

MINUTE of MEETING of WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL held within Council Chambers, West Lothian Civic Centre, on 22 January 2019.

Present – Provost Tom Kerr (Chair), Depute Provost Dave King (Vice Chair), Councillors Alison Adamson, Frank Anderson, William Boyle, Diane Calder, Janet Campbell, Harry Cartmill, Pauline Clark, Tom Conn, Robert De Bold, Jim Dickson, David Dodds, Angela Doran, Bruce Fairbairn, Lawrence Fitzpatrick, Peter Heggie, Chris Horne, Carl John, Charles Kennedy, Sarah King, John McGinty, Andrew McGuire, Dom McGuire, Andrew Miller, Cathy Muldoon, George Paul, Kirsteen Sullivan, David Tait and Damian Timson

Apologies – Councillors Stuart Borrowman, Peter Johnston and Moira Shemilt

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Item 16 (Motion – Advice Shop) – Councillor Cathy Muldoon declared an interest in that a family member was employed in the Advice Shop;

Item 17 (Motion – Parking at St John's Hospital) – Councillor John McGinty declared an interest in that was the council's appointed member of NHS Lothian Health Board;

Item 17 (Motion – Parking at St John's Hospital) – Councillor Dom McGuire declared an interest in that he was a council appointed member of St John's Hospital Stakeholder Group;

Item 17 (Motion – Parking at St John's Hospital) – Councillor Dom McGuire declared an interest in that he was a council appointed member of St John's Hospital Stakeholder Group;

Councillor Janet Campbell declared an interest in that she was a paid employee of NHS Lothian;

Item 17 (Motion – Parking at St John's Hospital) – Councillor Harry Cartmill declared an interest in that he was a council appointed member of St John's Hospital Stakeholder Group;

Item 17 (Motion – Parking at St John's Hospital) – Councillor Andrew McGuire declared an interest in that he was a paid employee of Neil Findlay MSP and would not participate in the item of business.

2. MINUTES :-

- a) The Council approved the minute of West Lothian Council held on 20 November 2018;
- b) The Council noted correspondence arising from previous decisions;
- c) The Council noted the minute of West Lothian Leisure Advisory Committee held on 25 June 2016;

- d) The Council noted the minute of Performance Committee held on 5 November 2018;
- e) The Council noted the minute of Employee Appeals Committee held on 26 October 2018;
- f) The Council noted the minute of West Lothian Planning Committee held on 21 November 2018; and
- g) The Council noted the minute of West Lothian Council (Planning) held on 21 November 2018.

3. ELECTION BUSINESS

Community Planning Partnership Board

The Council was informed that Labour wished to replace Councillor Cathy Muldoon with Councillor Tom Conn on the Community Planning Partnership Board.

Development Management Committee

The Council was informed that Labour wished to replace Councillor Dom McGuire with Councillor George Paul on the Development Management Committee.

Local Review Body

The Council was informed that Labour wished to replace Councillor Dom McGuire with Councillor David Dodds on the Local Review Body.

Health and Care Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel (PDSP)

The Council was informed that Labour wished to replace Councillor Dom McGuire with Councillor Andrew McGuire on the Health and Care PDSP.

Licensing Committee

The Council was informed that Labour wished to replace Councillor Dom McGuire with David Dodds on the Licensing Board

St John's Hospital Stakeholder Group

The Council was informed that Labour wished to replace Councillor Dom McGuire with Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick on the St John's Hospital Stakeholder Group.

Headteacher Appointment Panel

The Council was informed that the SNP wished to appoint Councillor Andrew Miller and Councillor Moira Shemilt to the Headteacher Appointment Panel.

Decision

To agree the membership changes proposed.

4. NOTICE OF MOTION - ALISON KERR, BLACKBURN COMMUNITY ACTION GROUP - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR BRUCE FAIRBAIRN

The Council considered a motion (copies of which had been circulated) submitted by Councillor Bruce Fairbairn in the following terms. It was also noted that a similar motion had been submitted by Councillor Kirsteen Sullivan (Agenda Item 15, copies of which had also been circulated). Councillor Fairbairn and Councillor Sullivan agreed that the two motions could be considered at the same time.

“Alison was announced as the winner of the “Unsung Hero” category of the 2018 Herald Society Awards at the Awards Ceremony in the Marriot Hotel in Glasgow on 1st November 2018

Alison has been an active volunteer working tirelessly in Blackburn for over 25 years. She started through being a parent helper at her children’s school and has continued through the years to use her experiences to help others, initially within the village but now sits on community committees with decision making powers and influence throughout the county.

The Herald Society Awards have been taking place since 2008 and serve to recognise the dedication, imagination and more importantly the vital impact of some of the best work taking place in the Public and Voluntary Sector.

This motion asks that this council sends flowers and a message of congratulations to Alison through the office of the Provost.”

- Moved by Councillor Bruce Fairbairn and seconded by Councillor Kirsteen Sullivan

Decision

To unanimously agree the terms of the motion

5. NOTICE OF MOTION - KEEP SAFE INITIATIVE - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR DAMIAN TIMSON

The Council considered a motion (copies of which had been circulated) submitted by Councillor Damian Timson in the following terms :-

“People who are vulnerable because of learning disabilities, physical disabilities, sensory impairment or mental health problems have the right to feel safe when they are out in the community. Unfortunately, some people can become targets for bullying and harassment and can feel intimidated, scared and frightened to go out.

The Keep Safe Initiative works with a network of businesses such as shops, libraries and cafes who have agreed to make their premises a “Keep Safe” place for people to go if they feel frightened, distressed or are the victim of crime when out in the community.

Disabled and elderly people who wish to take part in the initiative will be issued with a contact card which will contain details of the person’s name, health concerns, communication needs and helpful contact details for friends or family

Businesses who agree to take part in the initiative will be issued with a Keep Safe Sticker to display in the premises window to let vulnerable people know that they provide a “Keep Safe” place. If a person goes into the “Keep Safe” place and shows their contact card to staff, the staff member will reassure the person and ring one of the numbers on the card and/or contact the police if a crime has been committed.

This incredibly effective and basic initiative can make a substantial difference to those who are and feel vulnerable.

This service is provided free of charge by the “I Am Me” community charity and training to staff/volunteers in the premises is provided by the police, also free of charge.

West Lothian Council instructs Officers to identify all suitable Council premises that can provide the “Keep Safe” service to the vulnerable members of the West Lothian community and to bring a report to the next Partnership and Resources PDSP with a view that the “Keep Safe” initiative will be introduced at these premises.”

- Moved by Councillor Damian Timson and seconded by Councillor Peter Heggie

Decision

To unanimously approve the terms of the motion.

6. NOTICE OF MOTION - REGISTRATION OF EU NATIONALS AFTER BREXIT - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR FRANK ANDERSON

The Council considered a motion (copies of which had been circulated) submitted by Councillor Frank Anderson in the following terms :-

“West Lothian SNP Council Group are concerned at the latest proposals regarding EU nationals already resident in Scotland/UK. This appears to go against the EU directive, **“After five years of lawful and continuous residence as a “qualified person”, an EU national automatically acquires a right of permanent residence. There is no requirement for them to obtain any documentation affirming this right.**

West Lothian Council SNP Group considers this proposal as being both humiliating and derogatory to our fellow citizens who may have to go

through this process. There is also no need for this and it will lead to the formation of a 2nd class citizenship.

Council therefore urges the Council to write to the Scottish Government asking them to reassure our EU citizens resident in Scotland that they are welcome to stay and doing all to resist any EU national citizen who resides in Scotland having to go through this process of registration, irrespective of whether it's devolved or not. Furthermore, Council writes to the Westminster Government opposing this retrograde step and urging them to, as a minimum, drop the need for existing EU nationals with the UK, who qualify for permanent residence to go through this proposed process."

- Moved by Councillor Frank Anderson and seconded by Councillor Carl John

First Amendment

"Council welcomes the decision of the UK Government to drop the proposed charge of £65 for registration of EU nationals post Brexit.

Council notes that citizens of the Republic of Ireland were always exempt from the proposed arrangements for Registration of EU nationals.

Council recognises the contribution of EU nationals who have chosen to live and work in the United Kingdom, who contribute positively to its economy and culture and whose skills are essential to our health services, agriculture and the country's wide range of industry.

It is the view of Council that in this period of fluidity on the vexed issue of Brexit, that EU nationals working and living in the UK are given the clear message that they are fully respected, valued and welcome."

- Moved by Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick and seconded by Councillor Kirsteen Sullivan

Second Amendment

"West Lothian Conservative Group welcomes the progress made for EU nationals already resident in the UK following Brexit and notes the following:

You can continue to live in the UK without applying to the EU Settlement Scheme if you have indefinite leave to remain in or enter the UK. However, for those that choose to apply (and meet all the other conditions), they receive "indefinite leave to remain under the EU Settlement Scheme" – also known as settled status.

You do not need to apply if you're an Irish citizen.

It is pleasing to see there will be no charge for anyone applying for either settled or pre-settled status.

The following quote is to be recalled: "The UK is designing a new scheme

in which administrative procedures for application for settled status will be transparent, smooth and streamlined, so as to avoid any unnecessary administrative burdens”

This quote is from the European Commission.

West Lothian Conservative Council Group trust the EU will match the positive steps taken by the UK Government in ensuring similar safeguards are given to UK national's, living and working in the EU.

It is a concern that immigration to Scotland is substantially below that of the rest of the UK and the West Lothian Conservative Council Group warmly welcomes all to West Lothian who have a positive impact on our communities and instruct the council to write to the Scottish Government asking them to take a second independence referendum off the table and therefore ensure more stability exists across Scotland and that both employers and employees are encouraged to West Lothian.

- Moved by Councillor Damian Timson and seconded by Councillor Peter Heggie

A roll call vote was taken on the motion against the first amendment moved. The result was as follows :-

<u>Motion</u>	<u>First Amendment</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Frank Anderson	Harry Cartmill	Alison Adamson
William Boyle	Tom Conn	Bruce Fairbairn
Diane Calder	David Dodds	Peter Heggie
Janet Campbell	Angela Doran	Chris Horne
Pauline Clark	Lawrence Fitzpatrick	Charles Kennedy
Robert De Bold	Dave King	Tom Kerr
Jim Dickson	John McGinty	Damian Timson
Carl John	Andrew McGuire	
Sarah King	Dom McGuire	
Andrew Miller	Cathy Muldoon	
David Tait	George Paul	
	Kirsteen Sullivan	

The first amendment was successful by 12 votes to 11 with 7 abstentions (3 members absent)

A roll vote was taken on the first amendment (surviving position) against the second amendment moved. The result was as follows :-

<u>First Amendment</u>	<u>Second Amendment</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Harry Cartmill	Alison Adamson	Frank Anderson
Tom Conn	Bruce Fairbairn	William Boyle
David Dodds	Peter Heggie	Diane Calder
Angela Doran	Chris Horne	Janet Campbell
Lawrence Fitzpatrick	Charles Kennedy	Pauline Clark
Dave King	Tom Kerr	Robert De Bold
John McGinty	Damian Timson	Jim Dickson
Andrew McGuire		Carl John

Dom McGuire
Cathy Muldoon
George Paul
Kirsteen Sullivan

Sarah King
Andrew Miller
David Tait

Decision

Following a vote the first amendment was successful by 12 votes to 7 with 11 abstentions (3 members absent) and it was agreed accordingly.

7. NOTICE OF MOTION - HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSE BUILDING -
SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR FRANK ANDERSON

The Council considered a motion (copies of which had been circulated) submitted by Councillor Frank Anderson in the following terms :-

“West Lothian Council SNP group are concerned at the growing number of people being accommodated within B&B establishments. This gives no security and a very poor quality of life to the people affected, especially families. Whilst we appreciate that this is no single solution to resolving the situation, there are many issues over which we as a Council have some level of control.

One of the main contributory factors is the lack of available housing. This is exacerbated by the massively delayed programme of New Build which was promised in the last term of the Labour run council. 1000 houses were promised and yet almost 2 years since they should have been delivered, we are still waiting on over 460 to be handed over to our tenants. This has also led to an increase in the number of people being accommodated in B&B's, an enormous overspend in the budget for costs of B&B's, people having to stay longer in Temp Tenancies and West Lothian being one of the worst performing council's regarding homelessness.

We are also almost 2 years since the last Council elections and Labour promised to continue with a New Build programme. To date, there has not been a single report to PDSP on a start to any Council New Build sites. Last year alone, 2017/18, we spent almost £1.6Million pounds on homelessness.

The SNP Group believe that this shows that the current Administration and Executive Councillor are not treating the issue of homelessness as urgent or serious.

The Labour Group calls itself the council's minority administration group. Whether this is accurate or not it must recognise that power brings responsibility. It must recognise that it has an ongoing duty to the council and more importantly to the people of West Lothian to ensure the Labour members nominated as Executive Councillors are on top of their remits and are working effectively. We accept that under Standing Orders it is for the council as a whole to appoint Executive Councillors and to review those appointments. Council can and will do so at the appropriate time.

However, it is time for the Labour Group to face up to its responsibilities no. That should mean carrying out a full ongoing examination of all its nominees but it must now specifically consider the job of the Executive Councillor for Services for the Community and how he has performed and inform the council and the people of West Lothian of its conclusion and whether it thinks that homelessness and the use of B&B accommodation can be tackled effectively under the current appointment. Council agrees that a failure to do so is a failure of political responsibility and leadership.”

- Moved by Councillor Frank Anderson and seconded by Councillor Janet Campbell

Amendment

“Council notes the enormous challenge and pressure faced by homeless presentations in recent years. Council notes that West Lothian Council is not immune to these challenges and highlights the Housing and Rough Sleeping Action Group convened by the Scottish Government as evidence that this is a pressure faced by many other local authorities across Scotland.

Council acknowledges the high use of bed and breakfast accommodation in West Lothian but commends the Housing need service on their proactive approach to bringing down the use of bed and breakfast accommodation, noting a 10.5% reduction in bed and breakfast use now since July 2018.

Council further acknowledges delays in the new build housing programme however notes that these delays have occurred through a variety of external factors largely out with the Council’s control and highlights to the SNP group that their record on house building was far from exemplary. Council notes that in the 5 years of SNP rule between 2007 and 2012 only 253 new build properties were allocated compared with 640 new build allocations between 2012 and 2017.

Council notes the wide range of reports presented to Councillors for approval since the agreement of the 5 year Housing Capital programme on the 13th February 2018 including papers on the next phase of new build housing development; decision to stop development at Nelson Park in Armadale and commit capital money to buy backs and the Council Executive approval of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan on 18th December 2018.

Finally Council reaffirms its support to Councillor Paul in his role as Chair of Services for the Community PDSP and calls on opposition parties to work proactively with administration to reduce homelessness presentations and the underlying causes of these in West Lothian.”

- Moved by Councillor George Paul and seconded by Councillor Andrew McGuire

A roll vote was taken. The result was as follows :-

Motion

Amendment

Abstain

Frank Anderson	Harry Cartmill	Alison Adamson
William Boyle	Tom Conn	Bruce Fairbairn
Diane Calder	David Dodds	Peter Heggie
Janet Campbell	Angela Doran	Chris Horne
Pauline Clark	Lawrence Fitzpatrick	Charles Kennedy
Robert De Bold	Dave King	Tom Kerr
Jim Dickson	John McGinty	Damian Timson
Carl John	Andrew McGuire	
Sarah King	Dom McGuire	
Andrew Miller	Cathy Muldoon	
David Tait	George Paul	
	Kirsteen Sullivan	

Decision

Following a vote the amendment was successful by 12 votes to 11 with 7 abstentions (3 members absent) and it was agreed accordingly.

8. NOTICE OF MOTION - RENTAL EXCHANGE SCHEME - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR FRANK ANDERSON

The Council considered a motion (copies of which had been circulated) submitted by Councillor Frank Anderson in the following terms :-

“West Lothian Council SNP Group are concerned that many of our tenants may not have a credit rating or if they have, it may be poor. This could debar them from gaining access to credit. It is also more likely that many of our tenants will be unable to access better rates on mortgages (if they intend eventually to buy a house), loans, credit cards and their utility bills.

Using the Rental Exchange Scheme, a nationally recognised scheme, paying their rent on time helps build up a positive “credit history”. This is recognised by one of the major Credit Reference companies currently, with the other two major players looking positively at the scheme.

West Lothian Council SNP Group therefore urges Council to prepare a report to explore the options of making this scheme available for any tenant who wishes to participate in aiming to “improve their credit rating”. This report to be presented to the next Services for the Community PDSP, on 5th February.”

- Moved by Councillor Frank Anderson and seconded by Councillor Pauline Clark

Amendment

“The council already has a rigorous approach to income management in place, and in terms of our performance in this area, the council is one of the top performing local authorities in Scotland.

A key element to the council’s approach is continually exploring new ways to support and assist tenants experiencing financial difficulty, and

improving processes to make paying rent a priority for tenants.

The impact of the UK Government Welfare Reforms has had significant impact on the level of arrears and a large proportion of our tenants' ability to pay on time. Whilst the ability to improve the credit score of those who can pay is beneficial, this must be balanced with the negative and disproportionate impact on the credit rating of tenants in receipt of Universal Credit with average waiting times of 8 weeks for payments to be made. This would also impact on tenants in financial difficulty.

The council is currently undertaking a project involving system development work that will bring anticipated benefits to existing processes and early intervention with tenants in arrears. This development is being carried out in partnership with best in sector partners and is scheduled to take place over the next six months.

The feasibility of utilising the Rental Exchange Scheme can be included in the scope of this work and officers are instructed to report back to a future Services for the Community PDSP in 2019."

- Moved by Councillor George Paul and seconded by Councillor Andrew McGuire

A roll call vote was taken. The result was as follows :-

Motion

Alison Adamson
Frank Anderson
William Boyle
Diane Calder
Janet Campbell
Pauline Clark
Robert De Bold
Jim Dickson
Bruce Fairbairn
Peter Heggie
Chris Horne
Carl John
Charles Kennedy
Tom Kerr
Sarah King
Andrew Miller
David Tait
Damian Timson

Amendment

Harry Cartmill
Tom Conn
David Dodds
Angela Doran
Lawrence Fitzpatrick
Dave King
John McGinty
Andrew McGuire
Dom McGuire
Cathy Muldoon
George Paul
Kirsteen Sullivan

Decision

Following a vote the motion was successful by 18 votes to 12 (3 members absent) and it was agreed accordingly.

9. NOTICE OF MOTION - FUNERAL POVERTY - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR FRANK ANDERSON

The Council considered a motion (copies of which had been circulated) submitted by Councillor Frank Anderson in the following terms:-

“The West Lothian Council SNP Group are concerned at the growing number of people being caught in the “Funeral Poverty” trap. Many are victims to “upselling” at a very sensitive and vulnerable time. We are concerned at the rising costs of funerals not helped by this Council increasing its charges by at least inflation every year.

The SNP Group urges Council to prepare a report, for the Council Exec on 26th Feb 19, detailing the options available for a “respectable” funeral within West Lothian.”

- Moved by Frank Anderson and seconded by Councillor Pauline Clark

Amendment

“West Lothian Council recognises that Funeral Poverty is a major issue for many families facing bereavement and that every family deserves the right to conduct the funeral of their loved ones with dignity and without the need to incur significant debt.

Funeral Poverty is a current focus for both Scottish Government and Local Authorities in conjunction with COSLA. The Scottish Government have committed, through an Action Plan on Funeral Poverty, to work with other stakeholders to support moves to reduce funeral poverty. It should however be borne in mind that the costs associated with a funeral, out with local authority controlled costs, are determined by Funeral Directors and other private business stakeholders.

However, Council welcomes and supports Scottish Ministers who have set out proposals to prevent people who are struggling financially from being pushed into poverty by the death of a loved one, who hope to launch the new Funeral Expense Assistance benefit by the summer of 2019.

The Funeral Expense Assistance scheme will replace the existing Department for Work and Pensions funeral payment north of the Border, following the partial devolution of powers over welfare to Scotland.

In this regard Council notes that work is already underway to explore options for “affordable funerals”. Officers met with local funeral directors last month and made tentative discussions that could lead to a locally agreed “affordable funeral” being endorsed by the council, and supported by local funeral directors to be offered as part of the bereavement process to residents of West Lothian.

It was agreed that this process would be followed up in 2019 to culminate in an agreed “affordable funeral” provision within a specified cost range

that was both endorsed by the local authority and supported by funeral directors. Individual meetings to gauge the levels at which this could realistically be set and the service it would provide are in the process of being convened. Once the individual thoughts of the various funeral directors have been gauged the council will convene a follow up meeting to agree the cost range and the levels of service that this will provide.

Once completed, it is anticipated that a report outlining options and seeking endorsement of a West Lothian “Affordable Funeral” model will be presented to Council Executive for approval. It is anticipated that this will be in mid-2019 meeting the current timeline of Scottish Ministers to launch the new Funeral Expense Assistance benefit by the summer of 2019.

Funeral Poverty is a wide ranging and complex issue. Tackling it requires support across a range of service providers. The council are taking steps to influence stakeholders to provide an endorsed West Lothian “Affordable Funeral”. If successful, this will benefit residents of the area at a particularly vulnerable time in their lives.

Council, however, notes with incredulity the concerns of the West Lothian Council SNP with regards to the growing number of people being caught in the ‘Funeral Poverty’ trap. More so, when you consider their Party’s policy towards local government finance where they imposing a 10 year Council Tax Freeze, relenting slightly but implementing a Council Tax cap. Indeed it is worth noting the recent remarks of Patrick Harvie MSP when he commented, *“At least when Thatcher did rate capping she had the decency to do it on a statutory basis not by bullying”*.

These policies come with devastating consequences on the level of services which the Council can provide and support the most vulnerable in our communities.

The SNP Group seems to have collective amnesia regarding the Council Tax freeze and the cap which has reduced the financial resources available to this and other Scottish local authorities.

To protect vital local services the Council has had to introduce charges and increase existing charges. Reducing financial resources to the Council reduces the flexibility of the Council to maintain or protect services to our communities, perhaps the SNP need to join up the dots

Indeed, the accusation by the West Lothian SNP group with regards to this Council is not supported by the facts;

The council carries out a number of social interments each year, although these can be for reasons unrelated to available finance.

The internal costs of cemetery provision are currently heavily subsidised by the local authority and costs do not reflect the provision of the service. As such West Lothian Council already has one of the lower funeral costs for local authorities in Scotland – according to a survey by Citizens Advice Scotland West Lothian ranked 26th out of the 32 local authorities – the seventh lowest.

Costs across local authorities

LOCAL AUTHORITY	Total burial 2016	Cremation 2016	Private Crematorium
1) City of Edinburgh	£2,253.00	£708.00	-
2) East Dunbartonshire	£2,088.75	-	-
3) City of Glasgow	£2,040.00	£599.00	-
4) South Lanarkshire	£1,944.70	£599.40	-
5) Stirling	£1,815.00	-	-
6) Perth and Kinross	£1,746.00	£749.00	-
7 North Lanarkshire	£1,727.00	-	£736.00 Holytown
8) Scottish Borders	£1,670.08	-	£770.00 Melrose
9) Angus	£1,498.90	-	£930.00 Parkgrove
10) Moray	£1,441.00	-	£934.00
11) Aberdeenshire	£1,430.00	-	-
12) South Ayrshire	£1,430.00	£788.00	-
13) Clackmannanshire	£1,429.00	-	-
14) City of Aberdeen	£1,427.00	£693.00	-
15) Argyll & Bute	£1,383.00	£628.00	-
16) Highland	£1,380.00	£849.00	-
SCOTTISH AVERAGE	£1,373.31	£669.37	£773.55
17) West Dunbartonshire	£1,364.00	£617.00	
18) Dumfries and Galloway	£1,310.00	-	£745.00 Dumfries
19) East Lothian	£1,289.00	-	-
20) Fife	£1,184.00	-	-
21) City of Dundee	£1,175.00	-	£934.00
22) Midlothian	£1,141.00	-	-
23) North Ayrshire	£1,140.00	-	-
24) Inverclyde	£1,093.80	£552.00	-

25) Orkney	£1,079.00	-	-
26) West Lothian	£1,037.90	-	£770.00
27) Falkirk	£979.00	£608.00	-
28) East Ayrshire	£967.50	-	-
29) East Renfrewshire	£965.00	-	£890.00
30) Renfrewshire	£916.20	-	£570.00 Paisley
31) Shetland	£900.00	-	£858.00
32) Western Isles	£701.00	-	-

Figures from Citizens Advice
Scotland”

- Moved by Councillor Tom Conn and seconded by Councillor Cathy Muldoon

A roll call vote was taken. The result was as follows :-

Motion

Frank Anderson
William Boyle
Diane Calder
Janet Campbell
Pauline Clark
Robert De Bold
Jim Dickson
Carl John
Sarah King
Andrew Miller
David Tait

Amendment

Alison Adamson
Harry Cartmill
Tom Conn
David Dodds
Angela Doran
Bruce Fairbairn
Lawrence Fitzpatrick
Peter Heggie
Chris Horne
Charles Kennedy
Tom Kerr
Dave King
John McGinty
Andrew McGuire
Dom McGuire
Cathy Muldoon
George Paul
Kirsteen Sullivan
Damian Timson

Decision

Following a vote the amendment was successful by 19 votes to 11 (3 members absent) and it was agreed accordingly

10. NOTICE OF MOTION - KAIAM - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR KIRSTEEN SULLIVAN

The Council considered a motion (copies of which had been circulated) submitted by Councillor Kirsteen Sullivan in the following terms :-

“West Lothian Council recognises the tremendous efforts of the West Lothian community in supporting the employees made redundant by Kaiam on Christmas Eve. Council thanks local community volunteers, Council staff, local businesses and all those involved in fund raising efforts and in the donation, collection and disbursement of foods, toys, toiletries and other resources.”

Decision

To unanimously agree the terms of the motion

11. NOTICE OF MOTION - WHITBURN BAND - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR KIRSTEEN SULLIVAN

The Council considered a motion (copies of which had been circulated) submitted by Councillor Kirsteen Sullivan in the following terms :-

“Council recognises the tremendous achievement of the Whitburn Band on winning a fifth successive title at the recent Open Championship. This marks only the second time that a Scottish band has achieved five in a row at a national contest.

Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to congratulate the Whitburn band on its continuing success at the highest level.”

Decision

To unanimously agree the terms of the motion

12. NOTICE OF MOTION - LGBT YOUTH SCOTLAND'S GOLD CHARTERMARK AWARD - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR KIRSTEEN SULLIVAN

The Council considered a motion (copies of which had been circulated) submitted by Councillor Kirsteen Sullivan in the following terms :-

“Council recognises the outstanding achievement of West Lothian Council's Community Learning & Development team in recently achieving the LGBT Youth Scotland's Gold Chartermark award. This award is also the first of its kind to be won by a Community Learning & Development Team, and in turn, by a local authority in Scotland.

Council congratulations the CLD team on this exceptional achievement for promoting equality and inclusivity in our schools and communities.”

Decision

1. To unanimously agree the terms of the motion; and
2. To unanimously agree that the Provost write a letter of appreciation to the Community Learning & Development Team Leader

13. NOTICE OF MOTION - UNSUNG HERO AWARD - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR KIRSTEEN SULLIVAN

To note that the motion had already been dealt with at Minute Item 4

14. NOTICE OF MOTION - ADVICE SHOP - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR ANDREW MCGUIRE

The Council considered a motion (copies of which had been circulated) submitted by Councillor Andrew McGuire in the following terms :-

“Council recognises the outstanding achievement of West Lothian Council’s Advice Shop in recently achieving the National Standards for Advice Providers levels 1, 2 and 3 covering money, housing and benefits advice. West Lothian Council is the first council to achieve all 3 levels and this is as a result of the commitment and dedications of staff helping those most in need within our communities.”

Decision

To unanimously agree the terms of the motion.

The Provost adjourned the meeting for lunch. He intimated that he would not return after the adjournment. The Depute Provost took the chair when the meeting resumed and Councillor Jim Dickson did not return to the meeting.

15. NOTICE OF MOTION - PARKING AT ST JOHN'S HOSPITAL - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR HARRY CARTMILL

Having previously declared an interest Councillor Andrew McGuire did not participate in the following item of business.

The Council considered a motion (copies of which had been circulated) submitted by Councillor Harry Cartmill in the following terms :-

“Council notes with increasing concern the frustration of visitor; staff and patients at St John’s Hospital about the lack of adequate parking facilities in and around the hospital. Council understand that NHS management has recently made further changes to parking permits for staff and St John’s which will see fewer staff be allowed to park on hospital ground.

Council shares the concerns of those using the Hospital and accepts that a permanent long term solution must be found to this crisis. Council also acknowledges the great financial strain on NHS Lothian's budgets currently and therefore instructs the Chief Executive to write to the Scottish Government to request additional ring fenced capital funding is provided to NHS Lothian to improve parking facilities at St John's Hospital."

- Moved by Councillor Harry Cartmill and seconded by Councillor Dom McGuire

Amendment

"West Lothian SNP Group empathises and fully understands the issues surrounding car parking at St John's Hospital.

However we welcome the initiative by the SNP Scottish Government in 2008 to abolish car parking charges. Unfortunately, due to Labour Policy PFI/PPP Funding for some hospitals the Scottish Government were unable to remove these from some hospitals.

West Lothian SNP would urge St John's Hospital and the NHS to proactively encourage staff to look at other methods of getting to work, bearing in mind their opportunity to lead in a health care setting. These options could include car sharing, pool cars, cycle to work scheme, e-bikes.

Whilst the Scottish Government have increased the amount of money available to the NHS, the use of this money for car parking would appear to not be the best option at present.

West Lothian SNP Group would request Council to write to the NHS urging them to consider all options available to them."

- Moved by Councillor Frank Anderson and seconded by Councillor Sarah King.

A roll vote was taken. The result was as follows :-

Motion

Alison Adamson
Harry Cartmill
Tom Conn
David Dodds
Angela Doran
Bruce Fairbairn
Lawrence Fitzpatrick
Peter Heggie
Chris Horne
Charles Kennedy
Dave King
John McGinty
Dom McGuire

Amendment

Frank Anderson
William Boyle
Diane Calder
Janet Campbell
Pauline Clark
Robert De Bold
Carl John
Sarah King
Andrew Miller
David Tait

Cathy Muldoon
George Paul
Kirsteen Sullivan
Damian Timson

Decision

Following a vote the motion was successful by 17 votes to 10 (with 6 members absent) and it was agreed accordingly.

16. NOTICE OF MOTION - GREAT WAR CENTENARY
COMMEMORATIONS - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR JOHN
MCGINTY

The Council considered a motion (copies of which had been circulated) submitted by Councillor John McGinty in the following terms :-

“West Lothian Council notes that the centenary commemoration of the sinking of the HMV Iolaire on 1 January 2019 marked the completion of the Great War Centenary Commemoration events organised by the UK and Scottish Governments.

Council also recalls the highly successful series of local West Lothian events marking key anniversaries of the Great War since the beginning of the centenary commemorations in August 2014.

Councils commends the UK and Scottish Governments for the centenary commemoration programmes and thanks all those organisations and individuals who contributed to the local West Lothian programme of Great War centenary commemorations events.

Council agrees to request that the Provost organise a Civic reception for those key organisations and individuals who helped to organise and deliver the West Lothian Great War centenary commemorations programme as a mark of the Councils appreciation for all their efforts, and resolves that the sacrifice of all those who gave their lives during the course of the Great War should never be forgotten.”

Decision

To unanimously agree the terms of the motion

17. HEAD TEACHER AND DEPUTE HEAD TEACHER VACANCIES -
QUESTION TO EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR FOR EDUCATION -
SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR PETER HEGGIE

A question to the Executive Councillor for Education, Councillor David Dodds, was submitted by Councillor Peter Heggie in the following terms:-

“How many Head Teacher and Depute Head Teacher posts in West Lothian are filled on an interim basis?”

Councillor David Dodds provided a verbal answer to the written question.

Councillor Heggie indicated that he wished to put supplementary questions as provided for in Standing Orders. He did so and Councillor Dodds undertook to provide a written answer in due course, copied to all members.

Decision

1. To note the written question put and the verbal answer given; and
2. To note the supplementary questions put and that a written answer to one of the supplementary questions would be provided in due and copied to all members.

18. HOUSING SURVEY - QUESTION TO EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR FOR SERVICES FOR THE COMMUNITY - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR BRUCE FAIRBAIRN

A question to the Executive Councillor for Services for the Community, Councillor George Paul, was submitted by Councillor Bruce Fairbairn in the following terms :-

“At the full council meeting in March it was agreed by the Executive Councillor for housing that he would discuss with the relevant officers about conducting a root and branch survey on the condition of WLC housing stock. What was the outcome of those discussions?”

Councillor George Paul provided a verbal answer to the written question.

Councillor Fairbairn indicated that he wished to put supplementary questions as provided for in Standing Orders. He did so and Councillor Paul undertook to provide written answers in due course, copied to all members.

Decision

1. To note the written question put and the verbal answer given; and
2. To note the supplementary questions put and that a written answer to the supplementary questions would be provided in due course and copied to all members.

19. ECONOMIC GROWTH - QUESTION TO EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR FOR DEVELOPMENT & TRANSPORT - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR CHRIS HORNE

A question to the Executive Councillor for Development and Transport, Councillor Cathy Muldoon, was submitted by Councillor Chris Horne, in the following terms :-

“What measures and actions have West Lothian Council taken since the beginning of this minority Labour administration to encourage and improve economic generation across the County?”

Councillor Cathy Muldoon provided a verbal answer to the written question.

Councillor Horne indicated that he wished to put supplementary questions as provided for in Standing Orders. He did so and the Executive Councillor provided answers to the supplementary questions.

Decision

1. To note the written question put and the verbal answer given; and
2. To note the supplementary questions put and the verbal answers given.

20. POOL CARS - QUESTION TO EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR FOR ENVIRONMENT - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR FRANK ANDERSON

A question to the Executive Councillor for Environment, Councillor Tom Conn, was submitted by Councillor Frank Anderson, in the following terms :-

“At the November Council meeting, Council accepted that there would be an “urgent report” on the use of the Council pool cars. Currently, 2 months later, we appear to have no report. When can we expect this “urgent report”?”

Councillor Tom Conn provided a verbal answer to the written question.

Councillor Anderson indicated that he wished to put supplementary questions as provided for in Standing Orders. He did so and the Executive Councillor provided answers to the supplementary questions.

Decision

1. To note the written question put and the verbal answer given; and
2. To note the supplementary questions put and the verbal answers given.

21. VOLUNTARY SECTOR RENT PAYMENTS - QUESTION TO EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR FOR VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR FRANK ANDERSON

A question to the Executive Councillor for Voluntary Organisations, Councillor Kirsteen Sullivan, was submitted by Councillor Frank Anderson, in the following terms :-

“Could the Exec Councillor detail for me how much, in financial terms, do

the voluntary sector pay to the Council in rent for the premises they use?”

Councillor Kirsteen Sullivan provided a verbal answer to the written question.

Councillor Anderson indicated that he wished to put supplementary questions as provided for in Standing Orders. He did so and the Executive Councillor provided answers to the supplementary questions.

Decision

1. To note the written question put and the verbal answer given; and
2. To note the supplementary questions put and the verbal answers given.