and Councillor R. McColl seconded the motion by Councillor C. McLaughlin.

During the course of discussion on this item, Councillor Bollan indicated his dissent in relation to the matters under consideration and requested that this be recorded in the minutes.

It was also agreed that all Members should receive a hard copy of the savings options in order that as much detail as possible could be provided and in order to enable full consideration to take place.

During consideration of these matters, the Executive Director of Corporate Services and the Head of Finance & ICT were heard in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions.

On a vote being taken, 8 Members voted for the amendment and 10 for the motion which was accordingly declared carried.

The meeting closed 8.00 p.m.