

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

At the Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held in the Council Chambers, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton, on Wednesday 30 May 2007 at 7.00 p.m.

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

Attending: David McMillan, Chief Executive; Ronnie Dinnie, Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Land and Environmental Services); Irving Hodgson, Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Housing and Regeneration); Liz McGinlay, Director of Education and Cultural Services; Bill Clark, Director of Social Work Services; David Connell, Head of Finance; Terry Lanagan, Head of Service (Schools' Estate); Stephen Brown, Head of Legal and Administrative Services and George Hawthorn, Senior Administrative Officer.

Also Attending: Chief Superintendent Roger, Strathclyde Police, Mr. Cameron, MBE, Chair of the Balloch and Haldane Community Council and Mr McPhail.

Apology: An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Jim Finn.

Provost Denis Agnew in the Chair

OPEN FORUM

The Council noted that no open forum questions had been received from members of the public.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Statutory Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held on 16 May 2007 were submitted and approved as a correct record subject to a correction to the time the meeting closed, which should have read 2.45 p.m.

VARIATION IN ORDER OF BUSINESS

Having heard Provost Agnew, the Council agreed to vary the order of business as hereinafter recorded in these minutes.

VALE OF LEVEN ACUTE HOSPITAL SERVICES

A report was submitted by the Director of Social Work Services advising the Council of the latest stages in the Health Board's review of Acute Services at the Vale of Leven Hospital.

Councillor Robertson, seconded by Councillor J. McColl, moved as follows:-

This Council recognises that the recent announcement of Greater Glasgow & Clyde NHS to remove services at the Vale of Leven site is the final threat to the viability of the hospital.

The Council agrees that the announcement by NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde seems to have been timed to take advantage of fledgling administrations at both national and local level. It is clear that Greater Glasgow & Clyde NHS were well aware before the election of the outcome of the review of health services, but chose to hold it over until after the election.

The Council recognises that the Vale of Leven hospital is essential, not just for the health of the people of this area but also for the neighbouring communities, and that it is a key employer of local people.

It is important that the Council leads from the front in developing a strategy for the future of the Vale of Leven Hospital and its services.

The Council recognises that there is a need for a fresh approach to the sustainability of services at the Vale of Leven site. Following the comments of Tom Divers, Chief Executive of Greater Glasgow & Clyde NHS this Council also recognises that a North of the River option for local acute health services is now more difficult to achieve within the framework of Greater Glasgow & Clyde NHS.

With this in mind, the Council agrees to unite to fight the proposed service cuts and to fight to restore lost services at the Vale of Leven site.

To this end, officers are instructed to establish a Health Action Group and seek an independent expert to lead it. This should involve community reps, United Campaign members, Hospitalwatch members, hospital staff, union reps, Health Board members, all relevant Constituency and Regional MSPs, and Councillors from both West Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute Councils. Council urges Greater

Glasgow & Clyde NHS and Highland NHS to co-operate fully with this initiative.

The Council agrees to co-ordinate and assist in the administration of a pro-active campaign with the agreement and support of all groups to protect and enhance services at the Vale of Leven Hospital.

Officers are asked to consult with the relevant bodies and draft reports (to be presented at the August Council) addressing the following three options:-

1. The potential to develop locally based acute services, as envisaged by the Kerr report, should be explored fully. This should include partnership working from the Council and the Community Health Partnership in its delivery.
2. Highlands NHS taking over control of the Vale of Leven Hospital from Greater Glasgow & Clyde NHS and developing the site as a Southern Highland District Hospital Hub.
3. Encourage Greater Glasgow & Clyde NHS with the co-operation Highland NHS to deliver Acute services at the Vale of Leven site.

This Council welcomes the assurance of the new Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing that she will require independent scrutiny of Health Boards' proposals before they go out to public consultation, and that this new requirement will be applied in the case of changes to services proposed for the Vale of Leven Hospital.

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

This Council is appalled by the undue haste with which Greater Glasgow & Clyde Health Board have publicised the results of the NHS Working Groups that were set up to examine the future direction of the Vale of Leven Hospital. Furthermore, this Council is at a loss as to why the Health Minister allowed the Health Board to announce the outcome of the review without first consulting the Council.

The recommendations of the NHS Working Groups are unacceptable even prior to a three month consultation.

The Council's policy regarding the Vale of Leven is clear. The maximum number and range of services, including Anaesthetics, must be maintained on the Vale of Leven site. Where there are specialist clinical needs that cannot be provided on-site, then the services should be provided 'north of the river', either at the Golden Jubilee Hospital in Clydebank or Gartnavel. Paisley is not a long-term option. Jackie

Baillie MSP has consistently argued this position to Ministers, clinicians, community groups and elected members.

SNP campaign literature during the election campaign is clear on its policy:

“Under the SNP, Health Services will be local.”

“Health Services will be delivered as close as possible to communities.”

“We believe in local Health Services.”

This Council requests the Chief Executive to write to the Health Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, MSP to urge her to instruct the Health Board to take no further action on the report and to make no public announcements or management announcements that will demotivate the highly respected and valued staff at the Vale of Leven Hospital until she has made a personal visit to the Hospital and the Council so that she will be able to make a fully informed decision on the future of the Vale of Leven Hospital.

In the meantime, this Council is unanimous in its support for the efforts of Jackie Baillie, MSP, in her campaign to maintain the maximum range of services at the Vale of Leven Hospital and offers her any assistance that we can provide in order to ensure an equitable and sustainable future for the Hospital.

On a vote being taken, 10 Members voted for the amendment and 11 for the motion which was accordingly declared carried.

PROPOSED REVISION OF WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL’S BYELAW FOR THE PROHIBITION OF THE CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOL IN DESIGNATED PUBLIC PLACES

(a) Report by Chief Executive

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing information on issues relevant to the proposed extension of the Byelaw to prohibit the consumption of alcohol in designated public places within West Dunbartonshire to cover Balloch Castle Country Park and the immediate surrounding area.

The Head of Legal and Administrative Services was heard in further explanation of the report.

Thereafter, Provost Agnew invited Chief Superintendent Roger to address the Council on the issue. Chief Superintendent Roger spoke in support of the proposed extension of the Byelaw and gave an assurance that Police Officers would use their discretion when implementing the additional powers, if approved.

Provost Agnew then invited Mr Murdoch Cameron, MBE, Chair of the Balloch and Haldane Community Council to address the Council. Mr Cameron informed the Council that he represented the views of various local organisations in the Balloch area and the West Dunbartonshire Licensing Forum, all of which were in favour of the proposed extension of the Byelaw. He also took the opportunity to explain to the Council some of the problems which local people had to contend with as a result of bad behaviour due to excessive drinking in Balloch Park.

At this point Provost Agnew invited Mr McPhail, a local resident, to address the Council. Mr McPhail explained to the Council that he had circulated a petition in support of the extension of the Byelaw to all local hotels, bars and restaurants and it had been signed by a number of visitors to the area as well as residents. He expressed the view that the current situation whereby some people were drinking to excess and causing problems had an adverse effect on tourism and needed to be addressed.

Having heard the Head of Legal and Administrative Services and Chief Superintendent Roger in answers to Members' questions, the Council agreed to approve the undernoted motion by Councillor Rooney:-

This Council notes that the decision to allow drinking in public north of Balloch Road including Balloch Castle Country Park has negative consequences for local residents and visitors to Balloch.

Council agrees that the Byelaw prohibiting the drinking of alcohol in public must be extended to cover all of Balloch.

The Chief Executive is instructed to make all the necessary arrangements for public consultation on the proposed extension of the Byelaw.

APPOINTMENTS TO WORKING GROUPS, OUTSIDE BODIES AND JOINT BOARDS

With reference to the Minutes of the Statutory Meeting of Council on 16 May 2007 (Page xx, paragraph xx refers), a report was submitted by the Chief Executive requesting the Council to make nominations to working groups, outside bodies and joint boards, etc.

Councillor Robertson, seconded by Councillor McElhill, moved:-

That the Council should approve the list of nominations to outside bodies, etc. as detailed in the paper circulated to Council (see Appendix 1 to these minutes).

Having heard Councillor Bollan, Councillor Robertson agreed to the undernoted additions to the list circulated to Council (Appendix 1):-

Outside Body

Clydebank Independent Resource Centre
Management Committee

Dunbritton Housing Association

Strathleven Regeneration Company

Joint Board

Strathclyde Fire and Rescue Board

Nomination

Councillor Bolla

Councillor Black

Councillor Black

Nomination

Councillor Black

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

That the Council should approve the list of nominations to outside bodies, etc. as detailed in the paper circulated to Council (see Appendix 2 to these minutes).

ADJOURNMENT

Having heard Councillor J. McColl, the Council agreed to adjourn the meeting for a short period of time.

The meeting resumed at 8.45 p.m. with all those Members on the sederunt in attendance with the exception of Councillor Marie McNair.

On a vote being taken, 9 Members vote for the amendment and 11 for the motion which was accordingly declared carried.

REPRESENTATION ON COSLA

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive inviting the Council to make nominations to the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA).

Councillor Robertson, seconded by Councillor McElhill, moved:-

This Council nominates Councillor Iain Robertson and Councillor Ronnie McColl as the Administration nominations and invites the Opposition to nominate one representative, in accordance with the COSLA guidance on political balance.

Furthermore, this Council nominates Councillor Rob Murray (Angus Council) as President of COSLA.

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

This Council makes the following nominations:

- Councillor Pat Watters (South Lanarkshire Council) as President of COSLA; and
- Councillor Corrie McChord (Stirling Council) as Vice President of Cosla.

Following the advice from COSLA regarding political balance, this Council agrees that Councillor Martin Rooney and Councillor Margaret Bootland be nominated as West Dunbartonshire Council's delegates to COSLA, the other nomination to be made by the SNP minority administration.

On a vote being taken, 9 Members vote for the amendment and 11 for the motion which was accordingly declared carried.

CREATION OF MEMORIAL WALL IN CLYDEBANK

A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Land and Environmental Services) updating the Council on proposals for the creation of a Memorial Wall in Clydebank to commemorate service personnel who lost their lives during active service with the armed forces and civilian victims of the Clydebank Blitz.

The Council agreed:-

- (1) to note that the timescale for an official opening on Veteran's Day, 27 June 2007, would not be achieved;
- (2) that a ceremony of dedication of the site be held on Veteran's Day 2007 with commemoration events held annually thereafter;
- (3) that the Memorial Wall Working Group be reconvened with Provost Agnew as Chair;
- (4) that the membership of the Working Group be widened, for particular meetings, as it considered appropriate; and
- (5) that the Working Group should discuss and agree arrangements for the creation of the Memorial Wall and dedication/commemoration events and that its proposals be submitted to a future meeting of Council.

QUESTIONS

The undernoted questions were submitted in terms of Standing Order No 9:-

(a) Question from Councillor Patrick McGlinchey to Provost Denis Agnew

Councillor Agnew was fully committed to the Schools PPP project during his three and a half years as a Labour Councillor. Indeed as Education Spokesperson for a year he championed the Schools Regeneration Programme and took a lead role in the PPP consultation process. Councillor Agnew remained fully committed to the Schools PPP project during his five months as an Independent Councillor. At the Statutory Council meeting in May, Councillor Agnew was elected into the position of Provost of West Dunbartonshire by nine SNP Councillors, Independent Councillor George Black, and by his own vote. Will Provost Agnew confirm to the people of West Dunbartonshire that he will stick by his principles and that he will remain fully committed to the Schools PPP programme that he has championed and supported over the past four years?

Response from Provost Agnew

Provost Agnew took the opportunity to comment on specific points made in the question and then responded to the question as follows:-

I am fully committed to regeneration of the schools' estate in West Dunbartonshire.

(b) Question from Councillor John Millar to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Iain Robertson, the Council's representative on GG&C NHS Board

As West Dunbartonshire's new member of the Board of NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde what action will Councillor Robertson take to stop the Board from removing vital services at the Vale of Leven Hospital?

(c) Question from Councillor David McBride to Councillor Iain Robertson, the Council's representative on GG&C NHS Board

As the new member of NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde Health Board, can Councillor Robertson tell this Council what weight he believes should be attached to patient need and public opinion in arriving at a decision about services at the VOLH?

Councillor Robertson responded to the questions at (b) and (c) above as follows:-

I would like to thank both Councillor Millar and Councillor McBride for their questions albeit a little premature as my appointment to the Health Board requires Ministerial approval.

In answering, I would like to advise Members of my progress to date.

Along with Councillor Rooney and Councillor Smillie, I attended a pre-meeting with Keith Redpath and Tom Divers at which I left him in no doubt that, as a Council, we were very angry at the way in which he had sprung the announcement on both our authority and the new Health Minister.

I have had a brief discussion with Vivian Dance, Healthwatch and Mick Conroy, GMB, following which I arranged a free let of the Municipal Buildings for their meeting to take place this evening. I have also agreed through Mick Conroy to meet with Trades Union representatives at the hospital as soon as is practical.

I have made preliminary contact with Nicola Sturgeon, Health Secretary, regarding the independent review which she has ordered. I have had informal discussions with Jackie Pollock, United Campaign Group and also Jackie Baillie, MSP, who has arranged to meet the Health Minister on 14 June 2007 to discuss the situation.

In addition, I have contacted Derek Mackay, the Leader of Renfrewshire Council who will also be serving on Greater Glasgow & Clyde NHS Board with a view to joining forces on the Board to pursue our common agendas regarding services. So, unlike Councillor McColl, when he served on the Argyll & Clyde Health Board, I will be able to get a seconder to my motions.

However, in response to the second question, I will use the following statement which I took from the Scottish Health Council website as my guiding light:-

We all want to see a health service that delivers high quality services, and meets the needs and expectations of the thousands of people who depend on it every day. A truly responsive health service must seek, listen to and act upon the views and experiences of patients and the public. Only then will the needs of patients and communities be considered equally, alongside evidence of clinical effectiveness and value for money, in driving service improvements.

NOTICES OF MOTION

In accordance with the terms of Standing Order No 8 (a), the Council considered the undernoted motions:-

(a) Motion by Councillor Jim Bollan – The Black Bridge

This Council agrees to take all necessary measures to repair, protect and save the Black Bridge which crosses the River Leven at Dillichip Bond, Bonhill.

This Bridge is a main route for pedestrians and links the Communities of Bonhill with Renton and Alexandria. The Bridge is also the main route for many students attending the Vale of Leven Academy.

Officers are instructed to devise a repair and improvement scheme which will halt the current deterioration in the Bridge structure and protect it from any further damage.

Officers are delegated powers to act on this emergency matter in consultation with the Convener of Community Safety and Environmental Services, Cllr William Hendrie, and the local members.

Councillor Bollan was heard in support of the above motion which was seconded by Councillor Black.

Having heard the Chief Executive, the Council approved the above motion and noted that a report on the Bridge would be submitted to the next meeting of Council.

(b) Motion by Councillor Rooney – Schools PPP Projects

This Council notes with concern, the apprehension felt by Council officers, pupils, parents, staff, and the wider community of West Dunbartonshire in relation to the SNP's stated policy of cancelling all PPP projects that have not reached financial closure.

With both the Scottish Executive and West Dunbartonshire Council under SNP administrations, and financial closure of the West Dunbartonshire Schools PPP programme not able to be completed before the Autumn of 2007, this Council understands the legitimacy of these worries and fears.

In order to allay all fears and concerns, this Council confirms, that it will support the successes achieved so far within the Schools PPP new build programme and the choice of preferred bidder.

Furthermore, this Council confirms, without equivocation or evasion, that it will continue to work to financial closure under the existing PPP financial mechanism to ensure that our children move into new build, state-of-the-art schools with confirmed dates of entry in mid 2009.

Councillor Rooney was heard in support of the above motion which was seconded by Councillor Bootland.

As an amendment, Councillor Robertson, seconded by Councillor McElhill, moved:-

This Council notes with extreme concern the motion from Labour Group Leader Martin Rooney concerning Public Private Partnership.

It is clear from Councillor Rooney's motion that he and a faction within the Labour Group have no hesitation in exposing this authority to financial risk and public ridicule.

Given that senior officials are continuing to negotiate with BAM PPP it is not appropriate for this Council collectively to prejudice any discussions or future decisions at this time.

Furthermore, given the recent history of the previous Labour administration and the Audit Scotland report, Members should note the lessons learned in relation to good governance and ask Council to agree to allow senior officials to continue their negotiations.

However this Council acknowledges that PPP does not represent the best or cost effective method of funding our school's regeneration programme and that the previous Labour Administration has failed to address the significant threat to Council jobs.

Therefore Council instructs officers to prepare reports on alternative methods of funding for major School's Regeneration Projects and other major public works, bringing these reports to the earliest possible Council meeting, but no later than September 2007.

On a vote being taken, 11 Members voted for the amendment and 9 for the motion. Accordingly, the amendment was declared carried.

(c) Motion by Councillor McBride – Toilets in Dumbarton Town Centre

This Council notes that the automatic, unstaffed toilets in Dumbarton Town Centre are deeply unpopular.

In responding to the deep concerns of many residents of Dumbarton concerning the inadequate provision of public toilets in Dumbarton Town Centre, this Council requests the Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Land and Environmental Services) to bring forward a report to the Council meeting on 27th June with recommendations as follows:-

1. The refurbishment of the public toilets building in Quay Street, Dumbarton with an indicative completion date of 30th September 07.
2. If the building cannot be refurbished, then options for a new-build, either on the existing site or one close to it with a projected completion date included.
3. Options for financing the above work to be provided including, but not exclusively, capital consents and prudential borrowing.
4. Reinstating a staffed facility at no charge to the public with an indicative date of opening, including all costs involved with options for meeting them.
5. Recommendations for alternative locations for the automatic toilets to which they may be re-sited following the reinstatement of the fully staffed and refurbished facility in Dumbarton Town Centre.

Councillor McBride was heard in support of the above motion which was seconded by Councillor Calvert.

As an amendment, Councillor Robertson, seconded by Councillor Hendrie, moved:-

This Council notes with concern Labour's intention to commit to unplanned expenditure at the risk of other key services in a reckless manner.

It is clear from this approach, that Labour have learned nothing from the Best Value Audit conducted by Audit Scotland.

This Council however welcomes the commitment to the reversal of the policies of the last Labour Administration.

Furthermore, the Council also welcomes the new Councillor's agreement with local SNP policy regarding public toilet facilities, closed under Labour.

The Council also notes that delivering the planned re-opening of the toilets in the current financial year is not feasible at this time. This position is caused by the fact that ex-Council Leader Martin Rooney made no financial provision in this year's current Council budget, set by him a few months ago, for the re-opening of the facility.

However the Council agrees that quality public toilet facilities should be available in Dumbarton and instructs officers to prepare costs for consideration by the Corporate Services Committee.

On a vote being taken, 11 Members voted for the amendment and 9 for the motion. Accordingly, the amendment was declared carried.

(d) Motion by Councillor Rooney – Byelaws – Balloch Castle Country Park

This item was considered earlier in the meeting.

(e) Motion by Councillor Geoff Calvert – Maintenance of Garden Properties (Housing Stock) and Condition of Common Closes

This Council notes with extreme disapproval the state of maintenance of garden properties in the Council Housing Department's stock in many Council areas.

Inaction on behalf of the Housing Department is inexcusable given the commitment of this Council to tackle anti social behaviour in all its forms.

This Council requests the Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Housing and Regeneration) to liaise with all elected members to identify properties within their wards that need to be targeted and to act immediately to address the existing state of the properties.

Thereafter the Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Housing and Regeneration) is requested to bring a report to the meeting of the Council on 27th June that is to make recommendations for an intensive Estate Management Plan.

This plan should be pragmatic and realistic and it should recognise that some tenants will not act responsibly and this behaviour must be addressed for action.

The plan should recognise its fit within the anti social behaviour agenda and recommendations should address potential for partnership working alongside Council driven initiatives

The plan should include consideration of increased use of community wardens, litter wardens, estate officers and environmental officers.

The plan should include costings and timescales and be capable of short term gains as well as long term strategic actions.

Councillor Calvert was heard in support of the above motion which was seconded by Councillor Millar.

As an amendment, Councillor J. McColl, seconded by Councillor Robertson, moved:-

This Council notes with concern the state of maintenance of garden properties in the Council's housing stock.

This Council notes the report submitted to the Social Justice Committee at its meeting on the 13th September 2006 outlining the introduction of a system of estate audits for the management of the Council's estates.

Furthermore, Council thanks the staff of the Housing, Regeneration & Environmental Services department for their work devising a plan of action and their time taken carrying out both public and internal consultation.

As Cllr Calvert is fully aware, there is extensive on-going work with regards to estate management planning in response to criticism from the Best Value Audit, and given the findings of the recent Best Value Audit regarding staff morale, Council notes its disappointment that Cllr Calvert failed to ascertain what action had been taken before forming a motion that criticises the efforts of Council employees.

Council instructs the Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration & Environmental Services (Housing and Regeneration) to submit a progress report to the Social Justice Committee at its first meeting in November. This timescale should allow the department to use the new I.T system to collate enough data to provide members with a good indication of the progress in this matter.

Council advises elected members that they can contact the department with information if they have concerns with regards to a specific property.

On a vote being taken, 11 Members voted for the amendment and 9 for the motion. Accordingly, the amendment was declared carried.

(f) Motion by Councillor Willie McLaughlin – Accidents on A82

Due to a number of recent tragic accidents on the A82, this Council agrees to initiate a safety review at known danger spots throughout the whole authority.

There are a number of important areas that need to be included as follows:

1. A review of speed limits on the A82 between Drumry roundabout and the Drumchapel flyover;
2. A review of overtaking procedures for HGV's/large vans between Bowling Roundabout and the Erskine Bridge (A82);
3. A review of the area of Gavinburn switch is of major importance;
4. A review of the crossing points in the area of Milton; and
5. A review of the turning options at the top of Greenhead Road.

Elected members may be aware of specific danger spots in other areas regarding the A82 and I would invite them to pass these details on to officers for consideration.

The Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Land and Environmental Services) should liaise with other public bodies such as Strathclyde Police and Strathclyde Fire and Rescue Services in order to ensure that the report to Council provides a full range of options and recommendations for improving road safety along the length of the A82.

Having heard Councillor Black, Councillor McLaughlin agreed to accept the undernoted addendum to his motion:-

In addition to the Motion, we as a Council welcome the new awareness expressed by the Labour Group in relation to the problems experienced by local users of the A82.

This Council further instructs that the Acting Director should facilitate a meeting with Amey to bring forward a plan which has a broad local input in relation to present difficulties in relation to vehicular access and egress on the A82 at the village of Milton and also at Barnhill Road and Argyll Avenue, Dumbarton. We would also require to deal with the problem of excessive speeds at these areas.

We, as an Authority, would also require Amey representatives to attend a meeting of the full Council to discuss these issues with Council with a view to having them resolved.

Furthermore, Glasgow City Council should be consulted on this issue, given its interests in the A82.

The Council approved the motion and the addendum as stated above.

(g) Motion by Councillor Martin Rooney – Balloch Improvement Fund

This Council agrees in principle to using some of the profit obtained from the lease of Balloch Castle Country Park Events arena to provide benefits for Balloch Residents and visitors to the area.

Council notes that Balloch and Haldane Community Council has already made contact with the Head of Finance with a view to obtaining support to set up a 'Balloch Improvement Fund'.

It is suggested that a levy of 10% is put on any future events in Balloch and that this would be put into the Balloch Improvement Fund to instigate improvements in the Balloch area.

The Chief Executive is instructed to bring forward a report to a future Council meeting that examines the possibility of setting up a Balloch Improvement Fund.

Councillor Rooney was heard in support of the above motion which was seconded by Councillor McBride.

As an amendment, Councillor McElhill, seconded by Councillor Robertson, moved:-

The Council agrees to assist the Balloch and Haldane Community Council to examine the feasibility of establishing a community improvement fund for the Balloch Area.

However the Council agrees that the principle of top slicing funding for a particular area is highly desirable, but not practical.

Creation of such a policy would create a considerable division in our communities whereby those areas with the resources would benefit while others areas would loose out.

In addition the Council is at a loss to understand why Councillor Rooney did not implement such a policy commitment while he was Council Leader, particularly as the request was made when he was Council Leader.

Furthermore, the Council condemns Councillor Martin Rooney and a faction within the Labour Group for their deliberate attempt to generate division within our communities by pursuing an agenda of self-promotion, rather than working constructively for the benefit of the communities of West Dunbartonshire.

This authority notes with some confusion the paradoxical approach of Councillors Calvert and Rooney to this matter given that they failed to deal with all these serious matters raised in their motions when they and their colleagues held the previous Administration.

Therefore, this Council agrees that as part of a new Tourism and Culture strategy currently being devised by the Administration that all tourist areas across the Council will benefit, including Balloch, from new services and investment.

On a vote being taken, 11 Members voted for the amendment and 9 for the motion. Accordingly, the amendment was declared carried.

(h) Motion by Councillor Martin Rooney – Vale of Leven Hospital

This item was considered earlier in the meeting.

The meeting closed at 10.45 p.m.