

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

At a Hybrid Requisitioned Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held in the Civic Space, 16 Church Street, Dumbarton on Wednesday, 25 September 2024 at 2.00 p.m.

Present: Provost Karen Murray Conaghan and Councillors Jim Bollan, Ian Dickson, Diane Docherty, Fiona Hennebry, Gurpreet Singh Johal, Daniel Lennie, David McBride, Jonathan McColl, Michelle McGinty, June McKay, John Millar, Lawrence O'Neill, Lauren Oxley, Chris Pollock, Martin Rooney, Gordon Scanlan, Hazel Sorrell, Clare Steel and Sophie Traynor.

Attending: Peter Hessett, Chief Executive; Alan Douglas, Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration (Legal Officer); Laurence Slavin, Chief Officer – Resources, and Section 95 Officer; Peter Barry, Chief Officer – Housing and Employability; Amanda Graham, Chief Officer – Citizen, Culture and Facilities; Victoria Rogers, Chief Officer – People and Technology; Carol Alderson, Finance Manager; Michelle Lynn, Assets Co-ordinator; George Hawthorn, Manager of Democratic and Registration Services; and Carol-Ann Burns, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies: Apologies for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor James McElhill.

Provost Karen Murray Conaghan in the Chair

STATEMENT BY CHAIR

Provost Karen Murray Conaghan advised that the meeting was being audio streamed and broadcast live to the internet and would be available for playback.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

RECORDING OF VOTES

The Council agreed that all votes taken during the meeting would be carried out by roll call vote to ensure an accurate record.

POLITICAL ADMINISTRATION

It was noted that in terms of Standing Order No.3(b) Councillors Fiona Hennebry, Gurpreet Singh Johal, David McBride, Michelle McGinty, John Millar, Lawrence O'Neill, Martin Rooney, Hazel Sorrell and Clare Steel had submitted a request that a requisitioned meeting be called to debate the Political Administration of the Council.

Councillor Scanlan moved:-

Council recognises that there is no SNP Alliance and that almost every Council in Scotland operates by minority Administration.

Council also recognises that, as the Group with the greatest numbers, it is for Labour to seek to fulfil their mandate and lead the Council.

Minority administration requires comprise and more collegiate working than simply ruling by majority but is achievable and can lead to better outcomes for our communities.

Councillor Rooney, asked Councillor Scanlan if he would accept the following addendum to his motion:-

At the August Council, the Labour Group of Councillors indicated their intention to step down from the political leadership to allow the SNP opposition councillors to form an administration.

It is clear that neither a Labour coalition nor an SNP coalition is forthcoming, so an alternative solution needs to be found as a matter of urgency.

The uncertainty over the political leadership is a real; concern for the public and our staff. Therefore, Council agrees the following:-

- The Council need to work together in the best interests of the people of West Dunbartonshire.
- In particular, we will work to ensure that a balanced budget can be delivered by West Dunbartonshire Council in each of the next three years.
- The Council will use its earmarked reserves over the next three years to help work towards financial sustainability.
- To ask the Chief Executive to explore with the parties on potential joint working arrangements.
- In the short time the Labour Group of councillors will take on responsibility for the political leadership until the December council meeting while working arrangements are put in place that demonstrate the new minority administration can cooperate with members to deliver the vital services and financial sustainability that the council requires.

Following discussion, Councillor Scanlan confirmed his acceptance of the addendum and thereafter the motion with addendum, was then agreed by the Council.

VACANCIES ON COUNCIL COMMITTEES, ETC.– SEPTEMBER 2024

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration requesting the Council to fill the current list of vacancies on Council committees, senior councillor positions, working groups and outside bodies as a result of recent resignations by Elected Members.

After discussion and having heard the Chief Executive in further explanation and in answer to Members’ questions, Councillor Rooney, seconded by Councillor McBride, moved that Council agrees to make the following appointments:-

	APPOINTMENT	NOMINATION	NOTES
1.	Leader	Martin Rooney	Council Leader
2.	Depute Provost	Hazel Sorrell	Senior Councillor
3.	Depute Leader	David McBride	Senior Councillor
4.	Education Services	Clare Steel	Senior Councillor
5.	Housing & Communities Services	Gurpreet Singh Johal	Senior Councillor
6.	Corporate Services	Martin Rooney	Senior Councillor
7.	Infrastructure, Regeneration & Economic Development	David McBride	Senior Councillor
8.	Planning and Licensing Spokesperson	Lawrence O’Neill	Senior Councillor
9.	Appeals Committee	Fiona Hennebry	Senior Councillor

	APPOINTMENT	NOMINATION	NOTES
1.	Alexander Cross Cameron Bequest Committee	Leave vacant	To be filled by the successful Councillor following the Kilpatrick by- election.
2.	Depute Convener Cultural Committee	Clare Steel	N/A
3.	Educational Services Committee member.	Leave vacant	To be filled following the Kilpatrick by- election.
4.	Licensing Board Depute Convener	Hazel Sorrell	
5.	Planning Committee & Local Review Body member	Leave vacant	To be filled following the Kilpatrick by- election.
6.	Tendering Committee Deputy Convener	Hazel Sorrell	N/A
7.	Gault Trust	Hazel Sorrell	Depute Provost
8.	Member/Officer Cost of Living Working Group	SNP to nominate.	2 x SNP
9.	Glasgow City Region City Deal	Martin Rooney	Leader of the Council or substitute nominated by the Leader
10.	Dunbritton Housing Association	SNP to nominate	1 x Opposition Councillor
11.	Lomond & Clyde Care and Repair	SNP to nominate	2 x substitutes opposition members
12.	West Dunbartonshire Citizens Advice Bureau	SNP to nominate	1 x Board Member

The Council agreed the nominations of Elected Members to fill the various vacant positions listed above, with immediate effect and noted that any vacancies would be reported to Council in December 2024, after the results of the Ward 4 – Kilpatrick By-election was known.

The meeting closed at 2.33 p.m.