

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON 9 MARCH 2000
AT 1004 HRS IN THE MEETING ROOM, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS,
LONDON ROAD, KILMARNOCK**

PRESENT: Provost Jimmy Boyd and Councillors Brian McNeil, Kathleen Hall, Ann Hay, Stephanie Young, Brian Reeves, Daniel Coffey, Willie Coffey, Douglas Reid, Drew McIntyre, David Macrae, Harry Wilson, Iain Linton, Alexander Walsh, Alan Campbell, Jane Darnbrough, John Knapp, Jim Raymond, Finlay MacLean, Robert McDill, Eric Jackson, George Smith, Jimmy Kelly, Julie Faulds, William Menzies, Eric Ross, Elaine Dinwoodie, Robert Taylor and Jimmy Carmichael.

ATTENDING: David Montgomery, Chief Executive; Fiona Lees, Depute Chief Executive; William Stafford, Director of Community Services; Barbara Haughan, Director of Corporate Services; Stephen Chorley, Director of Development Services; John Mulgrew, Director of Education; Alex McPhee, Director of Finance; Jim Lavery, Director of Homes and Technical Services; Douglas Bulloch, Director of Social Work; Iain McLachlan, Executive Director; Tom McHugh, Head of Accounting Services; Roddy Wallace, Head of Administration; Douglas Campbell, Head of Public Relations; Ian Arnott, Corporate Accounting Manager; Dave Mitchell, Principal Solicitor; and Bill Walkinshaw, Principal Administrative Officer.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Robert Stevenson, John Weir and Tommy Farrell.

CHAIR: Provost Jimmy Boyd, Chair.

PROVOST'S REMARKS

1. The Provost referred to localised flooding that had occurred on the evening of Wednesday 8 March 2000 and expressed the Council's appreciation for all those involved in the emergency planning process, the emergency services and the Council's DLO/DSO workforce for their efforts in tackling the problem.

SETTING THE COUNCIL TAX - RESTRICTION ON VOTING

2. The Director of Corporate Services confirmed that a letter had been sent to all Council Members on 4 February 2000 advising of the restrictions on voting affecting Members as a result of legislation.

ORDER OF DEBATE AND TIME LIMIT FOR SPEECHES

3. It was agreed that the three issues in relation to the budget be debated together and noted that in accordance with Standing Orders the mover of a motion or amendment would speak for no more than 10 minutes with succeeding speakers entitled to speak for no more than 5 minutes and that the original mover would have the right to speak for no more than 5 minutes in reply.

**GENERAL SERVICES REVENUE ESTIMATES AND
COUNCIL TAX 2000/2001**

4. There was submitted excerpt from Minutes of the Special Policy and Resources Committee of 8 March 2000 (excerpt circulated) together with the undernoted reports

for background information (circulated under separate cover with the Agenda for the Special Policy and Resources Committee held on 8 March 2000).

- (a) Report dated 2 March 2000 by the Director of Finance on Draft Estimates 2000/2001 - Policy and Resources Committee Budgets - Savings and Growth Proposals;
- (b) Report dated 2 March 2000 by the Director of Finance on Draft Estimates 2000/2001 - Reports from Service Committees;
- (c) Report dated 2 March 2000 by the Director of Finance on General Services Revenue Estimates 2000/2001 - Setting the Council Tax.

Councillor McIntyre thanked Officers in relation to the budget setting process and made reference to the Council's commitment to consult with the public as part of the budget setting process. He then moved approval of the recommendations of the Policy and Resources Committee as contained in paragraphs (i) to (v) below. Councillor Jackson seconded.

- (i) to agree the savings and growth proposals detailed in the appendices, including the revised Appendix 5, to the report dated 2 March 2000 by the Director of Finance - Policy and Resources Committee Budgets - Savings and Growth Proposals;
- (ii) to note that all Service Committees had met and aligned Service Delivery Plans with the final allocations for 2000/2001 remitted by the Special Policy and Resources Committee held on 25 February 2000;
- (iii) the adoption of the savings and growth packages as detailed in Appendices 1 to 5 which accompanied the report dated 2 March 2000 by the Director of Finance and the revised appendices issued on 8 March 2000 - General Services Revenue Estimates 2000/2001 - Setting the Council Tax;
- (iv) to approve the service resource allocations for 2000/2001 as follows:

<u>Service</u>	<u>Proposed Resource Allocation</u>
Education	63.312
Social Work	24.586
Community Services	36.572
Development Services	9.603
Homes and Technical Services	2.103
Policy and Resources	12.781
Housing/Council Tax Benefit	1.904
Trading Services Surplus	(0.295)
Other Specific Budget Items	(2.310)
Council Funded Social Inclusion	0.065
Debt Charges	13.179
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	161.500; and

- (v) that the Band 'D' Council Tax level I for 2000/2001 be set at £878.40.

Councillor Reid thanked Officers for their assistance in relation to the budget process and moved as an amendment the undernoted proposals Councillor W Coffey seconded.

- (i) to note the savings and growth proposals as detailed in the appendices considered at the Special Policy and Resources Committee on 8 March 2000 subject to the amendments and additions detailed in paragraphs (iv) to (xii) below;
- (ii) to note the adoption of the savings and growth packages as detailed in the revised appendices issued on 8 March 2000 subject to the amendments and additions detailed in paragraphs (iv) to (xii) below; and
- (iii) to recommend to Council to approve Departmental resource allocation for 2000/2001 as detailed in Special Policy and Resources Committee subject to the amendments and additions detailed in paragraphs (iv) to (xii) below;
- (iv) that a strategic review of the new corporate structure recently prepared be carried out to ensure that the Council can clearly demonstrate best value;
- (v) that there be an immediate review of Committee structures in conjunction with the proposed restructure of managerial and support staff, and a freeze on Members' expenses at current levels to protect front line services saving £63,000 next year;
- (vi) that the Public Relations budget be reduced by 10% and that the publication of Headlines cease, saving £50,000;
- (vii) the pooling of resources and joint working with neighbouring authorities be undertaken with a view to achieving economies of scale in, for example, procurement of goods and services. Examples of this exist elsewhere in Scotland and it is actively being pursued by neighbouring authorities. Anticipated savings are £100,000;
- (viii) that in accordance with the series of new measures announced recently by the Executive's First Minister to increase Council Tax collection, provision for bad debt be reduced from 5% to 4% which would release additional funds of £300,000 to be used with previous savings referred to above;
- (ix) that the above savings of £500,000 be spent to protect front line services, as follows:
 - (a) the abatement of proposed cuts of £42,500 in the Library Services throughout the District;
 - (b) that the Kay Park pitch and putt not be closed at a cost of £5,200;
 - (c) that there be no 50% reduction in cemetery maintenance at a cost of £30,000;
 - (d) that the proposed £25 charges for Aids and Adaptations and the £5 weekly charges for the installation of new community alarms be withdrawn at a cost of £197,000;
 - (e) that the proposed 60p charge for Council Tax payments at Post Offices and the proposed cuts in grants to voluntary local organisations be rejected, at a cost of £96,000;
 - (f) that an Officer working full time on generating sources of revenue for Council services, leisure, and other local projects from the Lottery and elsewhere be appointed at a cost of £30,000;

- (g) that an additional £100,000 be provided in the Central Repairs Budget to help protect the fabric of our schools and other community facilities;
- (x) taking into consideration the above adjustments that the Band 'D' Council Tax level for 2000/2001 be set at £878.40.
- (xi) that an independent enquiry into financing local government, to provide a socially just settlement for Scotland be established; and
- (xii) that the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council should meet the Finance Minister immediately to demand a fairer settlement.

Councillor Hay joined the meeting during Councillor Reid's proposal and prior to a vote being taken.

On a division by a show of hands the motion was carried by 16 votes to 12.

The meeting terminated at 1035 hrs.