

MINUTE of MEETING of the COUNCIL EXECUTIVE held within WEBEX VIRTUAL MEETING ROOM, on 22 OCTOBER 2020.

Present – Councillors Lawrence Fitzpatrick (Chair), Kirsteen Sullivan, Frank Anderson, Diane Calder (substituting for Janet Campbell), Tom Conn, David Dodds, Peter Heggie, Chris Horne, Charles Kennedy, Andrew McGuire (substituting for Harry Cartmill), Cathy Muldoon, George Paul and Damian Timson

Apologies – Councillors Janet Campbell and Harry Cartmill

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Frank Anderson declared an interest in that he was the Chair of the Open Door Project and the Chair of the Craigshill Good Neighbour Network.

2. TOWN CENTRE FUND - CAPITAL GRANT 2020/21 - REPORT BY HEAD OF PLANNING, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION

The Council Executive considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration setting out proposals for the delivery and operation of the Town Centre Capital Grant 2020/21 of £658,000 which had been allocated to the council from Scottish Government.

It was recommended that Council Executive :-

1. Agrees the list of eligible areas and allocation to each area, as set out in appendix 1 of the report;
2. Agrees the criteria for the assessment of projects;
3. Agrees that decisions on the applications are made as follows:
 - a) Local Area Committees will consider applications from each community to the fund and have the power to award funding in full or in part as they see fit up to the amount allocated to that community.
 - b) After doing so, if there is a balance remaining of the aggregate amount allocated to the ward, Local Area Committees will have the power to apply that balance to applications for the ward area which have not already been funded at all or fully.
 - c) After doing so, if there is still a balance remaining, Council Executive will decide how and where all remaining balances from the Local Area Committees should be spent across the whole council area;
4. Notes that special virtual Local Area Committee (LAC) meetings will be required; and

5. Notes the conditions pertaining to the grant as set out in the report.

Motion

To approve the terms of the report.

- Moved by the Chair and seconded by Councillor Kirsteen Sullivan

First Amendment

West Lothian Council SNP Group believes that the moral position on any decision regarding this Funding distribution should be made by all Councillors and not just by the Council Executive, which has an inbuilt Labour majority despite them claiming to be a minority administration. This is additional funding to our previously allocated Budget and as such should be discussed at a Council meeting. Financial decisions affecting the Budget are the responsibility of all elected members.

The SNP Group therefore calls on the Executive to agree to postpone any decision on the allocation of this extra funding, call a Special Council meeting for the sole purpose of discussing this item.

- Moved by Councillor Diane Calder and seconded by Councillor Frank Anderson

Second Amendment

As previously agreed all budget amendment decisions should be taken at full Council. As the monies involved in this emergency paper did not form part of the budget figures previously agreed but are clearly a revision to overall budget then the decision of spend arrangements should be taken at full council. We therefore propose that the paper be presented to full council for decision making and ask the Council chair to convene an emergency meeting of Full Council for discussion and decision on this matter.

It is noted that, despite the failure of the previous process where democratic decisions were taken away from many communities as their elected members could not participate in decision making and LACs could not have input into decisions, this paper recommends that that failed process be repeated. The Joint Forum of Community Councils have expressed concerns that they will again be precluded from input at some LACs as the LAC will not be Quorate as happened previously and resulted in decisions being made by members of areas out with the community affected. This is neither wanted nor democratic and they ask that this be further considered. Council executive therefore directs officers review their recommendations, to arrange a process which allows ward elected members to participate in the decision making and takes account of the representations made during the last round of distribution and brings this to a full council meeting for discussion and decision.

- Moved by Councillor Charles Kennedy and seconded by Councillor Damian Timson

Third Amendment

West Lothian Council SNP Group are disappointed to see a paper presented for distribution of grant funding to our communities which takes no cognizance of deprivation, despite having these figures available. Yet again, this proposed distribution ignores in Livingston's case the clearly identified communities within Livingston when it comes to the allocation of grant. How can it be a fair an equal distribution when, for example, the proposal gives Greenrigg £15,05 per head and Craigshill £2.17 per head, the same figure £2.17 applies to the whole of Livingston, the lowest per head figure of all the communities.

West Lothian SNP Group proposes that Council Executive

1. Learning from the lessons of last year, the funding bids for each defined community be presented to LAC's as distinct and separate reports thus maximising the opportunity for local scrutiny and participation
2. Agrees that, if requested, deputations from our communities are permitted to speak in favour of their own submission at the LAC meetings
3. Agrees the list of eligible communities and allocations to each community as set out in the Amendment.
4. Accepts and rennumbers recommendations 3,4,5 as 4,5,6.

Settlement	Population	Fixed allocation	Pop. Alloc.	total
Bathgate	23559	10,000	44055	54055
Linlithgow	13862	10,000	25548	35548
Armadales	12021	10,000	22479	32479
Whitburn	11805	10,000	22075	32075
Broxburn	10970	10,000	20514	30514
Elburn	8211	10,000	15355	25385
Craigshill	7057	10,000	13197	23228
Dedridge	6808	10,000	12731	22761
Blackburn	5775	10,000	10799	20799
East Calder	5733	10,000	10721	20721
Murieston/Bankton	5315	10,000	9939	19970
Carmondean	5170	10,000	9668	19718
Ladywell	5024	10,000	9395	19426
Fauldhouse	4804	10,000	8983	18983
Uphall	4687	10,000	8765	18765
Deans	4234	10,000	7918	17918
Knightsbridge	3945	10,000	7377	17408
Winchburgh	3758	10,000	7027	17027
Howden	3489	10,000	6524	16554
Mid Calder	3351	10,000	6266	16266
West Calder	3152	10,000	5894	15894

Livingston Village/Kirkton	2958	10,000	5531	15562
Kirknewton	2598	10,000	4858	14858
Bellsquarry/Adamrae	2305	10,000	4310	14340
Polbeth	2301	10,000	4303	14303
Blackridge	2074	10,000	3878	13878
Addiewell	1991	10,000	3723	13723
Stoneyburn	1982	10,000	3706	13706
Pumpherstoun	1667	10,000	3117	13117
East Whitburn	1344	10,000	2513	12513
Seafield	1334	10,000	2495	12495
Uphall Stn	1073	10,000	2007	12020
Greenrigg	1066	10,000	1993	11993
TOTAL	175423	330,000	327664	658000

- Moved by Councillor Frank Anderson and seconded by Councillor Diane Calder

A series of roll call votes took place as follows :-

The first vote took place which was the motion against the first amendment. The result was as follows :-

Motion

Tom Conn
David Dodds
Lawrence Fitzpatrick
Andrew McGuire
Cathy Muldoon
Kirsteen Sullivan
George Paul

First Amendment

Frank Anderson
Diane Calder
Peter Heggie
Chris Horne
Charles Kennedy
Damian Timson

Following a vote, the motion was successful by 7 votes to 6.

The second vote took place which was the motion against the second amendment. The result was as follows :-

Motion

Tom Conn
David Dodds
Lawrence Fitzpatrick
Andrew McGuire
Cathy Muldoon
Kirsteen Sullivan
George Paul

Second Amendment

Frank Anderson
Diane Calder
Peter Heggie
Chris Horne
Charles Kennedy
Damian Timson

Following a vote, the motion was successful by 7 votes to 6.

The third vote took place which was the motion against the third amendment. The result was as follows.:-

Motion

Third Amendment

Abstain

Tom Conn
David Dodds
Lawrence Fitzpatrick
Andrew McGuire
Cathy Muldoon
Kirsteen Sullivan
George Paul

Frank Anderson
Diane Calder

Peter Heggie
Chris Horne
Charles Kennedy
Damian Timson

Decision

Following a vote, the motion was successful by 7 votes to 2, with 4 abstentions and it was agreed accordingly.