

**EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2010 AT  
1000 HRS IN STEWARTON AREA CENTRE, AVENUE STREET, STEWARTON**

**PRESENT:** Provost Stephanie Young and Councillors Rose-Ann Cuninghame, John MacKay, John McGhee, Helen Coffey, Willie Coffey Maureen McKay, Tom Cook, Robert Keohone, Iain Linton, Douglas Reid, Jim Buchanan, Depute Provost John Campbell, Councillors Gordon Cree, Drew McIntyre, John Knapp, Hugh Ross, Jim Todd, Alan Brown, Stuart Finlayson, Robert McDill, Jimmy Kelly, Neil McGhee, Jim Roberts, David Shaw, William Crawford, Barney Menzies, Kathy Morrice, Eric Ross, Elaine Dinwoodie, Drew Filson and Moira Pirie.

**ATTENDING:** Fiona Lees, Chief Executive; Elizabeth Morton, Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support; Graham Short, Executive Director of Educational and Social Services; William Stafford, Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services; Alex McPhee, Executive Head of Finance and Asset Management; Bill Walkinshaw, Head of Democratic Services; Chris McAleavey, Head of Housing; Martin Rose, Head of Human Resources; Malcolm Roulston, Head of Information Technology; David Mitchell, Head of Legal, Procurement and Regulatory Services; John Griffiths, Head of Leisure; Alan Neish, Head of Planning and Economic Development; Susan Taylor, Head of Service: Children, Families and Criminal Justice; Kay Gilmour, Head of Service: Community Support; Euan Couperwhite: Head of Service: Resource Support; John Bryson, Head of Roads and Transportation; Andrew Sutherland, Head of Service: Schools; Eddie Fraser, Head of Service: Social Work; Andrew Kennedy, Acting Head of Service: Facilities Management; Julie Jamieson, Chief Accountant; Joe McLachlan, Corporate Accounting Manager; Robin Baker, Financial Controller; Elaine Scott, Public Relations Officer; David Forbes, Senior Accountant; and Julie McGarry, Administration Manager.

**CHAIR:** Provost Stephanie Young, Chair.

**ORDER OF DEBATE AND TIME LIMIT FOR SPEECHES**

1. It was noted that, in accordance with Standing Orders, a mover of a motion or amendment should speak for no longer than 10 minutes with succeeding speakers entitled to speak for no more than 5 minutes, with the original mover then having the right to speak for no more than 5 minutes in reply.

**REVENUE BUDGET 2010/11 - 2012/13 (Item 2E, Page 1014, 07/12)**

2. There was submitted an excerpt from the Cabinet meeting of 10 February 2010 (excerpt circulated) together with the report for background information (circulated under separate cover as Agenda Item No 1E of the Cabinet meeting held on 10 February 2010).

Councillor Reid then gave details of a series of additional measures which he proposed be introduced, namely:-

- (i) to an allocation of £300,000 over three years from the Revenue Reserves to fund the establishment of a team of officers dedicated to securing new jobs for East Ayrshire in advance of the closure of the Diageo plant within Kilmarnock. It was noted that support had been offered from John Swinney, Cabinet

Secretary through Scottish Enterprise, the Scottish Government and its other agencies to match this funding which would equate to a dedicated resource equivalent to £600,000 over the three years;

- (ii) the extension of the opening hours at the Burns Monument Centre to include Saturdays at an estimated cost of £19,000;
- (iii) to provide funding for two more teachers within Primaries 1 to 3 to maintaining the good progress towards reducing class sizes;
- (iv) to introduce free school meals for all Primary 1 children in all schools within East Ayrshire from August 2010 at an additional cost of £95,000 in 2010/11;
- (v) that officers look at the opening hours of the Galleon and Visions leisure facilities with a view to providing more options for families to spend time together at these Centres; and
- (vi) to allocate £2m from the Renewal and Repairs Fund to repair damage to roads and pavements across the Council's network following the recent prolonged spell of severe weather.

Councillor Reid, seconded by Councillor Linton, thereafter moved approval of the above measures and the following Cabinet recommendations, namely:-

- (i) that the Band D Council Tax level for 2010/11 be set at £1,188.99;
- (ii) that the option to pay Council Tax by direct debit over 12 months be offered;
- (iii) that the Resource Allocations be approved as follows:-

<b>Service</b>	<b>Allocation 2009/10 £m</b>	<b>Allocation 2010/11 £m</b>	<b>Change over Previous Year</b>
Educational and Social Services	175.423	177.611	2.188
Neighbourhood Services	33.980	33.693	(0.287)
Police, Fire, Valuation Board & SPT	33.563	28.272	(5.291)
Corporate Support	15.969	15.788	(0.181)
Finance & Asset Management Service	52.515	57.074	4.559
Other Non-Departmental Items	23.365	26.400	3.035
Unallocated	-	0.549	0.549
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>334.815</b>	<b>339.387</b>	<b>4.572</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>334.815</b>	<b>339.387</b>	<b>4.572</b>

- (iv) that the changes to the budget and savings package consulted upon be amended as proposed in Paragraph 5 of the report to Cabinet;
- (v) that the rent increase policy be amended as set out in Paragraph 11.1 of the report to Cabinet;
- (vi) to a council house rent increase for 2010/11 of £1.53 per week over a 52 week period;
- (vii) that for 2010/11 there be no increase for lock-ups and garage site charges;
- (viii) to approve the Reserves and Balances Strategy as set out in Appendix 1 to the report; and
- (ix) otherwise, to note the contents of the report.

Councillor Cook acknowledged that the Leader had accepted some of his proposals and therefore considered that the budget offered the level of savings required, while, as far as possible, maintaining frontline services, offered his group's support for the adoption of the budget but sought assurances in the following areas, viz:-

- (i) that any review of charges for music tuition to be carried out be extended to include the charges for classes organised by Community Learning and Development;
- (ii) that any review of the type and content of publications issued by the Council be extended beyond publications and to look at all promotional material produced by the Council;
- (iii) that along with the previously agreed trial recycling of food waste, that the Council re-emphasise the need to improve the recycling rate in Council owned properties and to look at schools as exemplars of how to do this;
- (iv) to give consideration to providing battery collection points for used dry batteries in all Council buildings, this to supplement the bags already available to the public.

Councillor Reid, in response, gave assurances to Councillor Cook that his suggestions as outlined above would be taken on Board and that Cabinet would consider these areas in due course.

Councillor Maureen McKay, seconded by Councillor Barney Menzies, moved as an amendment the following changes to the proposed budget:

- (a) in Educational and Social Services, to reject £770,000 of the proposed cuts and:
  - (i) retain the full £100,510 in music tuition;
  - (ii) retain the full £124,300 for school meals;
  - (iii) retain £485,000 of delegated school budgets; and
  - (iv) retain the £60,000 for meals on wheels and community alarms and home care;
- (b) in Neighbourhood Services, to reject £691,000 of the proposed costs and
  - (i) retain the budget for Community Wardens at £244,540 across a full year and that the Executive Director, to bring forward full plans for an outcome focussed local service that will have full community support;
  - (ii) in Roads and Transportation, to make available an additional £446,000 to be used across the first two quarters of 2010/11 to repair damage to roads and pavements;
- (c) additional proposals in respect of the following
  - (i) increasing the target to 6% in Corporate Support, to protect frontline services, representing a further Departmental saving of £331,000, within IT areas;
  - (ii) increasing the target to 6% in Finance and Asset Management to again protect frontline services, representing a further Departmental saving of £200,000, with regard to the use of external labour, including consultants;

- (iii) reduced landfill charges due to increased recycling. Increase the £250,000 target by a further £30,000 setting the new target of £280,000 which would contribute to savings released to the General Fund and enhance the environment; and
- (iv) that the remaining £47,000 unspent on Leader's Initiatives be returned to the General Services budget to contribute to frontline provision;
- (d) to adopt a policy established by Glasgow City Council of a living wage minimum pay of £7 per hour at a cost of £300,000 ensuring 733 staff have the potential to invest in the local economy, this additional budget impact to be allocated across budgets as required to achieve this objective;
- (e) to an amendment the Revenue Budget 2010/11 as follows:-
  1. that the Band D Council Tax level for 2010/11 be set at £1,188.99;
  2. that the option to pay Council Tax by direct debit over 12 months be offered - highlighting this does not imply a Council Tax reduction; and
  3. that the Resource allocations be approved as follows:

<b>Service</b>	<b>Allocation 2010/11 £m</b>
Educational and Social Services	178.291
Neighbourhood Services	34.828
Police, Fire, Valuation Board & SPT	28.272
Corporate Support	15.458
Finance & Asset Management Service	56.874
Other Non-Departmental Items	26.275
Unallocated	0.436
Appropriation from Reserves	-1.047
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>339.387</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>339.387</b>

4. that the changes to the budget and savings package consulted upon, be amended as previously outlined;
5. that a Council house rent increase for 2010/11 of £1.53 per week over a 52 week period be approved, noting this would offset tenant's Council Tax savings;
6. that for 2010/11 there be no increase for lock-ups and garage site charges;
7. that the released £1.047m from uncommitted General Fund balances be allocated 50% to Educational and Social Services and 50% to Neighbourhood Services, reducing the projected balance at 31 March 2010 to £8.142m and otherwise approve the reserves and balances strategy as set out in Appendix 1 to the Cabinet report of 10 February 2010;
8. that the Directors of Educational and Social Services and Neighbourhood Services outline their planned use of £500k each Department, additional funding with an emphasis on Social Services, local pressures and pavement clearing equipment as appropriate;

9. to note that this amendment sought to address the Labour Group's concerns expressed at Cabinet;
  10. that a paper, outlining the framework for future budget consultations to be presented to Council for approval;
  11. otherwise, note the content of the report; and
- (f) further, that a series of short, focussed working groups be established Ayrshire wide to explore the following shared service topics: curriculum development and psychological services, single social transport solution, integrated vehicle maintenance/fleet procurement, shared use of waste treatment plants and joint recycling, joint road maintenance, integrated solutions to the problems of looked after and accommodated children; and with Community Planning partner, Ayrshire and Arran Health Board, on Integrated Health and Social Care in East Ayrshire, joint commissioning and procurement of special health and social services.

Councillor Reid confirmed that the proposed spending reduction proposals, as identified in the Cabinet report of 10 February 2010, were to be the subject of a further review by Cabinet, by 31 March 2010, and all Elected Members would have the opportunity to review the Cabinet reports prior to the Cabinet meeting.

On a division by a show of hands the motion was carried by 17 votes to 15.

The meeting terminated at 1125 hrs.