

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 10 FEBRUARY 2000
AT 1130 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, William Coffey, Douglas Reid, Robert Stevenson, John Weir, Drew McIntyre, David Macrae, Harry Wilson, Iain Linton, Alexander Walsh, Jane Darnbrough, John Knapp, James Raymond, Finlay MacLean, Robert McDill, Eric Jackson, George Smith, Jimmy Kelly, Tommy Farrell, 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; Alex McPhee, Director of Finance; James Lavery, Director of Homes and Technical Services; Kate McVey, Solicitor to the Council; Tom McHugh, Head of Accountancy; Roddy Wallace, Head of Administration; and Julie Armstrong, Senior Administrative Officer.

APOLOGY: Councillor Alan Campbell.

CHAIR: Provost Jimmy Boyd, Chair.

**HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT 2000/2001 -
DRAFT ESTIMATES (Item 5, Page 668, 99/02)**

1. There was submitted an excerpt from the Minutes of the Special Policy and Resources Committee held on 10 February 2000 (circulated).

Councillor McIntyre, seconded by Councillor Kelly, moved acceptance of the recommendations contained in the excerpt as follows:-

- (a) recommend to the Special Policy and Resources Committee to be held on 10 February 2000:-
 - (i) approval of the Draft Estimates for the Housing Revenue Account 2000/2001, as submitted to the Special Housing Committee of 21 January 2000;
 - (ii) approval of a flat rate increase on all house rents of £3.95 per week, over a 48 week period, in order to balance the Housing Revenue Account; and
 - (iii) approval of an additional increase of £0.87 in rents for houses in the former Kilmarnock and Loudoun area; and to note that at the end of this year rents will be fully harmonised and that subsequent changes in rent levels would apply uniformly across the Council area; and
- (b) otherwise to note the terms of the report.

Councillor William Coffey, seconded by Councillor Daniel Coffey, moved as an amendment that the Director of Homes and Technical Services take the budget back, review it, and present a revised set of proposals to the Council as soon as possible over the next week and that the budget should:-

- (i) give priority to our core, front line service that we offer to tenants, including an organisational review;
- (ii) reduce all non-core expenditure, not increase it;
- (iii) enforce a moratorium on all new appointments not yet approved;
- (iv) take decisive action to manage the scandalous situation we have with void properties; and
- (v) demonstrate that the Council actually puts the interests of the tenants first and foremost.

On a division by a show of hands the motion was carried by 17 votes to 14.

COALFIELD COMMUNITIES CAMPAIGN - MINERS' PENSION FUND SURPLUSES

2.1 Declarations of Interest

Councillors Kelly, Menzies and Taylor declared an interest in respect of this item.

2.2 Consideration of Item

There was submitted a report dated 8 February 2000 (circulated) by the Chief Executive which advised of an approach by the Coalfield Communities Campaign (CCC) which requested that the Council give consideration to adopting a Resolution aimed at drawing attention to the CCC's campaign for building support for change in respect of the transfer of Miners' Pension Fund Surpluses to the Government.

It was agreed:

- (i) to adopt the Resolution as shown in Appendix 1 to these Minutes; and
- (ii) to authorise Press releases as appropriate.

The meeting terminated at 1200 hrs.

APPENDIX I**MINERS' PENSION FUND SURPLUSES: RESOLUTION**

This Council notes with great concern that the Treasury is scheduled to receive £4,000 million in surpluses from the miners' pension funds. This money is being taken at a time when many of the 500,000 beneficiaries of the schemes, especially the oldest, continue to live on the edges of poverty, and while many mining communities suffer problems of unemployment, ill-health and decay.

The Council therefore calls upon the Government to revise the arrangements on the division of the surpluses, established in 1994 under the previous administration, to ensure that:

- in exchange for its continuing but low-risk guarantee to miners' pensions, the Government takes a smaller share of the surpluses, leaving more for pensioners
- and more of what the Government does receive is ploughed back in coalfield communities

The Council further resolves to convey this resolution and the Council's concern to:

- The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and
- Local MPs.