



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

West Lothian Civic Centre  
Howden South Road  
LIVINGSTON  
EH54 6FF

15 November 2022

A hybrid meeting of the **Joint Consultative Group (Teaching Staff) (Private)** of West Lothian Council will be held within the **Conference Room 3, West Lothian Civic Centre** on **Monday 21 November 2022** at **2:00pm**.

For Chief Executive

### **BUSINESS**

#### **Public Session**

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest - Members must declare any interests they have in the items of business for consideration at the meeting, identifying the relevant agenda items and the nature of their interests.
3. Order of Business, including notice of urgent business and declarations of interest in any urgent business
4. Confirm Draft Minutes of Meeting of Joint Consultative Group (Teaching Staff) (Private) held on Friday 11 February 2022 (herewith)
5. Consultation Proposals and Budget Cuts in Education

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NOTE **For further information please contact Anastasia Dragona on tel. no. 01506 281601 or email [anastasia.dragona@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:anastasia.dragona@westlothian.gov.uk)**





## **CODE OF CONDUCT AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (2021)**

**This form is a reminder and an aid. It is not a substitute for understanding the Code of Conduct and guidance.**

**Interests must be declared at the meeting, in public.**

**Look at every item of business and consider if there is a connection.**

**If you see a connection, decide if it amounts to an interest by applying the objective test.**

**The objective test is whether or not a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard your connection to a particular matter as being so significant that it would be considered as being likely to influence your discussion or decision-making.**

**If the connection does not amount to an interest then you have nothing to declare and no reason to withdraw.**

**If the connection amounts to an interest, declare it as soon as possible and leave the meeting when the agenda item comes up.**

**When you declare an interest, identify the agenda item and give enough information so that the public understands what it is and why you are declaring it.**

**Even if the connection does not amount to an interest you can make a statement about it for the purposes of transparency.**

**More detailed information is on the next page.**

Look at each item on the agenda, consider if there is a “connection”, take advice if necessary from appropriate officers in plenty of time. A connection is any link between the item of business and:-

- you
- a person you are associated with (e.g., employer, business partner, domestic partner, family member)
- a body or organisation you are associated with (e.g., outside body, community group, charity)

Anything in your Register of Interests is a connection unless one of the following exceptions applies.

A connection does not exist where:-

- you are a council tax payer, a rate payer, or a council house tenant, including at budget-setting meetings
- services delivered to the public are being considered, including at budget-setting meetings
- councillors’ remuneration, expenses, support services or pensions are being considered
- you are on an outside body through a council appointment or nomination unless it is for regulatory business or you have a personal conflict due to your connections, actions or legal obligations
- you hold a view in advance on a policy issue, have discussed that view, have expressed that view in public, or have asked for support for it

If you see a connection then you have to decide if it is an “interest” by applying the objective test. The objective test is whether or not a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard your connection to a particular matter as being so significant that it would be considered as being likely to influence your discussion or decision-making.

If the connection amounts to an interest then:-

- declare the interest in enough detail that members of the public will understand what it is
- leave the meeting room (physical or online) when that item is being considered
- do not contact colleagues participating in the item of business

Even if decide your connection is not an interest you can voluntarily make a statement about it for the record and for the purposes of transparency.

The relevant documents are:-

- [Councillors’ Code of Conduct, part 5](#)
- [Standards Commission Guidance, paragraphs 129-166](#)
- [Advice note for councillors on how to declare interests](#)

If you require assistance, contact:-

- James Millar, Interim Monitoring Officer and Governance Manager, 01506 281613, [james.millar@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:james.millar@westlothian.gov.uk)
- Carol Johnston, Chief Solicitor and Depute Monitoring Officer, 01506 281626, [carol.johnston@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:carol.johnston@westlothian.gov.uk)
- Committee Services Team, 01506 281604, 01506 281621  
[committee.services@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:committee.services@westlothian.gov.uk)

January 2022

MINUTE of MEETING of the JOINT CONSULTATIVE GROUP (TEACHING STAFF) (PRIVATE) held within MS TEAMS VIRTUAL MEETING ROOM, on 11 FEBRUARY 2022.

Present – Councillors David Dodds (Chair), Alison Adamson (Ordinary Member), Damian Doran-Timson (Ordinary Member), Lawrence Fitzpatrick (Ordinary Member), Cathy Muldoon (Ordinary Member) and Moira Shemilt (substituting for Councillor Andrew Miller); Mark Bonallo, (EIS), Mairi Green (EIS), Heather Hughes (EIS) and Shirley Thomson (EIS)

Apologies – Councillors Dom McGuire (Ordinary Member) and Andrew Miller (Ordinary Member); Douglas Bringhurst (SSTA)

In attendance – James Cameron (Head of Education (Learning, Policy and Resources)), Catrina Hatch (Head of Education Services Secondary Schools), Donald Forrest (Head of Finance and Property Services), Fiona Russell (Group Accountant) and Greg Welsh (Head of Education Services Primary Schools)

1        DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

2        MINUTES

The group confirmed the minute of its meeting held on 23 February 2021 as a correct record.

3        REVENUE BUDGET 2022/23 AND ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND GENERAL SERVICES CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23 TO 2027/28

The Head of Finance and Property Services presented the Group with information on the council's proposed Revenue Budget 2022/23 and Asset Management Strategy and General Services Capital Programme 2022/23 to 2027/28. A number of financial constraints were highlighted, which included increasing cost of providing council services, growing population in West Lothian, ongoing government constraints on public spending, and Scottish Government grant funding being insufficient to meet the increasing costs of providing local services. Details of funding and expenditure assumptions for the next year were then provided. Considering the proposed saving measures, the updated budget gap would be £11.7 million. Impact on staffing was expected to have a net increase of 7 FTE; any staffing changes would be implemented after consultation with the unions and the council's no compulsory redundancies policy would continue. Time-limited investments, including Covid-19 expenditure, were summarised and the proposed General Services Capital Investment for 2022/23 to 2027/28 was shown. More

detail was then provided on the budget for Education Services in particular. The proposed budget would allow the council to deliver key priorities including improving attainment and positive destinations for school children and delivering positive outcomes and early interventions for early years as well as a 2% pay award for staff. Significant investment in new school provision, ELC provision and school improvements was also planned. The outcomes sought through the proposed budget included improved attainment and achievement, reduced poverty and improved health and wellbeing.

The proposed Revenue Budget 2022/23 to 2023/24 and the Asset Management Strategy and General Services Capital Programme 2022/23 to 2027/28 would be considered at a special meeting of West Lothian Council scheduled to be held on 15 February 2022.

Following conclusion of the presentation, a number of questions were asked by members of the group in relation to budget proposals, which officers responded to.

The Teaching Unions indicated that they welcomed the 6% increase in the Education Revenue Budget and thanked the council for always making education a priority. They also pointed out that the unions were launching a campaign to challenge the Scottish Government on the 2% presumed pay offer. Finally, union representatives and members alike stressed the need for additional ASN resources.

### Decision

To note the contents of the budget briefing presentation.