



West Lothian
Council

West Lothian Council

West Lothian Civic Centre
Howden South Road
LIVINGSTON
EH54 6FF

12 August 2015

A meeting of West Lothian Council will be held within the **Council Chambers, Civic Centre, Livingston** on **Tuesday 18 August 2015 at 10:00am**.

For Chief Executive

BUSINESS

Public Session

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. Minutes -
 - (a) Confirm Minute of Meeting of West Lothian Council held on Tuesday 23 June 2015 (herewith)
 - (b) Note Correspondence Arising From Previous Decisions (herewith)
 - (c) Note Minute of Meeting of Performance Committee held on Monday 18 May 2015 (herewith)
 - (d) Note Minutes of Meeting of Audit and Governance Committee held on Monday 09 February 2015 (herewith)

Public Items for Decision

5. Election Business -
6. Notice of Motion - SNP Condemn Shameful Tory Tax Credit Cuts - Submitted by Councillor Johnston (herewith)
7. Notice of Motion - Support for the BBC - Submitted by Council Leader John McGinty (herewith)
8. Documents for Execution

Public Items for Information

9. Vacancies - Question to Executive Councillor for Services for the Community - Submitted by Councillor Anderson (herewith)
10. Living Wage - Question to the Leader of the Council Submitted by Councillor Anderson (herewith)

NOTE **For further information contact Anne Higgins, Tel: 01506 281601 or email: anne.higgins@westlothian.gov.uk**

MINUTE of MEETING of the WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL held within Council Chambers, West Lothian Civic Centre, Livingston, on 23 June 2015.

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

Apologies – Councillors Martyn Day and Peter Johnston.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Review of Paediatrics Services (Agenda Item 10)

Councillor Toner declared a non-financial interest arising from his position as (i) Non-Executive Director, NHS Lothian, and (ii) Chair, West Lothian Community Health and Care Partnership.

2. MINUTES

- (a) The Council approved the minute of meeting of West Lothian Council held on 12 May 2015. The minute was then signed by the Chair.
- (b) The Council noted correspondence arising from previous decisions.
- (c) The Council noted the minute of meeting of the Joint Consultative Group held on 27 October 2014.
- (d) The Council noted the minute of meeting of Performance Committee held on 16 March 2015.
- (e) The Council noted the minute of meeting of the Employee Appeals Committee held on 17 April 2015.
- (f) The Council noted the minute of meeting of the Employee Appeals Committee held on 17 April 2015.
- (g) The Council noted the minute of meeting of the Employee Appeals Committee held on 22 May 2015.

- (h) The Council noted the minute of meeting of Employee Appeals Committee held on 22 May 2015.
- (i) The Council noted the minute of meeting of the Education (Quality Assurance) Committee held on 21 April 2015.

3. SENIOR OFFICER APPOINTMENT COMMITTEE - POST OF DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, AREA AND PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICES)

The Council considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Chief Executive concerning the decision on 5 June 2015 of the Senior Officer Appointment Committee in relation to the post of Depute Chief Executive (Education, Area and Planning and Economic Development Services).

The Chief Executive advised that interviews of two candidates for the vacant post of Depute Chief Executive (Education, Area and Planning and Economic Development Services) had been held on 5th June 2015 and the Committee had agreed that Elaine Cook should be appointed to the post. The Committee had delegated to the Chief Executive the making of the necessary arrangements for her to take up the post, including the date of commencement of her employment in that post.

The Council was asked to note that, on 5 June 2015, the Senior Officer Appointment Committee had appointed Elaine Cook to the post of Depute Chief Executive (Education, Area and Planning and Economic Development Services).

Decision

To note the terms of the report and to congratulate Elaine Cook on her appointment to the post.

4. NOTICE OF MOTION - FURTHER £177 MILLION OSBORNE CUTS 'UNACCEPTABLE'

Prior to consideration of this item of business, the Council agreed that the Notice of Motion by Councillor Anderson (Agenda Item 6) and a Notice of Motion by Councillor McGinty (Agenda Item 9) be taken as one item of business, with the latter being put as an amendment against Councillor Anderson's motion.

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

"West Lothian SNP Group condemns the recent announcement of up to £177 million of further cuts to Scotland's budget this year as "completely and utterly unacceptable", after the Chancellor announced plans for in-

year spending cuts despite Scotland's budget having already been set by the Scottish Parliament.

The Scottish Parliament has already agreed our budget for this year and that should be respected, not slashed as part of George Osborne and David Cameron's obsession with austerity.

Furthermore, the SNP Group notes that all Council's have already set their current budget and further cuts to this year's figures are certain to create hardship for our most vulnerable. We note that these cuts are a result of decisions taken at Westminster and the consequences are passed to the Scottish Parliament and possibly local authorities to deal with.

West Lothian Council resolves to:

Write to the Chancellor condemning these cuts and urging him to look at alternatives to his austerity plans."

Moved by Councillor Anderson, seconded by Councillor Calder.

Amendment

"West Lothian Council condemns the decision of the UK Government to announce further reductions in the agreed public sector spending levels for 2015/16 including a reduction of over £170m in the block grant for the Scottish Parliament.

Council calls upon the Scottish Government to act to mitigate these additional cuts for at least the 2015/16 year in order to protect priority public services in Scotland such as Local Government and the NHS, and agrees to write to West Lothian constituency MSP's and MP's calling upon them to deliver on the promise they made at the General Election to end austerity."

Moved by Councillor McGinty, seconded by Councillor Muldoon.

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

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

George Paul
Barry Robertson
Frank Toner

Decision

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

5. NOTICE OF MOTION - LIVING WAGE

The Provost ruled that the motion submitted by Councillor Anderson would not be considered for the following reasons:-

Under Standing Order 28 and Standing Order 20(2) – A motion in similar terms had been submitted to West Lothian Council on 13 January 2015. That motion had not been heard because Council Executive on 7 January 2015 had made a decision on the matter and had called for a report to the Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel. The matter had remained on the Workplan for the PDSP and was scheduled for consideration by the Panel on 7 August 2015.

Under Standing Order 15(4) – The motion did not provide expenditure information and no such information had been verified by the Head of Finance and Estates.

6. NOTICE OF MOTION - DWP - WELFARE SYSTEM – SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR ANDERSON

The Provost ruled that the motion submitted by Councillor Anderson would not be considered under Standing Order 20(2) as the matter was already being dealt with. In clarifying his ruling, the Provost informed the Council that an amendment had been agreed by Council on 24 February 2015 instructing the Chief Executive to bring a report to the May 2015 meeting of the CPP Board. As the DWP representative had not attended the meeting, the report was continued to the next meeting of the CPP Board to be held on 17 August 2015.

7. NOTICE OF MOTION - PUBLIC SECTOR SPENDING CUTS - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR MCGINTY

It had been agreed earlier in the meeting that the motion, and a motion submitted by Councillor Anderson (Agenda Item 6) would be considered simultaneously.

8. NOTICE OF MOTION - REVIEW OF PAEDIATRICS SERVICES

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

“West Lothian Council notes the intention of NHS Lothian to carry out a review of Paediatrics services across the NHS Lothian area.

West Lothian Council values the commitment and hard work of the Paediatric service at St John’s Hospital and agrees it would not be acceptable for the Paediatric Service review to propose any downgrade or reduction in service at the Paediatric Unit at St John’s Hospital.”

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

Amendment

Prior to consideration of an amendment by Councillor Campbell, the Provost asked Councillor Campbell if she wished to remove the final two paragraphs within the paper as they concerned a matter that had already been dealt with by the Council.

Following agreement by Councillor Campbell that those paragraphs be removed, the Council considered the following amendment:-

“West Lothian Council agrees that the provision of 24/7 Children’s services at St John’s Hospital is essential to the well-being of the West Lothian community and agrees to write to NHS Lothian re-iterating this view.

Council further agrees to welcome the “Initial Agreement” by NHS Lothian of the St John’s Hospital campus redevelopment programme. Council notes that this programme outlines a series of investment proposals that will enhance the functionality, condition and capacity of the St John’s site and demonstrates the potential of the site to sustain and support the transfer of services from other NHS Lothian acute sites.

Council agrees to invite NHS Lothian to make a presentation to a future meeting of the Health and Care PDSP to illustrate the redevelopment scenarios and options under consideration within this programme.”

Moved by Councillor Campbell, seconded by Councillor Calder.

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	Frank Anderson	
Tony Boyle	Willie Boyle	
Harry Cartmill	Diane Calder	
Tom Conn	Janet Campbell	
Alex Davidson	Robert De Bold	
Jim Dixon	Jim Dickson	
David Dodds	Mary Dickson	
Lawrence Fitzpatrick	Carl John	
Tom Kerr	Sarah King	
Dave King	Greg McCarra	

Danny Logue	Andrew Miller
John McGinty	John Muir
Anne McMillan	Jim Walker
Angela Moohan	
Cathy Muldoon	
George Paul	
Barry Robertson	
Frank Toner	

Decision

The motion was successful by 18 votes to 13 votes, with 2 members absent, and it was agreed accordingly.

9. NOTICE OF MOTION - LITERACY SCORES - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR DODDS

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

“Council notes with regret the recent fall in literacy scores in Scottish schools and the fall in both the numbers studying modern languages and the pass rates:

- The number of candidates studying Level 3/4/5 German, French or Chinese fell by 37%.
- The number of candidates passing Level 3/4/5 German, French or Chinese fell by more than 40%
- The number of Gaelic Learners at Level 3/4/5 fell by more than 20% and the number passing these exams fell by more than a quarter

Council deplores the remarks by the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning suggesting that teachers are to blame for the falling literacy rates, and that problems in Scottish Education are entirely due to funding cuts from Westminster.

Council notes that education has always been wholly devolved to the Scottish Parliament and believes that current problems in Scottish education are due to the policies pursued by the SNP governments since 2007.

The continuing failure of the SNP government to take direct action to address teachers' concerns over workload have led directly to the views expressed by EIS President Tom Castles that the SNP government have declared “open season” on Scottish teachers, and subsequent votes in favour of industrial action on workload issues.

Council calls on the Education Secretary to stop blaming others and to take responsibility for Scottish education.

Council further calls on the Scottish government to support Scottish Labour's call to use the new tax raising powers to introduce a 50p tax rate on higher earners to properly fund the education system."

Moved by Councillor Dodds, seconded by Councillor Fitzpatrick.

Amendment

"It's no surprise that Labour are scrabbling around for specific and contrived statistics to complain about (there is yet another election disaster fast approaching for them after all) but here are some Educational facts:

- Fewer young people are leaving school with no qualifications
- Scotland's young people are achieving record exam results
- Number of Higher passes up 3% from 144,749 in 2013 to 148,684 in 2014
- School leaver destinations are the best on record: 90.0 per cent of pupils who left school during or at the end of the academic year 2012/13, were in sustained positive destinations in March 2014. A record 60.*% of leavers were in Higher or Further Education
- The June 2014 Audit Scotland report found that exam performance has improved over the last decade against all ten of the attainment measures examined.

That the Labour group had to invent the new subject of "Chinese" to prop up their spurious argument speaks volumes for their own education. Let's be generous and presume they mean Mandarin and Cantonese.

Nationally we see the ridiculously contrived set of figures placed before us in the Labour motion. Why highlight French, German and "Chinese"? There is a clear shift in Scotland in the languages being studied with Spanish in particular seeing an astonishing increase with the more traditional German a slight decrease.

To highlight some actual figures, the number of pupils doing a language Higher is increasing

Since 2010 there has been an 8% increase in Higher language entries (6,243 in 2010 and 6,722 in 2014).

To focus in to a local level on the only meaningful figures available to us (to attempt to map standard grades onto CfE shows a worrying lack of understanding of the new system). West Lothian councils own modern language figures for the two years of CfE shows that in 2013/14 1k749 students studied French, German and Mandarin in our schools which rose impressively to 785 in 2014/15.

There is no crisis in modern languages, there is however mounting

evidence of a crisis in the modern Labour Party.

The Labour group claim that education is wholly devolved to the Scottish Parliament, no such a bad thing when you see the comparison in pupil spend between Scotland and England, not to forget our key policy in Scotland of free higher education. Cllr Dodds does however maybe just forget that actual running of schools and employment of teachers is a local government function. It's his council administration that attempted earlier this year to slash the teacher budget. How dare he talk of teacher workload when, if he had his way, it would be so much worse.

The lack of actual cabinet secretary quotes in the motion is fairly telling so here are actual quotes from her recent speech at the Robert Owen Centre on the 19th May 2015:

"In our schools, we have a long term national plan for success in Curriculum for Excellence that is delivering improving outcomes for four children.

My commitment to CfE is absolute. Its principles and approach to learning will deliver the skills, knowledge and experience we want to see for all our children and young people. I want to pay tribute to the work of teachers across Scotland and the flexibility and autonomy they have shown in in developing and implementing CfE."

"The importance of teaching and leadership is why as a Government, we have placed such emphasis on ensuring we maintain teacher numbers. This year's agreement with Councils to protect teacher numbers has shown that we will intervene where we are sufficiently concerned by Council decisions. I am clear that if funding methodologies are getting in the way of providing what we need to deliver excellence then we must be open to reviewing them. We cannot allow our ambitions and aspirations for our children to be constrained by "aye been"."

On Literacy and numeracy the cabinet secretary had this to say:

"The Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy results in 2014 on numeracy and this year's results on literacy show that we need to step up the pace of change. Frankly, it's not good enough that some children appear to be doing less well in basic skills the older they get.

I am particularly concerned about what these results tell us about boys and their achievements in school. The evidence suggests that current approaches to teaching children to read, write, listen and talk are less suited to boys than girls. So we fund find and embed new ones."

I'm intrigued to know which parts of this the Labour group disagree with?

On teachers she had this to say:

Teachers are, of course, crucial in leading any change. The quality of our teaching workforce and the excellence of our educational leadership, provide the bedrock of our education system.

And all – not some – teachers must play their part. They need to understand poverty and children’s lives better. Seeing the children they teach not just as pupils or learners, but as individuals with foibles, weaknesses and challenges but importantly too, strengths, opportunities and enthusiasm – all the qualities that make each of them who they are. Each child is unique and deserves the very best learning and school experience we can provide for them.”

Now those in the Labour Party living in an already perfect world and looking to be negative may see this as criticism, in the SNP we see this as aspirational. The cabinet secretary goes on to outline how she will support teachers:

Establishing the Scottish College for Educational Leadership, with a focus on leadership at all levels.

- Introducing a mandatory qualification for headteachers, to ensure that those who apply for the personally and professionally challenging role of headteacher are well-prepared and well-supported once in post.
- Committing £4m to masters learning for teachers.
- Creating partnerships between universities and local authorities
- Requiring all teachers in independent and grant-aided schools to register with the General Teaching Council for Scotland.

Finally in her speech that seems to have so outraged the Labour MSP’s and Cllrs desperately looking to save their jobs in the next two elections the Cabinet secretary concludes:

“My priorities are clear. I want Scotland to have an education system which ensures each child has every chance to succeed; that leaves no child behind; that promotes and support excellence in learning through valued and supported teachers and a high quality workforce; that is ambitious for our children, that takes their aspirations for themselves and nurtures and develops those, so that they succeed in school and in life.”

Just to reiterate “valued and supported teachers” a sentiment I’m sure we can all support.

Council therefore agrees to:

- Note the improved attainment of Scottish students
- Note the year on year increase in positive leaver destinations
- Commend the cabinet secretary on her honest assessments and unswerving commitment to improving Scottish educational attainment.
- Welcomes the Scottish government funding the maintaining of

teacher numbers in our schools (as per CoSLA agreement) despite West Lothian Council administration's best efforts to cut our teaching budgets.

- Support both government and teachers in the drive to reduce teacher workload and supply the resources necessary to enable continuing professional developments."

Moved by Councillor Miller, seconded by Councillor Walker.

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

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

Decision

On a vote being taken, the motion was successful by 16 votes to 13 votes, with 2 abstentions and 2 members absent, and it was agreed accordingly.

10. NOTICE OF MOTION - DECOMMISSIONING OF REDUNDANT WIND TURBINES - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR ROBERTSON

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

"As the renewable energy market grows more and more wind turbines are being erected and there is an absence of any statute that commits wind turbine owners to decommission any redundant turbines at the end of their life span.

West Lothian Council therefore agrees to petition the Scottish Government to conduct a survey into the decommissioning of redundant wind turbines after their life span, with a view to introducing statute to decommission these turbines once they have become redundant."

Moved by Councillor Robertson, seconded by Councillor Conn.

Amendment

“According to the Scottish Government (“Onshore Wind FAQ”, 2011): -

“Wind farm developers must satisfy the local authority that they have a suitable and robust plan for decommissioning and restoration as one of the conditions of being given permission to build and operate the wind farm, and must also satisfy the local authority that a financial bond is in place to meet the expected costs. The plan must be agreed and the financial bond must be in place before any site works can commence. The purpose of this condition is to return the site to as near to its original state as is feasible in a practicable and environmentally sound way”.

It is also noted that Heads of Planning Scotland (HoPS) have prepared a suite of model conditions for onshore wind developments and this includes provisions for financial guarantees.

It should be further noted that Commissioned Report No. 591 Research and guidance on restoration and decommissioning of onshore wind farms (Scottish Natural Heritage, 2013) details best practice for planning authorities and does not advocate the requirement for statutory legislation in its conclusions.

All current wind farms in West Lothian have reinstatement financial guarantee mechanisms in place or reinstatement conditions.

Therefore, there is no requirement at this stage for the proposal.”

Moved by Councillor De Bold, seconded by Councillor John.

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	Frank Anderson	
Tony Boyle	Willie Boyle	
Harry Cartmill	Diane Calder	
Tom Conn	Janet Campbell	
Alex Davidson	Robert De Bold	
Jim Dickson	Jim Dickson	
David Dodds	Mary Dickson	
Lawrence Fitzpatrick	Carl John	
Tom Kerr	Sarah King	
Dave King	Greg McCarra	
Danny Logue	Andrew Miller	
John McGinty	John Muir	
Anne McMillan	Jim Walker	
Angela Moohan		
Cathy Muldoon		
George Paul		
Barry Robertson		

Frank Toner

Decision

On a vote being taken, the motion was successful by 18 votes to 13 votes, with 2 members absent, and it was agreed accordingly.

11. DOCUMENTS FOR EXECUTION

The Chief Solicitor presented 93 documents for execution.

Decision

That the deeds be executed.

12. PRIMARY SCHOOL DEVOLVED BUDGETS - QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR FOR EDUCATION - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR MILLER

A written question to the Executive Councillor for Education had been submitted by Councillor Miller in the following terms:-

“On January 29th you voted for a proposal to cut £1.544m from the primary school devolved budgets along with 39 jobs.

Can you now detail exactly what changes are to be made to deliver this cut and which jobs are to be lost.”

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

Councillor Miller indicated that he wished to put supplementary questions as provided for in Standing Orders. He did so, and the Executive Councillor for Education provided verbal answers to the two supplementary questions.

Decision

1. To note the written question put and verbal answer given.
2. To note the two supplementary questions put and verbal answers given.
3. To note that, in answering the supplementary question, the Executive Councillor also gave an undertaking that the report to come to the Education PDSP and Education Executive on the budget formula would provide specific information in relation to the P1 to P3 stages.

13. REVISED CLEANING SPECIFICATION - QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR FOR EDUCATION - SUBMITTED BY

COUNCILLOR MILLER

A written question to the Executive Councillor for Education had been submitted by Councillor Miller in the following terms:-

“On January 29th you voted for a proposal to cut £1.544m from the primary school devolved budgets along with 39 jobs.

Can you now detail exactly what changes are to be made to deliver this cut and which jobs are to be lost.”

The Executive Councillor for Education answered verbally to indicate that the subject matter of the question was not within his remit, and should have been directed to a different Executive Councillor.

Councillor Miller indicated that he wished to put a supplementary question as provided for in Standing Orders. He did so, but, since the subject matter was in the remit of a different Executive Councillor, Councillor Miller was advised by the Provost to consider re-drafting his question for submission to the next meeting.

Decision

1. To note the written questions put and verbal answers given.
2. To note that the written question and a supplementary question were not answered by the Executive Councillor for Education as the matter did not fall within his remit.

14. BUDGET FOR PRE SCHOOL PROVISION - QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR FOR EDUCATION

A written question to the Executive Councillor for Education had been submitted by Councillor Miller in the following terms:-

“On January 29th you voted for a proposal to cut £504,000 from the budget for pre school provision.

Can you now detail exactly what changes are to be made to deliver this cut.”

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

Councillor Miller indicated that he wished to put a supplementary question as provided for in Standing Orders. He did so, and the Executive Councillor requested that the supplementary question be submitted by Councillor Miller by email. Thereafter, the Executive Councillor would provide an answer to the question.

Decision

1. To note the written question put and verbal answer given.
2. To note the supplementary question put.
3. To note request by the Executive Councillor for Education that the supplementary question be submitted by email and the Executive Councillor's undertaking to answer it.

15. STAFF VACANCIES - QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR JOHNSTON

A written question to the Leader of the Council had been submitted by Councillor Johnston in the following terms:-

"On 12th May you advised council that as of March 2015 a saving of £4,878,884 had been made as a result of staff vacancies during the 2014/15 financial year.

Do you stand by this figure?"

The Leader of the Council provided a verbal answer to the written question.

Councillor Johnston was not in attendance to ask supplementary questions.

Decision

To note the written question put and verbal answer given.

16. CONCESSIONARY RAIL SCHEME - QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR DE BOLD

A written question to the Leader of the Council had been submitted by Councillor De Bold in the following terms:-

"In a West Lothian Courier article dated 21 May 2015, Labour Group Leader, John McGinty is quoted as saying that those who responded to the budget consultation "showed a clear preference for paying more for the concessionary rail scheme, rather than see it abolished" whilst also denying "claims made by SNP Transport Spokesperson Councillor Robert De Bold that Labour Councillor Cathy Muldoon has admitted that the scheme is to be significantly reduced" yet then making mention of "austerity hitting Council services hard and changes will need to be made to the Concessionary Travel Scheme to ensure that it remains affordable."

Could Councillor McGinty please clarify the apparent contradictions in how he is being quoted?"

The Leader of the Council provided a verbal answer to the written question.

Councillor De Bold indicated that he wished to put a supplementary question as provide for in Standing Orders. He did so, and the Leader of the Council provided a verbal answer to the supplementary question.

Decision

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

17. ARMADALE LIBRARY - QUESTION TO EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR FOR CULTURE AND LEISURE - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR SARAH KING

A written question to the Executive Councillor for Culture and Leisure had been submitted by Councillor Sarah King in the following terms:-

“Armadale Library is currently proposed to have its library hours reduced from 50 to 33 from 1st July 2015. Once Armadale Library forms part of Armadale Partnership centre, will the previous library hours be reinstated in line with other Partnership Centres in Bathgate and Fauldhouse, which are currently proposed to retain their existing opening hours.”

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

Councillor Sarah King indicated that she wished to put supplementary questions as provided for in Standing Orders. She did so and the Executive Councillor provided verbal answers to the supplementary questions.

Decision

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

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC

Corporate Services

Martyn Day MP
Member for Linlithgow and East Falkirk Constituency
House of Commons
LONDON
SW1A 0AA

**Committee Services
Carol Johnston
Chief Solicitor**

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West Lothian
EH54 6FF
e-mail: anne.higgins@westlothian.gov.uk

Contact: Anne Higgins
Tel: 01506 281601

1 July 2015

Dear Mr Day

PUBLIC SECTOR SPENDING CUTS

At a meeting of West Lothian Council held on 23 June 2015, the Council agreed a motion submitted by Leader of the Council John McGinty concerning the above. A copy of the motion is attached.

I would be grateful if you could consider the terms of the motion and I would ask that your response be directed to Graham Hope, Chief Executive, West Lothian Council.

Yours sincerely



for Graham Hope
Chief Executive

Enc.

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC

Corporate Services

Hannah Bardell MP
Member for Livingston
House of Commons
LONDON
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**Committee Services
Carol Johnston
Chief Solicitor**

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Contact: Anne Higgins
Tel: 01506 281601

1 July 2015

Dear Ms Bardell

PUBLIC SECTOR SPENDING CUTS

At a meeting of West Lothian Council held on 23 June 2015, the Council agreed a motion submitted by Leader of the Council John McGinty concerning the above. A copy of the motion is attached.

I would be grateful if you could consider the terms of the motion and I would ask that your response be directed to Graham Hope, Chief Executive, West Lothian Council.

Yours sincerely



for Graham Hope
Chief Executive

Enc.

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC

Corporate Services

Angela Constance MSP
The Scottish Parliament
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**Committee Services
Carol Johnston
Chief Solicitor**

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Contact: Anne Higgins
Tel: 01506 281601

1 July 2015

Dear Ms Constance

PUBLIC SECTOR SPENDING CUTS

At a meeting of West Lothian Council held on 23 June 2015, the Council agreed a motion submitted by the Leader of the Council concerning the above. A copy of the motion is attached.

I would be grateful if you could consider the terms of the motion and I would ask that your response be directed to Graham Hope, Chief Executive, West Lothian Council.

Yours sincerely



for Graham Hope
Chief Executive

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC

Corporate Services

Fiona Hyslop MSP
59 West Main Street
Whitburn
West Lothian
EH47 0QD

**Committee Services
Carol Johnston
Chief Solicitor**

Civic Centre
Howden South Road
Livingston
West Lothian
EH54 6FF
e-mail: anne.higgins@westlothian.gov.uk

Contact: Anne Higgins
Tel: 01506 281601

1 July 2015

Dear Ms Hyslop

PUBLIC SECTOR SPENDING CUTS

At a meeting of West Lothian Council held on 23 June 2015, the Council agreed a motion submitted by the Leader of the Council concerning the above. A copy of the motion is attached.

I would be grateful if you could consider the terms of the motion and I would ask that your response be directed to Graham Hope, Chief Executive, West Lothian Council.

Yours sincerely



for Graham Hope
Chief Executive

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC

Corporate Services

John McNairney
Chief Planner
Planning and Architecture Division
Scottish Government
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ

Committee Services Carol Johnston Chief Solicitor

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Contact: Anne Higgins
Tel: 01506 281601

28 July 2015

Dear Mr McNairney

The Decommissioning of Wind Turbines

I am writing to you on behalf of West Lothian Council in respect of the decommissioning of wind turbines.

At its meeting in June 2015 the Council approved the attached motion which sets out the Council's concerns.

Although it may be the case that certain larger schemes contain site restoration conditions, the council is concerned that many other turbines may not be subject to decommissioning requirements.

The Council is further concerned about the need to ensure that there is a statutory requirement that commits the owners of all wind turbines to decommission any redundant structure at the end of their lifespan.

Accordingly the Council requests that the Scottish Government carries out a survey of all Scottish planning authorities into the decommissioning of redundant wind turbines after their lifespan, with a view to introducing statute to ensure that such redundant turbines are decommissioned at the end of their lifespan.

This letter has not been copied to the Scottish Government's Energy Consent Division and a response which includes their views would be helpful.

Yours sincerely



for Graham Hope
Chief Executive

Enc.

Ministerial Correspondence Unit

T: 0131-244 1832
E: iain.mckenzie@scotland.gsi.gov.uk



Mr Graham Hope
West Lothian Council
West Lothian Civic Centre
Howden South Road
LIVINGSTON
West Lothian
EH54 6FF

Your ref: CEO/AS
Our ref: 2015/0022800
1 July 2015

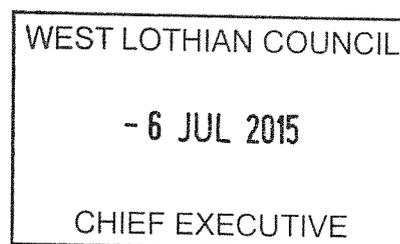
Dear Mr Hope

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your recent letter to Margaret Burgess regarding Bedroom Tax Mitigation.

A reply will be provided to you as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

IM Iain McKenzie
Ministerial Correspondence Unit



MINUTE of MEETING of the PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE of WEST LoTHIAN COUNCIL held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WEST LoTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE, LIVINGSTON, on 18 MAY 2015.

Present – Councillors Stuart Borrowman (Chair), Tony Boyle, Greg McCarra, Carl John, John McGinty

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

2. MINUTE

The committee confirmed the minute of its meeting held on 16 March 2015 as a correct record. The minute was thereafter signed by the Chair.

3. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT UNIT

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Finance and Estates providing an overview of the Property Management and Development Unit together with performance details.

The report advised that the Property Management and Development Unit provided a wide range of property related services to both internal and external customers.

The Head of Finance and Estates explained that the service operated with a total complement of 19.43 FTE staff and an annual net revenue budget of £15.733 million. During 2014/15 Property Management and Development had been involved in a number of projects, many of which contributed directly or indirectly to the approved revenue budget strategy for 2015/16/ to 2017/18.

For the forthcoming year 2015/16 the trend in terms of workload would remain similarly focused with some additional challenges. To ensure that the unit could meet future service requirements a review was to be carried out.

The unit was also likely to be involved in external challenges as a result of the current Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill, which was likely to be enacted during the year, and the current consultation on Land Reform.

The report went on to advise that the Property Management and Development unit was regularly measured through a suite of performance indicators in line with the council's performance management framework, using the Covalent system.

These indicators were representative of a range of activities delivered by the unit and included statutory, public performance reporting and

management indicators, including measures of customer and staff perception. Appendix 1 to the report provided a sample of Property Management and Development performance indicators.

The report advised that in November 2014 the unit undertook a WLAM assessment. The outcome of the assessment represented an improvement of the previous assessment. The results of the assessment were presented to the Chief Executive's performance review panel.

In conclusion the Head of Finance and Estates advised that the report and appendix summarised the activities and the performance of the unit.

The report recommended that the committee:

1. Note the contents of the report and appendix 1;
2. Provide feedback on performance; and
3. Identify any recommendations for performance improvements.

There then followed a number of questions in particular with regard to the impact of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill and Land Reform. Information was also requested in respect of valuable assets owned by the council which were not currently in use.

Decision

1. To note the terms of the report.
2. To provide the committee with details of council owned assets not currently in use.

4. SPORT AND OUTDOOR EDUCATION PERFORMANCE

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Area Services providing an overview of the Sport and Outdoor Education unit and details of performance.

The report advised that the Sport and Outdoor Education provided a range of learning, development and community capacity building interventions targeted at increasing participation rates in physical activity, improving performance in formal sport and outdoor activities and contributing to children's experiences and outcomes.

The Head of Area Services explained that Sport and Outdoor Education measured a suite of performance indicators, in line with the council's performance management framework, using the Covalent system. These indicators were representative of the range of services delivered by the WLAM unit and included measures of both customer and staff perception. Appendix 1 to the report included a selection of indicators in full detail including current and historical performance.

The report went on to advise that in May 2013 Sport and Outdoor

Education undertook a WLAM assessment, the outcome of which was presented to the Chief Executive's performance review panel.

In conclusion the Head of Area Services advised that the report and appendix summarised the work and performance of the Sport and Outdoor Education WLAM unit.

The report recommended that the committee:-

- Note the performance report
- Provide feedback and recommendation on performance; and
- Identify any recommendations for performance improvement

There then followed a number of questions in particular with regard to the Council's accreditation scheme and how it compared to other local authorities.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

MINUTE of MEETING of the AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE of WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WEST LOTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE, LIVINGSTON, on 9 FEBRUARY 2015.

Present – Councillors Harry Cartmill (Chair), John McGinty, Jim Dixon and John Muir (substituting for Carl John)

Apologies – Councillor Carl John

Absent – Councillor William Boyle

In Attendance – Graham Hope (Chief Executive, WLC), Donald Forrest (Head of Finance and Estates, WLC), Kenneth Ribbons (Audit & Risk Manager, WLC), Susan Gordon (Community Planning, WLC), Elaine Byrne (Housing, Construction & Building Services, WLC), David McConnell and Allister Perston (Audit Scotland)

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

2. MINUTE

The committee confirmed the Minute of its meeting held on 1 December 2014. The Minute was thereafter signed by the Chair.

3. INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2015/16

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Audit and Risk Manager advising of the 2015-16 Internal Audit Plan.

The Audit and Risk Manager advised that the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) required that a risk based audit plan be prepared

The Internal Audit Plan for 2015-16 set out the planned internal audit work for the financial year to 31 March 2016 and a copy was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

Audits were included within the plan on the basis of an assessment of risk, based on the corporate risk register, discussions with managers, local knowledge of the council and its operations. Where risks were derived from the corporate risk registers, the risk reference was set out in the plan.

Audit Scotland had been consulted to ensure that the internal audit plan was co-ordinated within their programme of work.

It was recommended that the Audit and Governance Committee approve the 2015-16 Internal Audit Plan.

The Chair of the committee noted that a number of risks to the council

remained outstanding, as per the appendix to the report, and sought further information particularly in relation to Risk NLCS005 (Injury or death by falling onto spiked railings around headstones or graves or by unsafe memorialisation). The Audit and Risk Manager undertook to obtain more information on this matter and circulate to the committee members in due course.

Decision

To approve the terms of the report

4. RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN 2015/16

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Audit and Risk Manager advising of the 2015-16 Risk Management Plan.

The committee were advised that the Risk Management Plan for 2015-16 set out the main areas of planned work on risk management, including business continuity planning. A copy of the Risk Management Plan for 2015-16 was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The objective of risk management work was to ensure that effective processes were in place for managing risk at both corporate and service level. This was carried out by ensuring that up to date and effective guidance was provided by services, by facilitating and participating in the work of the Risk Management Working Group and Governance and Risk Board and by reporting on risks to the Governance and Risk Board and Executive Management Team.

The Audit and Risk Manager continued to advise that the objective of business continuity planning was to ensure that business continuity plans were up to date and effective. Testing of WLC1 (risk to life and limb) business continuity plans was currently on schedule to be completed by April 2015. Further work on the review of WLC2 (significant impact) business continuity plans would be undertaken during 2015-16.

It was recommended that the Audit and Governance Committee approve the 2015-16 Risk Management Plan.

Decision

To approve the terms of the report

5. COUNTER FRAUD PLAN 2015/16

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Audit and Risk Manager advising of the 2015-16 Counter Fraud Plan.

Attached to the report at Appendix 1 was a copy of the Counter Fraud Plan for 2015-16, which had been prepared by the Audit and Risk

Manager.

The main elements of the Counter Fraud Plan were to :-

- Record, assess and investigate fraud referrals;
- Administer the 2014 National Fraud Initiative (NFI) data matching exercise, risk assess data matches and investigate them appropriately; and
- Maintain the council's whistleblowing hotline and investigate allegations.

It was recommended that the Audit and Governance Committee approve the 2015-16 Counter Fraud Plan.

Decision

To approve the terms of the report.

6. INTERNAL AUDIT CHARTER

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Audit and Risk Manager advising of the internal audit charter, a copy of which was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The Audit and Risk Manager advised that the internal audit charter covered matters such as internal audit's purpose, scope, responsibilities, objectives, organisational status, independence and authority. The charter was important in that it clearly set out the arrangements for securing internal audit's independence and set out the right of internal audit staff to receive documents, information and explanations from officers and members of the council.

It was recommended that the Audit and Governance Committee approve the internal audit charter.

Decision

To approve the terms of the report

7. THE ACCOUNTS COMMISSION'S NATIONAL REPORT ON COMMUNITY PLANNING

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Chief Executive, providing an update on the findings of the Accounts Commission national audit report on Community Planning and the plans for responding to the recommendations.

The committee were advised that the Accounts Commission published their national report on Community Planning "*Turning Ambition into Action*" on 27 November 2014. The report assessed progress locally and

nationally in the context of the agenda for improvement set out in the Statement of Ambition for Community Planning and identified opportunities for further improvement.

The report contained several key findings and recommendations for the National Community Planning Group, the Scottish Government, COSLA and CPP's to consider. These were summarised in Appendix 1 attached to the report.

It was noted that the Accounts Commission found that there was a strong sense of renewed energy nationally and locally to improving Community Planning since the publication of the Statement of Ambition in 2012. Partners were now taking a more active part in sharing ownership of priorities, understanding what resources were available and recognising the importance of prevention. However leadership, scrutiny and challenges remained inconsistent and there was also a lack of a coherent national framework for assessing performance and pace of improvement of CPP's. The National Community Planning Group would need to work with the Scottish Government and COSLA on what their new approach to Community Planning would mean in practice for CPP's and how successful delivery would be measured.

The report continued to advise that the findings and recommendations of the West Lothian CPP audit report and the national audit report would be considered and incorporated into the partnership's existing self-assessed development plan at a special meeting of the CPP. Additionally representatives from the Accounts Commission would be invited to the next CPP Board meeting on 9 March 2015 to further discuss the key findings and a Celebrating Community Planning event would be arranged in early summer to highlight areas of particular strength and to learn from invited speakers and other CPP's of examples of good practice.

In conclusion the Accounts Commission had found that there was a strong sense of renewed energy nationally and locally to improving Community Planning since the publication of the Statement of Ambition in 2012 and the partners were now taking a more active part in sharing ownership of priorities. However there were some areas for improvement for CPP's, as well as for the National Community Planning Group, the Scottish Government and COSLA.

It was recommended that the Audit and Governance Committee:-

1. Note the findings and recommendations of the Accounts Commission's national report; and
2. Note the Community Planning Partnership's plans for responding to the findings and recommendations and for further developing the partnership.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

8. AUDIT SCOTLAND REPORT ON THE IMPACT OF WELFARE REFORMS ON COUNCIL RENT ARREARS IN SCOTLAND

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Housing, Construction and Building Services providing a summary of the report on "*Impact of Welfare Reforms on Council Rent Arrears in Scotland*" published by Audit Scotland in September 2014, a copy of which was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

In September 2014, Audit Scotland published a report "The Impact of Welfare Reforms on Council Rent Arrears in Scotland". The report concluded a review of the underlying factors impacting on rent arrears, highlighted council initiatives to mitigate the effect of welfare reform (WR) on rent arrears, reviewed revisions to council policies in response to WR and highlighted where current and impending WR could impact on rent arrears in the future.

The Head of Housing, Construction and Building Services then provided a summary under the headings of Rent Arrears, Write Offs & Bad Debt, Voids, Discretionary Housing Payment, Policies & Incentives and the effect of the council's long term plans.

With regards to the position for West Lothian Council it was noted that in line with the national trend West Lothian Council experienced a higher level of rent arrears, rising from £998,000 in 2012-13 to £1.3 million in 2013-14. This increase was in a year when the council had approved a rent freeze to assist tenants. The estimated loss of Housing Benefit as a result of the removal of spare room subsidy was £1.3 million for council tenants alone in 2013-14. There had not been a notable impact on voids for the council as a result of WR's.

It was further noted that West Lothian Council was one of five councils that increased bad debt provision in anticipation of higher rent arrears. West Lothian Council was also one of thirteen councils that had spent in excess of 90% of their DHP budget with an outturn of 99% for 2013-14. The council was also continuing to make preparations for the introduction of Universal Credit and a working group had been established to take this forward.

In conclusion the Audit Scotland report noted that at this stage there was not a significant impact on councils' long term housing plans or strategies but highlighted that there were further welfare reforms still to have an impact, most notably Universal Credit. However West Lothian Council had responded positively to the challenge of Welfare Reform particularly in rent arrears through its task group approach, maximising DHP spend and approving a rent freeze in the first year of the removal of the spare room subsidy.

It was recommended that the Audit and Governance Committee note the key messages included in Audit Scotland's report and the council's position on these.

It was noted by the committee that the housing team had been particularly proactive and innovative in their methods to collect council rent arrears and wished to record a note of thanks. It was however noted that more work was to come with the introduction of the Universal Credit later in the year which would bring fresh challenges.

Decision

1. To note the content of the report; and
2. Agreed to record a note of thanks to the staff for all their efforts and innovative methods for dealing with the council's rent arrears.

9. AUDIT SCOTLAND ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN 2014/15

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Audit and Risk Manager advising of Audit Scotland's 2014-15 Annual Audit Plan, a copy of which was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The Committee were advised that Audit Scotland's audit plan set out the work they proposed to undertake in relation to their 2014-15 audit. As Audit Scotland set out their plan, auditors in the public sector gave an independent opinion on the financial statements. They also reviewed and reported on the arrangements set in place by the audited body to ensure the proper conduct of its financial affairs and to manage its performance and use of resources. In doing this they aimed to support improvement and accountability.

Audit Scotland's fee was set out on page 11 of their plan and took account of the risk exposure to the council, the management assurances in place and the level of reliance they planned to take from the work of internal audit.

Audit Scotland had also concluded that overall, internal audit operated in accordance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) and had sound documentation standards and reporting procedures in place.

It was recommended that the Audit and Governance Committee notes Audit Scotland's planned 2014-15 audit work.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

10. THE LOCAL AUTHORITY ACCOUNTS (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2014

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Audit and Risk Manager advising of the provisions of the Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations in relation to internal audit.

The Audit and Risk Manager explained that the Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations came into force on 10 October 2014. In addition to a number of provisions related to the council's accounts, accounting records and control systems, the regulations provided that the council must "operate a professional and objective internal auditing service in accordance with recognised standards and practices in relation to internal auditing".

It was to be noted that the regulations required a local authority to operate a service which allowed for the internal audit service to be provided in-house, by way of a share service or outsourced.

The regulations also required internal audit to operate in accordance with recognised standards and practices in relation to internal auditing. Recognised standards and practices were those set out in the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS). The PSIAS placed a very great emphasis on the operational independence and objectivity of the internal audit function.

The Audit and Risk Managed continued to advise that the regulations also required that the council from time to time assess the efficiency and effectiveness of internal audit, with references to recognised standards and practices in relation to internal auditing. Therefore the Scottish Local Authorities Chief Internal Auditors Group (SLACIAG) was developing a peer review system under which council internal audit teams would independently review their peers for compliance with the PSIAS. The Audit and Governance Committee would be provided with further information on this initiative as it developed.

It was recommended that the Audit and Governance Committee notes that there was now a statutory requirement for councils to operate an internal audit service.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

West Lothian Council SNP Group

Leader: Cllr Peter Johnston
Depute Leader: Cllr Frank Anderson
Secretary: Cllr Jim Walker

*Dico Tibi Verum, Libertas Optima Rerum
Nunquam Servili!*



SNP Condemn Shameful Tory Tax Credit Cuts

West Lothian Council notes new figures showing the 'shameful' impact of Tory cuts to tax credits – with almost 350,000 children set to be worse off as a result of changes announced in George Osborne's budget.

Council notes that new figures from the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe) show that 197,200 families in Scotland with a total of 346,000 children have been hit by the changes to tax credits and that these figures come in the aftermath of an IFS report showing that the vast majority of children in poverty in the UK live in working households as the Tory government's relentless assault on the poor continues.

West Lothian Council SNP group assert that George Osborne's shameful cuts were always going to hammer those in our society who were already struggling to get by – and these figures show that it is children who are going to pay a particularly heavy price, with almost 350,000 set to lose out.

West Lothian Council SNP group further assert that the Tory UK government should be utterly ashamed that the number of children from working families living in poverty has grown under their watch for, as these cuts to tax credits show, they are intent on intensifying their punitive cuts agenda as their slavish devotion to right-wing ideology trumps any commitment to supporting those in need.

West Lothian Council SNP group further assert that working families and vulnerable people in Scotland can't afford for decisions over the economy and social security to continue to be made by the Tory Westminster Government and that it is time for these powers to be transferred to Scotland - allowing us to take real action to truly tackle poverty, support working families and give our children all the support they need – rather than continuing on the UK Government's course, which will push even more children into poverty.

Proposed

Peter Johnston

Cllr Peter Johnston
Leader of the SNP Group



*Allyson
11.00 am*

WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL LABOUR GROUP

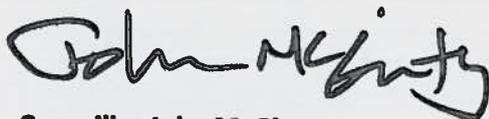
**Notice of Motion from Councillor John McGinty
For the Council Meeting on 18 August 2015**

Support for the BBC

West Lothian Council welcomes the contribution made by the BBC to the lives of citizens across the UK and beyond since its establishment, and notes the value of having a public broadcaster run independently from Government.

Council particularly welcomes the distinctive and successful contributions made by BBC Scotland, and notes that for the first time the Scottish Parliament will have a consultative role in the BBC charter renewal process, granted following the Smith Commission.

West Lothian Council agrees that it is vital that the BBC remains adequately and independently funded, and free from political interference, and agrees to write to the leaders of all political parties represented in the Scottish Parliament to express this view and to encourage their support for a publicly funded and politically independent BBC.



**Councillor John McGinty
West Lothian Council Labour Group**



*AKG:ms
11.50am*

West Lothian Council SNP Group

Leader: Cllr Peter Johnston
Depute Leader: Cllr Frank Anderson
Secretary: Cllr Jim Walker



*Dico Tibi Verum, Libertas Optima Rerum
Nunquam Servili!*

Question to Executive Councillor - Services for the Community

Could you list, by trades, the total number of employees within Building Services and the number of current vacancies within each trade? Also the longest time a position has been vacant?

Councillor Frank Anderson



*A Higgins
10.37 am*

West Lothian Council SNP Group

Leader: Cllr Peter Johnston
Depute Leader: Cllr Frank Anderson
Secretary: Cllr Jim Walker

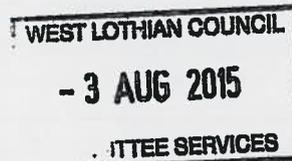


*Dico Tibi Verum, Libertas Optima Rerum
Nunquam Servili!*

Question to Leader of the Council - Services for the Community

Bearing in mind that a motion on the Living Wage from the SNP Group on the 7th of January 2015, was refused as a 'matter in hand' and that a report was due to come before elected members in the spring of this year, why has no report been forthcoming? Meanwhile, many of the lower paid people working for the Council, including our apprentices, are struggling to stay above the breadline.

Councillor Frank Anderson



*A Higgins
10.37am*