

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 4 MARCH 1999 AT 1100 HOURS IN THE MEETING ROOM, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS, LONDON ROAD, KILMARNOCK

PRESENT: Depute Provost Jimmy Boyd and Councillors Irene Reeves, Gordon Cree, Jane Darnbrough, Jim O'Neill, Kathleen Hall, Ann Hay, David Fulton, David Macrae, Robert McDill, Eric Ross, Jim Kelly, David Sneller, George Smith, Robert Taylor, John Smith, Tommy Farrell and Eric Jackson.

ATTENDING: David Montgomery, Chief Executive; Fiona Lees, Depute Chief Executive; Bill Stafford, Director of Community Services; Stephen Chorley, Director of Development Services; John Mulgrew, Director of Education; Alex McPhee, Director of Finance; John Hillis, Director of Housing; Douglas Bulloch, Director of Social Work; Barbara Haughan, Director of Support Services; Graham Haugh, Depute Director of Personnel Services; Tom McHugh, Head of Accounting; Roddy Wallace, Head of Administration; Douglas Campbell, Head of Public Relations and Marketing; Ian Arnott, Corporate Accounting Manager; Bill Walkinshaw, Principal Administrative Officer; David Mitchell, Principal Solicitor; Alex McPhee, Senior Accountant; and Julie Armstrong, Senior Administrative Officer.

APOLOGIES: Provost Robert Stirling and Councillors Gordon McCredie, Drew McIntyre, Douglas Reid, Alan Campbell, John Knapp, Daniel Coffey, Kim Nicoll and Jimmy Carmichael.

CHAIR: In the absence of Provost Robert Stirling, Depute Provost Boyd.

ORDER OF DEBATE AND TIME LIMIT FOR SPEECHES

It was agreed that the three issues in relation to the budget be debated together and that for the duration of this meeting in relation to the Council's proposed budget, that the mover of a motion or amendment speak for no more than 20 minutes with succeeding speakers entitled to speak for no more than 10 minutes and that the original mover should have the right to speak for no more than 10 minutes in reply.

GENERAL SERVICES REVENUE ESTIMATES AND COUNCIL TAX 1999/2000

1. There was submitted Minute excerpt from the Special Policy and Resources Committee of 3 March 1999 together with undernoted reports circulated under separate cover for the Agenda for the Special Policy and Resources Committee held on 3 March 1999.
 - (a) Report dated 24 February 1999 by the Director of Finance on Draft Estimates 1999/2000 - Policy and Resources Committee Budgets - Savings and Growth Proposals;
 - (b) Report dated 23 February 1999 by the Director of Finance on Draft Estimates 1999/2000 - Reports from Service Committees; and
 - (c) Report dated 26 February 1999 by the Director of Finance on General Services Revenue Estimates 1999/2000 - Setting the Council Tax.

Councillor Sneller in moving the recommendations of the Policy and Resources Committee as shown below first of all wished Councillor Coffey a speedy return to health.

He commented on the problems which had been experienced in the Commercial Operations Department. He followed by thanking the Chief Executive, all Directors and Administrative staff for their assistance through the difficult time. In particular he expressed appreciation of the role played by Officers in the Finance Department and of their contribution to facilitate the budget setting process. He further commented that following the public consultation, comments had led to budget proposals being adjusted to reflect the views expressed.

Councillor Jackson seconded Councillor Sneller's motion to move the recommendations contained in the remit of the Policy and Resources Committee of 3 March 1999 as follows, viz:-

- (i) agree to the savings and growth proposals detailed in the Appendix to the report dated 24 February 1999 by the Director of Finance including additional information issued on 2 March 1999;
- (ii) to note that all Service Committees had met and aligned service delivery plans with the final allocations for 1999/2000 remitted by Special Policy and Resources Committee held on 19 February 1999;
- (iii) to the adoption of the savings and growth packages as detailed in Appendices I to V which accompanied the report and the substitute appendices issued on 2 March 1999;
- (iv) that in respect of the substitute Appendix V in relation to Education Department, that the growth for the Child Care Strategy be reduced from £250,000 to £242,500 and the balance of £7,500 be used to reduce the proposed increase in school meal charges resulting in a charge of £1.25;
- (v) to approve the Departmental resource allocation for 1999/2000 as shown below with the £0.449m of management savings not being allocated to individual Departments at this time but that the position be reviewed during the financial year as savings arising from Departmental restructuring become further clarified;

Department	Departmental Resources Allocations
	£m
Education	62.305
Social Work	23.310
Community Services	35.118
Development Services	9.363
General Fund Housing	0.557
Chief Executives	0.646
Finance	2.508
Personnel	0.490
Democratic Process	0.435
Support Services	5.843
Miscellaneous Services	2.566
Housing and Council Tax Benefit	1.794
Common Police Services	0.125
Community Alarms	0.343
Other Specific Budget Items	(3.328)

Debt Charges	12.837
Urban Aid	0.063
Unallocated	0.680
Total Expenditure	155.655

- (vi) to reduce the proposed allocation of £0.500m for contingencies to an allocation of £0.270m for contingencies arising in 1999/2000 and that the balance be used to limit the percentage increase in Council Tax to 3.63% and declare a Council Tax band 'D' equivalent of £848.70 for 1999/2000.

Councillor McDill then thanked Officers for their assistance in relation to the budget process and moved as an amendment seconded by Councillor Hay:-

- (i) that an external independent audit of the Council's finances and systems to update the recent Audit Commission report be carried out to report within 3 months and that the report be made public;
- (ii) that an in-depth comprehensive review of all service spending plans be undertaken to identify ways in which services such as Education, Social, Community and Leisure Services can be expanded; and
- (iii) the following amendments to the budget proposals contained in the motion:-

<u>PROPOSAL</u>	<u>CUT</u>	<u>RE-ALLOCATED MONEY</u>
Public Relations Budget	162,500	
Members/Officers Expenses	45,000	
Chief Executive Department and Other Admin Departments	100,000	
Plus other savings yet to be decided		
SAVINGS TOTAL	£307,500	
Minus	£190,000 - Top up to contingency	270,000
Balance	£117,500 - To reverse Labour Cuts	
	Library Service	15,000
	Kay Park Boating Pond	5,450
	Employment Grants	15,000
Rescind Traffic Order	Town Centre Parking Charges	25,000
	School Meals	12,500
Two Officers dedicated to external funding: Spend to save - eg: - from		44,550
	Lottery	
	Euro Fund	
	National Funding	
	International Funding	
	TOTAL	117,500

Council Tax Increase = 3%
Council Tax Band D = £843.57
Contingency = £270,000

On a division by a show of hands the motion was carried by 15 votes to 3.

APPOINTMENT TO COALFIELD REGENERATION TRUST

2. There was submitted a report dated 1 March 1999 (circulated) by the Director of Support Services to consider a request from the Scottish Office to submit a nomination for appointment to the Coalfield Regeneration Trust.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to nominate Peter Boyce, Midlothian Council to the Coalfields Regeneration Trust; and
- (ii) that the Director of Support Services submit the nomination to the Scottish Office by 12 March 1999.

DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS PROPERTY REVIEW PROCESS (Item 20, Page 4403)

3. There was submitted excerpt from the Personnel and Property Sub-Committee of 2 March 1999 (circulated) which sought the appointment of three Members (two Members from the Administration and one Member from the Opposition) to the Property Monitoring Group.

It was agreed to appoint Councillors Eric Jackson (Chair), Jimmy Boyd and Kathleen Hall.

The meeting terminated at 1201 hours.