



West Lothian  
Council

## ***Joint Consultative Group (Teaching Staff)***

West Lothian Civic Centre  
Howden South Road  
LIVINGSTON  
EH54 6FF

22 January 2015

A meeting of the **Joint Consultative Group (Teaching Staff)** of West Lothian Council will be held within the **Emergency Planning Room, West Lothian Civic Centre**, on **Tuesday 27 January 2015 at 3:00 p.m.**

For Chief Executive

### **BUSINESS**

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Order of Business, including notice of urgent business
3. Declarations of Interest - Members should declare any financial and non-financial interests they have in the items of business for consideration at the meeting, identifying the relevant agenda item and the nature of their interest.
4. Confirm Draft Minute of Meeting of the Joint Consultative Group (Teaching Staff) held on Wednesday 18 December 2013 (herewith).
5. Revenue Budget 2015/16 to 2017/18 and General Services Capital Programme 2015/16 to 2017/18 - Briefing on Budget Proposals by Head of Finance.

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NOTE      **For further information please contact Elaine Dow on 01506 281594 or email [elaine.dow@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:elaine.dow@westlothian.gov.uk)**



MINUTE of MEETING of the JOINT CONSULTATIVE GROUP (TEACHING STAFF) of WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL held within the EMERGENCY PLANNING ROOM, WEST LOTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE on 18 DECEMBER 2013.

Present – Councillors David Dodds, Danny Logue, John McGinty, Andrew Miller, George Paul (substituting for Lawrence Fitzpatrick) and Jim Walker.

Apologies – Councillors Cathy Muldoon and Lawrence Fitzpatrick; Lynne McEwen and Martin Currie.

In attendance:

Moira Niven (Depute Chief Executive, Education Planning and Area Services)

Donald Forrest (Head of Finance and Estates)

James Cameron (Head of Schools with Education Support)

Fiona Russell (Group Accountant)

Elsie Aitken, EIS Union Representative

John MacKinnon, EIS Union Representative

1. ORDER OF BUSINESS

Members agreed that Councillor David Dodds, Vice Chair of the Education Executive, would act as the Chair of the meeting due to Councillor Fitzpatrick submitting his apologies.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

3. MINUTE

The minute of the meeting of the Group held on 24 January 2013 was approved as a correct record.

4. REVENUE BUDGET 2014/2015 - BRIEFING ON BUDGET PROPOSALS

The Group considered a presentation by the Head of Finance & Estates and the Group Accountant which provided an overview of the financial circumstances affecting the council's proposed Revenue Budget for 2014/15 and the 2014/15 to 2017/18 General Services Capital Programme which was to be considered at a meeting of the full council on 19 December 2013.

The Head of Finance & Estates advised that a two year detailed Revenue Budget for 2013/14 and 2014/15 was agreed at the full council meeting held on 29 January 2013, which included indicative Council Tax levels for 2014/15. It was also agreed that the council would develop a medium term financial strategy incorporating the eight priorities and nine workstreams as set out in the Delivering Better Outcomes consultation.

The 2014/15 budget was based on the budget agreed in January 2013 and updated to reflect the latest circumstances.

It was noted that the council was able to deliver the following three commitments in 2014/15 in return for the Government Revenue Grant funding:

- To maintain a council tax freeze;
- To maintain teacher numbers in line with pupil numbers; and
- To secure places for all probationers who required one under the teacher induction scheme.

The Head of Finance & Estates continued by highlighting the anticipated risks and uncertainties in relation to the Council's overall position.

The Group Accountant then provided an update regarding the Council's overall position in relation to its education service which included a breakdown of the school's budget and the challenges ahead.

A summary of the council's capital investment programme was then given as well as the proposed capital investment in school projects allocated from block budgets for the period 2014/15 to 2017/18.

In conclusion, the Group was advised that the council would be invited to agree the 2014/15 Revenue Budget, which took into account previous decisions made by the Council and Council Executive and to agree the 2014/15 level of council tax.

Elsie Aitken, EIS Union Representative, welcomed the proposals outlined in the budget and was reassured that officers of the council had done an excellent job in protecting the budget. Staffing levels had been maintained in schools with priority given to service delivery. The proposals for capital spending in schools were also commendable.

Elsie highlighted concerns raised by the teacher's union that West Lothian was one of the few authorities who had not had a 1% pay rise. She also stated that union members were unhappy about the 11% pay rise awarded to MSPs.

The Head of Finance & Estates confirmed that there was provision within the budget which took into account a 1% pay rise.

The Chair thanked the union members for attending the meeting and for their commitment to the work carried out.