

MINUTE of MEETING of the WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL held within Council Chambers, West Lothian Civic Centre, Livingston, on 24 February 2015.

Present – Provost Tom Kerr (Chair), Depute Provost Dave King, Council Leader John McGinty, Councillors Stuart Borrowman, Tony Boyle, William Boyle, Diane Calder, Janet Campbell, Harry Cartmill, Tom Conn, Alexander Davidson, Martyn Day, Robert De Bold, Jim Dickson, Mary Dickson, Jim Dixon, David Dodds, Lawrence Fitzpatrick, Carl John, Peter Johnston, Danny Logue, Greg McCarra, Anne McMillan, Andrew Miller, Angela Moohan, John Muir, George Paul, Barry Robertson, Frank Toner, Jim Walker

Apologies – Councillors Frank Anderson and Cathy Muldoon.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members declared interests as undernoted:-

Councillor Johnston

Councillor Johnston declared a non-financial interest arising from the following positions held:-

Non-Executive Director of NHS Lothian  
COSLA Spokesperson (Health and Wellbeing)  
Non-Executive Director, Health Improvement Scotland  
EIS member.

Councillor Toner

Councillor Toner declared a non-financial interest arising from his position as a Non-Executive Director, NHS Lothian and as a Chair of West Lothian CHCP.

Councillor Logue

Councillor Logue declared an interest as an employee of NHS Lothian.

2. MINUTES

- (a) The Council approved the minute of the meeting of West Lothian Council held on 13 January 2015.
- (b) The Council approved the minute of meeting of West Lothian Council held on 29 January 2015.
- (c) The Council noted correspondence arising from previous decisions.

- (d) The Council noted the minute of meeting of the Performance Committee held on 24 November 2014.
- (e) The Council noted the minute of meeting of the Employee Appeals Committee held on 27 November 2014.
- (f) The Council noted the minute of meeting of the Employee Appeals Committee held on 5 December 2014.
- (g) The Council noted the minute of meeting of the Joint Consultative Group (Teaching Staff) held on 18 December 2013.
- (h) The Council noted the minute of meeting of the Education (Quality Assurance) Committee held on 18 November 2014.

3. NOTICE OF MOTION - NHS PERFORMANCE - SUBMITTED BY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL JOHN MCGINTY

The Council considered a motion submitted by Council Leader John McGinty in the following terms:-

“West Lothian Council notes with concern that the Accident and Emergency waiting times performance for NHS Scotland has now fallen behind those of NHS England.

Council acknowledges that our NHS staff in Scotland do great work to give people the care that they need but agrees that patients and health service staff are being let down by the SNP Scottish Government.

Council therefore welcomes the pledge from the Scottish Labour Party to use the money raised from a ‘Mansion Tax’ on homes worth more than £2m to fund an extra 1000 nurses for the NHS in Scotland, a step which will help to improve A&E waiting times, and agrees to write to the Cabinet Secretary for Health expressing Council concern over the SNP Scottish Government handling of the NHS in Scotland.”

Moved by Council Leader John McGinty, seconded by Councillor McMillan.

Amendment

“West Lothian Council accepts that there are challenges facing our accident and emergency departments and welcomes the fact that the SNP Government is investing in our NHS to help it to deal with the challenges.

Council notes;

- That over this challenging winter period, nine out of 10 patients were admitted within four hours and 99.9 per cent were admitted within 12 hours.
- That the SNP Government will increase health spending next year by £383 million.
- Labour voted against the SNP budget.
- In 2014-15 0.64% of A&E patients waited more than 8 hours.
- Labour say that in the last 2 years 12,000 patients had waited more than 12 weeks for in-patient treatment in our health service. However, under the last two years of the last Labour Administration, 267,000 patients waited more than 12 weeks.
- In 2013-14, 99,152 patients waited longer than four hours in our accident and emergency departments.
- In 2006-07, the last year of Labour in government, 125,753 patients waited longer than four hours.
- While Labour criticises an accident and emergency performance of 90 per cent in Scotland, it seems to want to defend the performance of its Government in Wales of 81 per cent.
- Since the SNP Government took office, the health budget has increased by £3 billion,
- Almost three times the number of accident and emergency consultants are now working in our national health service,
- Two accident and emergency departments that Labour would have closed if it had won the 2007 election have, together, treated almost 1 million patients.
- The SNP Government has committed to over £400m investment in health and care integration to radically redesign community health services, effectively tackle delayed discharges and by supporting healthy and independent living with our communities substantially reduce unplanned admissions to our acute sector.

Council further notes that Labour leader in Scotland, Jim Murphy MP, has now been caught red-handed, fiddling the NHS figures and agrees to write to Mr Murphy calling upon him to withdraw his unfounded and outrageous claims and to issue an immediate and unequivocal apology to NHS staff and patients as whilst there are undoubtedly pressures in our NHS, the last thing NHS staff, and indeed patients, needs is to have irresponsible politicians touring the country whipping up panic with their false claims.

Council welcomes the Scottish Government's decision to publish weekly

A&E statistics as part of a new programme to increase transparency on NHS data.

Council therefore accepts that whilst our NHS has still got work to do, the commitment and investment from the SNP Scottish Government means that we will not be going backwards to the bad old days of Labour but instead will be seeing sustained and significant improvements across all aspects of our NHS.”

Moved by Councillor Johnston, seconded by Councillor Campbell.

It was agreed that a roll call vote be taken which resulted as follows:-

| <u>Motion</u>        | <u>Amendment</u> | <u>Abstain</u> |
|----------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Stuart Borrowman     | Willie Boyle     | Tom Kerr       |
| Tony Boyle           | Diane Calder     |                |
| Harry Cartmill       | Janet Campbell   |                |
| Tom Conn             | Martyn Day       |                |
| Alex Davidson        | Robert De Bold   |                |
| Jim Dixon            | Jim Dickson      |                |
| David Dodds          | Mary Dickson     |                |
| Lawrence Fitzpatrick | Carl John        |                |
| Dave King            | Peter Johnston   |                |
| Danny Logue          | Greg McCarra     |                |
| John McGinty         | Andrew Miller    |                |
| Anne McMillan        | John Muir        |                |
| Angela Moohan        | Jim Walker       |                |
| George Paul          |                  |                |
| Frank Toner          |                  |                |

#### Decision

The motion was successful by 15 votes to 13 votes, with 1 abstention and 3 members absent (Councillor Robertson having joined the meeting after the vote was taken). The motion was agreed accordingly.

#### 4. NOTICE OF MOTION - JAK TRUEMAN - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR TONER

The Council considered a motion submitted by Councillor Toner in the following terms:-

“Council notes with sadness the passing of Jak Trueman.

Jak Trueman who was a 15 year old student at West Calder High School bravely battled Leukaemia and in doing so raised funds of nearly £70,000. Jak’s commitment to fundraising and awareness about Leukaemia is an inspiration to all.

Councils therefore agrees:-

- that the Provost writes to Jak Trueman's family expressing the council's condolences and congratulations for the fundraising that has happened so far.
- that the Executive Councillor for Education writes to the Head Teacher at West Calder High School congratulating them on holding the school prom early and also for organising a memorial event at Livingston Football Club which was held on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> February."

At this point in the meeting, the Provost informed the Council that Councillor Toner wished to include a third bullet point in his motion as follows:-

"that the refurbished hall in the Auld School in Mid Calder be dedicated/renamed as Jak's Room."

Moved by Councillor Toner, seconded by Depute Provost Dave King.

#### Decision

To unanimously approve the terms of the motion with the inclusion of a third bullet point as follows:

"that the refurbished hall in the Auld School in Mid Calder be dedicated/renamed as Jak's Room."

#### 5. NOTICE OF MOTION - DELIVERING A BETTER, FAIRER AND MORE EQUAL SCOTLAND - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR JOHNSTON

The Council considered a motion submitted by Councillor Johnston in the following terms:-

"West Lothian Council congratulates the SNP Scottish Government for setting its 2015/16 budget to seek to deliver a better, fairer and more equal Scotland.

Council notes that to ensure that all our citizens have the opportunity to achieve their potential, the 2015/16 will invest;

- £16.6 million to implement the findings of the Wood commission on developing Scotland's young workforce;
- £526 million in our colleges and over £1 billion in our universities.
- expand our modern apprenticeship programme towards a target of 30,000 starts each year by 2020;
- secure capital investment of around £4.5 billion in our schools, hospitals, homes and transport networks;
- allocate £81 million to mitigate the most harmful impacts of the UK

Government's welfare reforms;

- deliver more than £200 million to support health and social care integration.

Council further notes that to deliver a fairer society, we must focus on the importance of creating a fair work culture and welcomes the SNP Government's targeting its pay policy at those on the lowest incomes through measures such as the Scottish living wage.

Council notes that more than 100 companies across Scotland are now accredited as living wage employers to the benefit of 100,000 individuals, and welcomes the SNP Government's aim to expand that number to 150 companies by the end of year.

Council further welcomes the progress towards payment of the living wage in both the care at home sector and the care home sector.

Council further welcomes the SNP Government's promotion of better engagement of employees in business through the establishment of the fair work convention.

Council further welcomes the progress that is being made, supported by the additional £200,000 allocated to the Poverty Alliance in November, to encourage more employers to deliver the living wage in Scotland and welcomes the allocation of an additional £200,000 in 2015-16 to support further progress in fair work objectives.

Council accepts that the health of our population and the education of our young people are two of the Government's most important responsibilities.

Council therefore welcomes the SNP Government's overall investment in the national health service to build a health service fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and notes that as a result of this front-line investment;

- patient satisfaction has increased, with 85 per cent of people – an increase of 4 per cent – either fairly or very satisfied with the local health services.
- hospitals are cleaner, with MRSA cases reduced by 89 per cent since 2007;
- more than 600,000 patients have been treated within the 12-233k treatment time guarantee;
- that under the Scottish National Party Government, full-time NHS staff numbers have increased by more than 9,600.
- nine out of 10 people were seen within four hours between October and December 2014,
- 99 per cent of all A and E attendees were admitted, discharged or transferred within eight hours.

- This record is better than performance in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Council further notes that the SNP Government has;

- protected our hospitals with Accident and emergency departments at Monklands and Ayr remaining open.
- acted to deliver a new Edinburgh royal hospital for sick children and the Dumfries and Galloway royal infirmary;
- delivered with NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde the new £842 million south Glasgow hospital which will transform the delivery of acute healthcare in the west of Scotland.

Council further notes that the SNP Government has;

- provided £383 million of extra funding for front-line healthcare in our national health service in 2015-16.
- confirmed that £98 million of those additional resources will boost the funding for territorial boards and tackle delayed discharge.
- established a performance fund of £31.5 million in 2015-16 to improve the quality of care and to reduce waiting times.
- provided our front-line fund for the NHS, not £100 million asked for by Labour, but a 2015/16 budget increase of £388 million and a budget of more than £12 billion.

Council further welcomes the SNP Governments additional investment of more than £300 million in expanded early year's provision.

Council welcomes the SNP Government's key focus on tackling inequality to ensure that Scotland is one of the best countries in the world for children to grow up.

Council accepts that the evidence is clear that the foundations of a successful education system lie in the quality of teachers and asserts that we have thousands of excellent teachers across Scotland.

Council accepts the need to be consistent in our commitment to maintain teacher numbers, in line with pupil numbers, as a central part of our priority to raise attainment.

Council welcomes the fact that over the period 2011-12 to 2014-15, the SNP Scottish Government has provided additional funding of £134 million to local authorities specifically to support the maintenance of teacher numbers.

Council recognises that when specific and sufficient funding is available to maintain the employment of teachers, it is not acceptable that the number of teachers declined slightly last year, with the ratio of pupils to teachers

also rising slightly.

Council therefore welcomes the SNP Government's commitment to maintain teacher numbers, the offer to suspend the penalty for 2014-15 in respect of the fall in teacher numbers, and the offer to provide a further £10 million for 2015/16, on top of the previously allocated £41 million, to support the employment of teachers.

Council further welcomes the announcement of the first tranche of additional funding to tackle educational inequality in Scotland with the SNP Government providing £25 million in 2015/16 to be followed by further funding in next 3 years budgets to focus minds and efforts on supporting those in education who face some of the greatest challenges and on closing the attainment gap between the least and most deprived areas.

Council notes that, yet again, the Labour Party, despite the consistent rhetoric from Labour members in this chamber, failed to move any amendment to the 2015/16 Scottish budget seeking to deliver additional money to Scottish Local Government.

Council further notes that many of the powers needed to deliver the better, fairer and more equal Scotland that we seek remain currently at Westminster. Council endorses the SNP Government's 2015/16 budget but calls for all Scottish political parties to act to ensure that all the fiscal powers needed to empower the Holyrood Parliament to effectively tackle poverty and inequality are delivered from Westminster following the May election.

Moved by Councillor Johnston, seconded by Councillor McCarra.

#### Amendment

"West Lothian Council is committed to strong and engaging Local Government where high quality services are strategically developed based on the needs and priorities of the people that they serve.

Council believes that the Scottish Government continues to undermine this position by repeatedly cutting Local Government budgets with a real terms cut of 2% in revenue funding between 2008 and 2012 and a further 1.6 real terms cut between 2013 to 2016 (SPICE).

West Lothian Council also recognises the importance of the Barnett Formula in securing additional investment from the UK Government to support revenue and capital investment for schools, the NHS and child care etc.

West Lothian Council notes:

- That decisions taken at Westminster and Holyrood to continue with public sector cuts undermine the important role that Local Government has to play in delivering high quality, needs led services.
- The Council Tax freeze has taken more than £2.5 billion out of public



services benefitting the wealthiest, leaving the most vulnerable in our society to face the brunt of the cuts.

- The Scottish Government's commitment to implement the Living wage is piecemeal and rhetorical as repeatedly they refuse to use the £10 billion annual procurement spend to make work fairer and better and to prevent tax avoiders getting public contracts.

Council further believes that if a fairer society is to be achieved all workers must have the right to join a trade union and to take strike action as and when required. Council therefore condemns the Scottish Government's decision to bribe workers with bonus payments to give up their fundamental human right to take strike action. A right that the Labour and Trade Union movement fought for with many losing their lives in the process.

Council recognises that the Scottish Government has failed the young people of Scotland with youth unemployment still an issue across the country. They have failed to strategically develop a robust and workable policy that takes young people from school to work at the pace and level that meets their needs. They have also failed to put in place sufficient budget and policies to address the gender, ethnicity and disability imbalance in the Modern Apprenticeship scheme.

West Lothian Council therefore supports Unison's proposal to develop an industrial strategy for young people in Scotland that is fully inclusive.

West Lothian Council finds it concerning that there has been a fall in the number of college and university places available in Scotland and notes that:

- There is a disproportionate number of students from the most deprived backgrounds going to college
- There is a disproportionate number of students from least deprived backgrounds going to university
- In 2013 there were 140,834 students fewer than in 2007.

All of these statistics taken from Scottish Funding Council confirm that the Scottish Government has made no progress on the representation of the most deprived attending our universities.

West Lothian Council welcomes the Scottish Government's commitment to teacher numbers but believes that the lack of funding to support this policy is another step by the SNP Government to centralise local services and put further financial pressures on Local Government; holding a gun to their heads to force through the policy.

The Audit Scotland, NHS in Scotland 2013/14 report, highlights that the NHS in Scotland is failing in many areas, not least in strategic planning, financial management and meeting waiting times targets. The report also states that the Scottish Government has failed to take on board many of the recommendations previously made by Audit Scotland to review funding allocations and how NHS boards manage finances.

Council notes the key points from this report:

- The SNP have shown no vision for Health and Social Care Services
- Accident and emergency waiting time targets are being missed despite the Scottish Government lowering their own targets.
- The number of patients delayed over four weeks increased by 106% between October 2013 and October 2014.
- The number of bed days increased by 22% to 154,588 between July to September 2013 and July to September 2014
- The number of complaints received by NHS Scotland have increased

West Lothian Council commends the NHS Scotland staff who work tirelessly under increasing pressure to deliver high quality care to patients.

West Lothian council also notes:

- The SNP Scottish Government has cut over 1000 beds since 2007
- The BMA suggest Consultant vacancies could be almost double the official figures
- Despite scaremongering about privatisation of the NHS the number of patients referred to private hospitals and clinics for treatment last year rocketed by 472%
- The concerns of staff regarding the on-going scandal of 15-minute social care visits, falling standards and a race to the bottom in quality, wages and conditions.

West Lothian Council therefore instructs the Chief Executive to write to the First Minister to:

- Urge that the retention of teacher numbers be fully funded, as not to do so will place further budget pressures on West Lothian Council.
- Ask the Scottish Government to support Unison's calls for an Industrial Strategy in Scotland for young people
- Call on the Scottish Government to conduct a full-scale review of the NHS, as supported by the Royal College of Nursing, to address the broad range of pressures being identified in all areas of the NHS by staff and patients and to build a health service that meets the demands and needs of the 21st century."

Moved by Councillor Moohan, seconded by Councillor Dodds.

At this point in the meeting, Councillor Robertson joined the meeting.

It was agreed that a roll call vote be taken which resulted as follows:-

| <u>Motion</u>  | <u>Amendment</u> | <u>Abstain</u> |
|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| Willie Boyle   | Stuart Borrowman | Tom Kerr       |
| Diane Calder   | Tony Boyle       |                |
| Janet Campbell | Harry Cartmill   |                |
| Martyn Day     | Tom Conn         |                |
| Robert De Bold | Alex Davidson    |                |

|                |                      |
|----------------|----------------------|
| Jim Dickson    | Jim Dixon            |
| Mary Dickson   | David Dodds          |
| Carl John      | Lawrence Fitzpatrick |
| Peter Johnston | Dave King            |
| Greg McCarra   | Danny Logue          |
| Andrew Miller  | John McGinty         |
| John Muir      | Anne McMillan        |
| Jim Walker     | Angela Moohan        |
|                | George Paul          |
|                | Barry Robertson      |
|                | Frank Toner          |

The amendment was successful by 16 votes to 13 votes, with 1 abstention and 2 members absent. The amendment was agreed accordingly.

6. NOTICE OF MOTION - DWP STAFF - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR JOHNSTON

The Council considered a motion submitted by Councillor Johnston in the following terms:-

“West Lothian Council notes with extreme concern assertions that DWP staff are being put under pressure to impose sanctions on benefit claimants.

Council notes that David Mundell MP, the Under-Secretary of State for Scotland, attending a meeting of the Scottish Parliament’s Welfare Reform Committee, refused to acknowledge comments from Inclusion Scotland’s Director of Policy, Bill Scott, who has told of DWP staff who have been warned that they will be disciplined because they have not imposed enough sanctions.

Council notes Mr Mundell also failed to address the results of a PCS survey which found that 82% of staff questioned felt that they were under pressure to suggest more people who could be sanctioned.

Council notes Mr Mundell also rejected evidence from a prominent south of Scotland charity organiser, Mark Frankland, on the grounds that he was a campaigner for a Yes vote in last year’s referendum.

Council accepts that all David Mundell achieved at the Welfare Reform Committee was to confirm just how totally out of touch Westminster politicians are from the reality of people’s lives in Scotland.

Council therefore agrees to write to Ester McVey, the UK Minister of State for Employment, calling on her to instruct the Department of Work and Pensions to:

- urgently commission an independent investigation to investigate evidence suggesting that DWP staff are pressurised into sanctioning

people.

- immediately instruct DWP staff to disregard all instructions to target benefit claimants for sanctions.”

**Sources;**

*Bill Scott, Inclusion Scotland: “Therefore there is a bit of sophistry within DWP when it says that no targets exist, no league tables exist and so on. In fact, that is what is happening in practice. I have messages on my mobile phone from Public and Commercial Services Union members who have been taken into disciplinary meetings to be told that they are being disciplined because they have not imposed enough sanctions. Other PCS members have been told that they will not be getting their annual uplift in pay – their increment – because they have not sanctioned sufficient people in the last year.”*

**Welfare Reform Committee report on sanctions, 2014;**

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/78114.aspx>

*The Committee report also states: “A recent survey by the PCS union of its members indicated that 25% believed that they had been given a target and 82% felt that they were under pressure to suggest more people who could be sanctioned.”*

*The full PCS survey is here:*

<http://www.pcs.org.uk/en/departmentsforworkandpensionsgroup/dwp-news.cfm/results-of-the-pcs-membership-survey-on-conditionality-and-sanctions>

**David Mundell on the purpose of sanctions:**

*“I have concluded since I last came to this Committee that any research produced by ourselves would not necessarily command everybody’s acceptance and, therefore, it’s very important that we have independent evidence that we can all subscribe to.”*

*“I’ve set out for you that sanctions are not aimed at employment – they’re aimed at ensuring that people who are in receipt of working benefits look for work.”*

*David Mundell on disregarding evidence:*

*Joan McAlpine MSP: “One of the other organisations that distributes food in your constituency is FirstBase and they distribute food parcels, about 500 upwards, across Dumfries and Galloway. One of the areas that they distribute food to is Kirckconnel and Cobholm in your constituency in Upper Nithsdale. And Mark Frankland has written quite extensively about his work in these former mining villages in Mid and Upper Nithsdale . [...]”*

*David Mundell: “For reasons we won’t go into in the Committee it won’t surprise you to know that I take what Mr Frankland says with a pinch of salt. [...]”*

*Joan McAlpine MSP: “I’m surprised you made that comment about Mr Frankland. He has been working in a voluntary capacity for food for a number of years helping veterans. So whatever his political views are I’m sure you would pay credit to his charity work?”*

*David Mundell: “I think Mark has done a lot of very good work, particularly with drug users but having been a very prominent yes campaigner we could hardly take what he*

*says as totally objective.*

***Welfare Committee Report February 2015.***

Moved by Councillor Johnston, seconded by Councillor Day.

Amendment

West Lothian Council notes that the Department for Work and Pensions completed the national roll out of a new 'Claimant Commitment' in April 2014 and notes with concern the impact of sanction on benefit recipients in West Lothian.

Council further notes that West Lothian Council has also, through the Improvement Service, requested a greater degree of data sharing with the JCP so that LAs and our third sector partners can work together to tailor claimant commitments to the realities facing the claimant, and the realities of the local job market on the ground; and to seek positive outcomes for our mutual customers, and that the council's Anti-Poverty Strategy Development Group is monitoring the situation and works with our partners to provide the required support to people affected by the new arrangements.

Council accepts that meaningful action to address issues facing the citizens of West Lothian is always preferable to political posturing and therefore instructs the Council Chief Executive to bring a report on benefit sanctions and their impact on West Lothian citizens to the May 2015 meeting of the Community Planning Partnership Board.

Moved by Council Leader John McGinty, seconded by Councillor Fitzpatrick.

It was agreed that a roll call vote be taken which resulted as follows:-

| <u>Motion</u>  | <u>Amendment</u>     | <u>Abstain</u> |
|----------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Willie Boyle   | Stuart Borrowman     | Tom Kerr       |
| Diane Calder   | Tony Boyle           |                |
| Janet Campbell | Harry Cartmill       |                |
| Martyn Day     | Tom Conn             |                |
| Robert De Bold | Alex Davidson        |                |
| Jim Dickson    | Jim Dixon            |                |
| Mary Dickson   | David Dodds          |                |
| Carl John      | Lawrence Fitzpatrick |                |
| Peter Johnston | Dave King            |                |
| Greg McCarra   | Danny Logue          |                |
| Andrew Miller  | John McGinty         |                |
| John Muir      | Anne McMillan        |                |
| Jim Walker     | Angela Moohan        |                |
|                | George Paul          |                |
|                | Barry Robertson      |                |
|                | Frank Toner          |                |

Decision

The amendment was successful by 16 votes to 13 votes, with 1 abstention and 2 members absent. The amendment was agreed accordingly.

7. DOCUMENTS FOR EXECUTION

The Chief Legal Officer presented 82 deeds for execution.

Decision

That the deeds be executed.

8. WINTER READY - QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR FOR THE ENVIRONMENT - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR BORROWMAN

A question to the Executive Councillor for the Environment had been submitted by Councillor Borrowman in the following terms:-

“Was West Lothian Council winter ready?”

The Executive Councillor for the Environment provided a verbal answer to the written question.

Councillor Borrowman indicated that he wished to put supplementary questions as provided for in Standing Orders. He did so and the Executive Councillor for the Environment provided a verbal answer to the first question. He advised that he would provide an answer to the second supplementary question in due course.

Decision

1. To note the written question put and verbal answer given.
2. To note the two supplementary questions put and the verbal answer given to the first question.
3. To note that the Executive Councillor would provide an answer to the second supplementary question in due course.

9. CAPPERS BRIDGE - QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR FOR THE ENVIRONMENT - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR BORROWMAN

A question to the Executive Councillor for the Environment had been submitted by Councillor Borrowman in the following terms:-

“Prior to the 2012 Council election in Armadale, Labour said:

- “the failure to provide a bridge with a footpath is an accident waiting to

happen”; and

- “I would like to see a traffic management system. That would be straightforward (for people who are) finding it daunting to have to use this bridge regularly.”

Is this bridge safer now than in 2012?”

The Executive Councillor for the Environment provided a verbal answer to the written question.

#### Decision

To note the written question put and verbal answer given.

#### 10. PARTNERSHIP CENTRE, ARMADALE - QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR FOR CULTURE AND LEISURE - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR BORROWMAN

A question to the Executive Councillor for Culture and Leisure was submitted by Councillor Borrowman in the following terms:-

“When is it planned to open a partnership centre in Armadale?”

The Executive Councillor for Culture and Leisure provided a verbal answer to the written question.

Councillor Borrowman indicated that he wished to put a supplementary question as provided for in Standing Orders. He did so, and the Executive Councillor advised that a written answer would be provided in due course.

#### Decision

1. To note the written question put and verbal answer given.
2. To note the supplementary question put and that a written answer would be provided in due course.

#### 11. COUNCIL BUDGET - QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR JOHNSTON

Written questions to the Leader of the Council had been submitted by Councillor Johnston in the following terms:-

##### **1. Strategic Review of council supported public transport provision - saving £1,490.**

1. On 29<sup>th</sup> January you decided to proceed with the above measure despite details of how the cut would be delivered not being available.
2. What is the current council budget for supported public

transport?

3. What changes in current provision will be required to save £1,490?
4. How many bus routes are currently supported by the council?
5. How many bus routes will be supported by the council once this cut has been implemented
6. What consultation with our communities is planned in respect of these changes?

**2. Negotiation of a revised concessionary rail scheme – saving £272k.**

On 29<sup>th</sup> January you decided to proceed with the above measure despite details of how the cut would be delivered not being available.

This measure proposes to save £272k in 2015/16. How will this be achieved?

What is the current council budget for this?

When did negotiations to deliver a new concessionary rail scheme commence?

**3. Modernisation of the Trust model for sports, outdoor education, cultural and leisure services – saving £882k, job losses 22**

On 29<sup>th</sup> January you decided to proceed with the above measure despite details of how the cut would be delivered not being available,

1. What consultation with staff and trades unions has taken place?
2. Which council services are planned to be transferred out of the council to a trust?
3. What influence on charges and service provision will the council have when these services are transferred?
4. How will this new model improve the council's ability to tackle inequalities?
5. How will this new model improve the council's ability to promote healthy living?
6. Detail the posts to be removed?
7. How many council staff will be required to transfer to the trust?
8. How exactly will the saving of £130k be delivered in 2015/16?

**4. Review of Provision at the Lowport Centre – saving £200k – job losses 8**



On 29<sup>th</sup> January you decided to proceed with the above measure despite details of how the cut would be delivered not being available.

1. How exactly is this saving of £200k delivered?
2. What consultation has taken place with staff and trades unions?
3. How will this review improve the council's ability to provide outdoor education?
4. How will this review affect the council's ability to tackle inequalities by ensuring access to outdoor education is accessible and affordable?

**5. Redesign to primary school devolved school budget formula – saving £1.544m. job losses 39**

On 29<sup>th</sup> January you decided to proceed with the above measure despite details of how the cut would be delivered not being available. How exactly will this reduction of £1.544 million be achieved?

**6. Redesign to secondary school devolved school budget formula – saving £1,421m, job losses 43.**

On 29<sup>th</sup> January you decided to proceed with the above measure despite details of how the cut would be delivered not being available. How exactly will this reduction of £1.421 million be achieved?

The Leader of the Council provided verbal answers to the questions.

Councillor Johnston indicated that he wished to put supplementary questions as provided for in Standing Orders. He did so and the Leader of the Council provided verbal answers to the supplementary questions. It was noted that in his verbal answer to questions 5 and 6, the Leader of the Council advised that elected members would be provided with a list of schools and their budgets for 2014/15 and for 2015/16.

Decision

1. To note the written questions put and verbal answers given.
2. To note the supplementary questions put and the verbal answers given, and that further information would be provided in due course.