

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

At a Hybrid Requisitioned Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held in the Civic Space, 16 Church Street, Dumbarton on Wednesday, 29 November 2023 at 6.04 p.m.

Present: Provost Douglas McAllister and Councillors Jim Bollan, Karen Murray Conaghan, Ian Dickson, Craig Edward, 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: Alan Douglas, Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration (Legal Officer); Laurence Slavin, Chief Officer – Resources and Section 95 Officer; 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 were intimated on behalf of Councillors Diane Docherty and James McElhill.

Provost Douglas McAllister in the Chair

STATEMENT BY CHAIR

Provost McAllister 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 done by roll call vote to ensure an accurate record.

ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT

It was noted that in terms of Standing Order No. 3(b) Councillors Diane Docherty, Jonathan McColl, Lauren Oxley, Chris Pollock, Gordon Scanlan and Sophie Traynor had submitted the following:-

We the undersigned request that a requisitioned meeting be called to debate the following motion:

West Dunbartonshire Council supports the United Nations Secretary General's calls for a ceasefire in Gaza.

West Dunbartonshire Council condemns in the strongest possible terms the atrocities committed by Hamas on, before and after October 7th.

However, there can be no justification for war crimes, the suffering of innocent Palestinian civilians every day due to hostile actions must stop.

Councillor Scanlan was heard in support of the motion which he moved.

The Council agreed the motion. Councillors Bollan and Edward requested that their abstention was recorded in respect of this item.

URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS

It was noted in terms of Standing Order No. 8 Councillor Martin Rooney had submitted a motion relating to an urgent item of business for the Council to consider which had been accepted by Provost Douglas McAllister.

Motion by Councillor Martin Rooney – Israel-Gaza War Ceasefire

Councillor Rooney moved:-

West Dunbartonshire Council unequivocally condemns in the strongest possible terms Hamas's barbaric and unjustifiable terrorist attacks against Israeli citizens on 7 October 2023 and therefore:

- Demands the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages;
- Agrees that all human life is equal,
- Abhors the loss of innocent lives, and
- Affirms the right of all Israelis and Palestinians to live in peace and security;

The Council also agreed that:

- The killing of innocent civilians in Gaza, including women and children who have been besieged by Israeli forces, must stop;
- We associate ourselves with the United Nations Secretary-General's statements that there must be an immediate humanitarian ceasefire to allow

civilians to escape harm, for hostages to be released, for humanitarian aid to reach those in need, and affirming that international humanitarian law, including the Geneva Conventions, must be upheld;

- We reiterate our solidarity with Scotland's Jewish, Muslim, and Palestinian communities and condemns antisemitism, Islamophobia or any other form of hatred;
- We welcome the Scottish Government's contribution of £750,000 towards the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East's flash appeal for Gaza, and the humanitarian assistance announced by the UK Government;
- We reaffirm that a credible, lasting and sustainable peace can only be based on the two-state solution through reinvigorated diplomatic and political efforts in the Middle East Peace Process, and agrees with many in the international community that all parties must agree to an immediate ceasefire.

Furthermore, the Council recognises that in order for any ceasefire to work, it requires all sides to comply.

- Council is horrified by Hamas statement that they would repeat the October 7th attacks and continue rocket fire;
- Council regrets that Benjamin Netanyahu has stated that he will not even consider a ceasefire;
- Council therefore calls on the international community to use every form of diplomacy to try and create the conditions on the ground to make a ceasefire a reality.

Finally West Dunbartonshire Council calls on the International Criminal Court to investigate the conduct of all parties in this conflict; and reaffirms our commitment to a lasting peace and a two state solution with the end of illegal occupation, siege, and settlements. In addition, the Council calls on the Chief Executive to write to the UK Government expressing our concerns and enclosing a copy of this motion.

The Council agreed the motion. Councillors Bollan and Edward requested that their abstention was recorded in respect of this item.

The meeting closed at 6.33 p.m.