

**EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON 6 MARCH 1997 AT 1000 HRS  
IN THE MEETING ROOM, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS,  
LONDON ROAD, KILMARNOCK**

**PRESENT:** Provost Robert Stirling and Councillors Gordon McCredie, Irene Reeves, Gordon Cree, Douglas Reid, Wilma Doyle, Ronald Brailsford, Alan Campbell, Kathleen Hall, Bob Beattie, John Knapp, Daniel Coffey, David Macrae, Kim Nicoll, George Turnbull, Robert McDill, Eric Ross, Jim Kelly, David Sneller, Jimmy Boyd, George Smith, Robert Taylor, John Smith and Eric Jackson.

**ATTENDING:** David Montgomery, Chief Executive; Fiona Lees, Depute Chief Executive; Des Tierney, Director of Commercial Operations; Bill Stafford, Director of Community Services; Stephen Chorley, Director of Development Services; John Hillis, Director of Housing, Iain McLachlan, Director of Personnel Services; Douglas Bulloch, Director of Social Work; Barbara Haughan, Director of Support Services; Margaret Burnell, Senior Depute Director of Education; Helen Dick and Tom McHugh, Depute Directors of Finance; Alan McDougall, Depute Director of Social Work; Roddy Wallace, Head of Administration; Kate McVey, Head of Legal Services; Bill Walkinshaw, Principal Administrative Officer; Graham Kerr, Public Relations Officer; and Julie Armstrong, Senior Administrative Officer.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Drew McIntyre, Jane Darnbrough, Jim O'Neill, David Fulton, Jimmy Carmichael and Tommy Farrell.

**CHAIR:** Provost Robert Stirling, Chair.

**COUNCIL TAX - RESTRICTIONS ON VOTING**

1. The Provost requested and the Council noted a statement by the Director of Support Services regarding the provisions of Section 112 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 on prohibitions on voting on the setting of the Council Tax if in arrears of Community Charge or Council Tax payments.

Councillor McDill left the meeting at this point.

**GENERAL SERVICES - THREE YEAR CAPITAL  
PLAN 1997/98 - 1999/2000 (Item 1, Page 1871)**

2. There was submitted Minute excerpt of the Special Policy and Resources Committee of 5 March 1997 together with report (both circulated) by the Director of Finance on the proposed three year General Services Capital Plan based on the latest information on available capital resources.

Councillor Sneller reported that East Ayrshire Council's Challenge Fund Bids submitted to the Scottish Office by East Ayrshire for the Flood Prevention Scheme and Recycling Scheme had been successful which would result in the Council receiving, in respect of the Flood Prevention Plan, additional capital consent of £1.4m for 1997/98 and £500,000 in 1998/99, and in respect of the Council's Recycling Scheme £550,000 in 1998/99, with the possibility if resources were available of receiving the funding in 1997/98.

Councillor Sneller also commented on the recent announcement of the approval for the major capital project for works to upgrade the A77 (M77) which would benefit Ayrshire and, in particular, East Ayrshire. The works were not due to start until the year 2000 but he suggested that pressure from the Council, business communities and authorities within Ayrshire could be brought to bear on the Government for an earlier start date.

The Council then agreed to approve the recommendations of the Special Policy and Resources Committee of 5 March 1997 as follows:-

- (i) to approve the block allocations per Service as detailed in Appendix II of the Director of Finance's report; and
- (ii) to remit to each Service Committee to agree the details of its final programme within the block allocations as now set for the next three years and to proceed to implement accordingly.

### **GENERAL SERVICES REVENUE ESTIMATES AND COUNCIL TAX 1997/98**

3. There was submitted Minute excerpt from the Special Policy and Resources Committee of 5 March 1997 (circulated under item 2 above) together with the following reports:

- (a) composite report by Chief Executive dated 28 February 1997 on Draft Estimates 1997/98 - Savings and Growth Proposals;
- (b) report by Chief Executive dated 3 March 1997 on Draft Estimates 1997/98 - Report from Service Committees; and
- (c) report by Director of Finance dated 28 February 1997 on General Services Revenue Estimates 1997/98 - Setting the Council Tax.

Councillor Sneller commented on the difficulties faced by the Council in setting the second budget of East Ayrshire Council and thanked Officers, Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Service Committees for their work and in particular the Chief Executive, Director of Finance and their team for their hard work throughout. He also thanked the External Auditor for his guidance in compiling the difficult budget. He referred to the extensive public consultation exercise by East Ayrshire Council which had been undertaken, comments from which had led to budget proposals being adjusted to reflect views expressed at the consultation meetings and thanked all members of the public for their input.

Councillor Sneller, seconded by Councillor Boyd, moved the recommendations contained in the remit from the Policy and Resources Committee of 5 March 1997 as follows, viz:-

- (i) to agree the revised savings and growth proposals in respect of General Services and the Support Services, Personnel Services and Finance Departments and across the Council action as detailed in Appendices I to V of the Chief Executive's composite report dated 28 February 1997 (referred to under (a) above) to align the Policy and Resources Committee budget to the final allocation remitted by the Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting held on 25 February 1997;

- (ii) to the adoption of the savings and growth packages as detailed in Appendices I to VI of the Chief Executive's report dated 3 March 1997 (referred to under (b) above);
- (iii) to declare a level of relevant expenditure for capping purposes amounting to £128.043m;
- (iv) to approve an additional CFCR contribution of £1m for the 1997/98 financial year;
- (v) to approve the level of other items of non-relevant expenditure amounting to £16.794m as shown in paragraph 3.4 of the Director of Finance's report dated 28 February 1997 (referred to under (c) above);
- (vi) to approve the level of net expenditure amounting to £27.503m to be met from Council Tax on the basis as shown in paragraph 3.5 of the Director of Finance's report dated 28 February 1997 (referred to under (c) above);
- (vii) to approve the Council Tax bad debt provision at 6%; and
- (viii) to declare a Council Tax (Band "D" equivalent) of £779 for 1997/98.

Councillor Coffey thanked the Members and staff for the work which had been undertaken in preparation for the budget and moved as an amendment, seconded by Councillor Nicoll:

- (i) that the Chief Executive carry out an urgent review of the Council's Senior Management Structure and that a report be submitted to the next appropriate Council meeting;
- (ii) that this Council re-prioritise the savings and growth packages and set a budget that does not attack the most vulnerable in the community; and
- (iii) that after the General Election, the Council reconsider the whole budgetary position and give a commitment to the people of East Ayrshire to restore all the cuts imposed on the Council by the Conservative Government.

On a division by a show of hands the motion was carried by 16 votes to 7.

The meeting terminated at 1030 hrs.