

Motherwell, 23 October 2002 at 2 pm.

A Meeting of the **GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

PRESENT

Councillor Chadha, Vice-Convener; Provost McCulloch; Councillors Barrie, Cefferty, Connelly, Devine, Glavin, Gormill, Grant, Homer, Irvine, J. Martin, Shields, Smith and Wilson.

CHAIR

In the absence of Councillor Holloway (Convener) Councillor Chadha, Vice-Convener presided.

IN ATTENDANCE

The Director of Administration; Head of Central Services; Head of Legal Services, and Senior Accountant, Department of Finance.

APOLOGIES

Councillors Hebenton, Holloway, Love, McCabe, McKinlay and Selfridge.

GENERAL PURPOSES (LICENSING) SUB-COMMITTEE

1. There was submitted the Minutes of the meetings and special meetings of the General Purposes (Licensing) Committees held on 19 August, 23 August, 12 September, 24 September, 2 October, 8 October and 14 October 2002.

Decided: that the Minutes of the meetings and special meetings of the General Purposes (Licensing) Committees held on 19 August, 23 August, 12 September, 24 September, 2 October, 8 October and 14 October 2002 be approved and noted.

GENERAL PURPOSES (PUBLIC PROCESSIONS) SUB-COMMITTEE

2. There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the General Purposes (Public Processions) Sub-Committee held on 19 September 2002.

Decided: that the Minute of the meeting of the General Purposes (Public Processions) Sub-Committee held on 19 September 2002 be approved and noted.

CIVIC FUNCTIONS GROUP

3. There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Civic Functions Group held on 2 October 2002.

Decided: that the Minute of the meeting of the Civic Functions Group held on 2 October 2002 be approved and noted.

2002/2003 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION (EXCLUDING PERSONNEL) - 1 APRIL TO 13 SEPTEMBER 2002

4. There was submitted a report dated 3 October 2002 by the Director of Administration detailing for the period 1 April to 13 September 2002, actual expenditure and income against the estimates contained in the 2002/2003 budget for the Central Services Division, including separate details in respect of the Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages and for the Legal Services Division of the Department of Administration.

Decided: that the report be noted.

The Convener being of the view that the following item of business was relevant, competent and urgent, authorised its consideration to enable the Council to progress the item timeously.

CINEMA LICENSING REVIEW OF FILM CLASSIFICATION

5. There was submitted a report (tabled) dated 19 September 2002 by the Director of Administration advising (1) that the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) classifies films for exhibition in Cinemas, on behalf of local authorities who hold the legal power to determine film classifications; (2) that significant policy decisions taken by the BBFC, which have a direct impact on cinema licensing, require to be approved by local authorities; (3) that the BBFC recently announced a change to the mandatory "12" cinema classification whereby no one younger than 12 years of age may be admitted to a "12" certificated film; (4) that the "12" classification had been converted to an advisory "12A" whereby children under 12 will be admitted to a "12A" certificated film if accompanied by a person aged 18 or over, and (5) that the Council's Cinema Licence Conditions now require to be amended to reflect this conversion.

Decided:

- (1) that the action taken by the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC), in changing the mandatory "12" cinema classification to an advisory "12A" classification effective from 30 August 2002 be approved, and
- (2) that it be agreed to vary the Council's Cinema Licence Conditions to incorporate a condition that "No person apparently under the age of 12 shall be admitted to any exhibition at which there is to be shown a film which has received a "12A" certificate from the BBFC, unless accompanied throughout that exhibition by a responsible adult aged 18 years or over.

CINEMA LICENSING - REVIEW OF CLASSIFICATION OF THE FILM "SWEET SIXTEEN"

6. There was submitted a report dated 9 October 2002 by the Director of Administration advising (1) that a representation had been received from Tommy Sheridan, MSP, seeking a change to the film classification in respect of the film "Sweet Sixteen"; (2) that the film "Sweet Sixteen", which was classified by the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) as an "18" rating, depicted the everyday lives of certain young people growing up in the Greenock area; (3) that Mr. Sheridan had suggested that the film does not have gratuitous scenes of violence or sexual content and that the film classification was given an "18" as a result of the use of strong language, and therefore sought a reduction of the classification to "15", and (4) that the Council were unaware of any substantive criticism of the BBFC's decision in respect of this film.

Decided:

- (1) that the representation received from Tommy Sheridan, MSP, in respect of the classification of the film "Sweet Sixteen" be noted, and
- (2) that the decision of the British Board of Film Classification to classify the film as an "18" rating be confirmed.

REVIEW OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE CIVIC GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 1982

7. There was submitted a report (docketed) dated 19 September 2002 by the Director of Administration advising (1) that the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 contains the licensing provisions for a number of activities such as Taxi and Private Car and Driver Licensing, Market Operators, Late Hours Catering, Second Hand Dealing, Public Entertainment, Street Traders and Window Cleaners; (2) that since the 1982 Act was originally passed, it has been subject to only very minor amendments; (3) that following consideration of a report submitted by the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) the Scottish Ministers determined that a review of the licensing provisions contained in that Act should be carried out; (4) that a Task Group was set up for the purposes of reviewing that Act with a remit to examine the principles and mechanisms of licensing, as set out in that Act, and having done so to review the existing provisions, taking into account any proposals for change; (5) that, following a detailed review of the relevant provisions of the 1982 Act, the Task Group had issued to a broad range of organisations with an interest in that form of licensing a Consultation Paper entitled "Review of the Licensing Provisions Contained in the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982"; (6) that the Consultation Paper proceeds systematically through the licensing provision of the 1982 Act highlighting the principal issues for consideration and posing a number of questions, and (7) that, after consultation with the Convener and Vice-Convener, and in order to meet the Task Group's timetable for comments on the document, a response on behalf of the Council, as contained within the Appendix to the report, had been submitted to the Task Group.

Decided:

- (1) that the action taken after consultation with the Convener and Vice-Convener, in submitting to the Task Group a response on behalf of the Council on the Consultation Document entitled "Review of the Licensing Provisions Contained in the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982", as contained within the Appendix to the report, be homologated, and
- (2) the contents of the report be otherwise noted.

TAXI LICENSING - TAXI FARES REVIEW

8. With reference to paragraphs 12 and 13 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 24 January 2001 when the taxi fare structure for the Central, South and North Licensing areas was agreed, there was submitted a report dated 26 September 2002 by the Director of Administration (1) advising that in terms of Section 17 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982, the Council now requires to carry out its statutory duty to review taxi fares, and (2) seeking authority to enter into full discussions with the taxi trade on a review.

Decided:

- (1) that the Head of Legal Services be authorised to enter into full discussions with the taxi trade on a review of taxi fares in the Council's licensing areas, and
 - (2) that a report be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee.
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COUNCIL HOUSE SALES - REVIEW OF TEMPORARY CONTRACTS

9. With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 24 January 2001, when it was agreed that resources continue to be provided from the Housing Capital Receipts for a further two years to fund the temporary contracts of employment associated with the sale of Council houses, there was submitted a report dated 11 October 2002 by the Director of Administration (1) advising (a) that the impact of the Housing Act, which lengthens the period before entitlement to purchase Council houses becomes available to new tenants, has led to a substantial increase in applications received, and (b) that the Inter-departmental Council House Sales Working Group had reviewed the position with regard to the contracts and felt that sales were unlikely to diminish for the foreseeable future, and (2) recommending that resources continue to be provided from the Housing Capital Receipts for a further two years from 1 April 2003.

Decided:

- (1) that resources continue to be provided from the Housing Capital Receipts for a further two years from 1 April 2003 to fund the temporary contracts associated with the sale of Council Houses, and
- (2) that the report be remitted to the Policy and Resources (Personnel) Sub-Committee.

THE MARRIAGE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2000 - CONDUCT OF CIVIL MARRIAGES OUTWITH REGISTRATION OFFICES

10. With reference to paragraph 10 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 21 August 2002, when it was agreed that authority be delegated to the Director of Administration, after consultation with the Conveners of this Committee and of the Policy and Resources (Personnel) Sub-Committee to determine the basis and level of payment to staff, and after consultation with the Convener of this Committee, to determine the level of fees, for the conduct of civil marriages outwith registration offices, there was submitted a report (docketed) dated 10 October 2002 by the Director of Administration setting out the fees applicable.

Decided: that the basis and level of payment to staff, and the level of fees, for the conduct of civil marriages outwith normal hours and outwith Registration Offices be noted.

ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT CENTRAL SERVICES DIVISION - AREA/REGISTRATION PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING AUDIT (PMP)

11. There was submitted a report dated 25 September 2002 by the Director of Administration advising (1) that by agreement between the Council and Audit Scotland, the Area/Registration Service was selected in 2001/2002 to review progress being made in implementing the framework set out by the Best Value Task Force; (2) that the review involved the assessment of the service against the criteria set out by Audit Scotland; (3) that, as a result, a Best Value achievement report was produced identifying the main strengths of the service; (4) that the overall conclusion from Audit Scotland was "that the service can demonstrate clear commitment and progress in implementing best value PMP framework and was able to demonstrate it has sound and well developed procedures in relation to consultation, best value service review, financial monitoring and public performance reporting", and (5) that a SMART action plan had been produced and was currently being implemented.

Decided: that the report be noted.

PRINTING AND REPROGRAPHICS - BEST VALUE SERVICE REVIEW AND PROPOSED VARIATION OF EXISTING CONTRACT WITH XEROX

12. With reference to paragraph 7 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 20 January 2002 when a Best Value Service Review in respect of the printing services provided by the Department of Administration was noted, there was submitted a report (docketed) dated 8 October 2002 by the Director of Administration (1) referring to the meeting of this Committee held on 22 November 2000 when it was agreed that in order to enhance the printing process, the high volume copiers in the Motherwell Print Room be replaced to facilitate the scanning of documents for printing and publication on the Intranet; (2) advising (a) that in reviewing the range of requirements appropriate to provide a full service to the Council and its Departments, it had become clear that there was a necessity to examine the way in which colour printing services were provided, and (b) that the introduction of a high quality colour printing service would offer the capability of providing the Council and its Departments with a most cost effective and productive service; (3) indicating (a) that Xerox (UK) Limited were the major suppliers of copying equipment in the Print Room and were able to meet the Council's requirements to conjoin the provision of colour printing into the existing agreement, and (b) preliminary discussions had taken place with representatives of Xerox (UK) Limited to review the terms of the present financial agreement to incorporate the improved colour copying service; (4) proposing that the two large high volume copiers be retained and the existing colour copier and small volume multi-user copier be replaced by a DocuColor 2000 series printer, and (5) indicating that the cost of these proposals would be less than the current financial outlay.

Decided: that the Director of Administration be authorised to enter into a revised contract with Xerox (UK) Limited to install the equipment proposed at the cost contained with the report.

INTERNET - MINUTES, AGENDAS AND REPORTS

13. With reference to paragraph 13 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 8 May 2002, when a report on action taken to progress issues identified following the best value review of Committee and Core Services was noted, there was submitted a report dated 9 October 2002 by the Director of Administration advising (1) that work had been completed to enable the publication of all current papers on the Internet and that these papers were now available on the Council's website; (2) that, agendas and reports, were being published on the website on the day on which they were issued and made available for public inspection; (3) that, in addition, all Minutes of North Lanarkshire Council were also available via access through that website, and (4) that the publication of all past agendas and reports was currently being addressed.

Decided:

- (1) that a report be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee, and
(2) that the contents of the report be otherwise noted.

ADMINISTRATION SERVICE PLAN - DEVELOPMENT OF PROPERTY ENQUIRY SERVICE

14. With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 19 December 2001, when the Administration Service Plan for the period 2001-2004 was approved, there was submitted a report dated 25 September 2002 by the Director of Administration (1) advising (a) that property enquiry certificates were an essential part of the dealing in the property market and contained vital information from a number of Council departments, and (b) that while there were agencies outwith the local authority working in the same service provision, it was felt that the Council should maintain its part of this service by recognising that the information contained within the certificates was crucial to those in the property market; (2) indicating (a) that at its meeting held on 8 May 2002 a progress report on his Departmental Service Plan had indicated as a key action that a

survey of existing users in relation to the development of the property enquiry service was underway, and (b) that the purpose, and subsequent results of the survey was intended to be utilised to extend the accessibility of the service to other potential customers by improved marketing and publishing of the availability of the service; (3) providing statistical information on the number of property enquiries between 1996 to the present year, together with details of the income generated including performance targets, and (4) summarising that investigations were underway to identify means by which the certificates could be provided more speedily.

Decided: that the contents of the report be noted.

DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION SERVICE PLAN - MONITORING REPORT

15. With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 19 December 2001 when the Administration Service Plan for the period 2001-2004 was approved, there was submitted a report (docketed) dated 14 October 2002 by the Director of Administration (1) advising that progress in addressing strategic and operational issues and identified in the Plan was monitored in the undertaking of the priority and key actions; (2) setting out the current stage of implementing the ten priority actions identified in the plan, and (3) detailing, in the Appendix to the report the current state of progress of the key actions identified in that plan.

Decided: that the contents of the report be noted.

APPOINTMENT TO LOW MOSS PRISON VISITING COMMITTEE

16. There was submitted a report dated 7 October 2002 by the Director of Administration (1) advising (a) that North Lanarkshire Council are, in terms of the Prisons and Young Offenders Institutions (Scotland) Rules 1994 as amended, responsible for appointing to Low Moss Prison Visiting Committee three persons of whom two may be Members of the Council; (b) that in accordance with that requirement the Council has appointed to Low Moss Prison Visiting Committee, Councillor Jean Jones and two other persons who are not Members of the Council, and (c) that one of the members appointed, not a Member of the Council, has intimated her resignation from the Prison Visiting Committee, and (2) recommending that the Council appoint a Member of the Council to the Low Moss Prison Visiting Committee.

Decided: that it be recommended that the Council appoint a Member to Low Moss Prison Visiting Committee.

TWINNING

(1) BRON

17. There was submitted a report dated 15 October 2002 by the Director of Administration (1) advising that correspondence had been received from the Tour Secretary, Cumbernauld Rugby Club advising that the Junior Section would be travelling to their Twin Town of Bron, France to participate in a rugby tournament during May 2003, and (2) seeking assistance towards the visit.

Decided: that assistance in terms of Council policy be awarded to Cumbernauld Rugby Club in respect of the visit to Bron, France during May 2003.

(2) LES MARCHES

18. With reference to paragraph 16 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 24 October 2001 when it was agreed that the Council enter into formal twinning links with the Municipality of Les Marches, there was submitted a report dated 26 September 2002 by the Director of Administration (1) advising (a) that the Municipality of Les Marches similarly approved the establishment of formal twinning links with North Lanarkshire Council and wrote to the Council proposing that the formal twinning agreement be signed in Les Marches on 29 September 2002 to coincide with a twinning visit to Les Marches by a group of people from Stepps and inviting the Provost and a number of colleagues to be present, and (b) following consultation with the Provost, the Convener and the Chief Executive, a response was sent accepting the invitation and arrangements made for the Council to be represented at the formal Twinning Ceremony by the Depute Provost and Councillor Wallace, and (2) seeking homologation for the action taken.

Decided: that the action taken after consultation with the Provost, the Convener and the Chief Executive in accepting the invitation from the Municipality of Les Marches to formally inaugurate the twinning agreements between North Lanarkshire Council and the Municipality of Les Marches be homologated.

(3) LES MARCHES

19. With reference to paragraph 18 above, there was submitted a report dated 15 October 2002 by the Director of Administration (1) advising that a group consisting of 36 people from Stepps travelled to Les Marches to coincide with the formal inauguration of the twinning arrangements between North Lanarkshire Council and the Municipality of Les Marches, and (2) seeking homologation for action taken after consultation with the Convener in awarding financial assistance in this respect.

Decided: that the action taken, after consultation with the Convener, in awarding financial assistance in respect of the twinning visit to Les Marches be homologated.

(4) MEULAN

20. There was submitted a report dated 11 October 2002 by the Director of Administration (1) advising that correspondence had been received from the Secretary of Kilsyth Town Twinning Association advising that an exchange group would be arriving from their Twin Town of Meulan, from 31 October to 3 November 2002, and (2) seeking assistance in this respect.

Decided: that assistance in terms of Council policy be awarded to Kilsyth Town Twinning Association in respect of the visit from Meulan, France from 31 October to 3 November 2002.

CONFERENCES

21. There was submitted a report dated 11 October 2002 by the Director of Administration advising that four invitations had been received in respect of attendance at conferences and seeking that consideration be given to the invitations.

Decided:

- (1) that the Council be represented at the undernoted conference:-

Conference	Venue	Date	Attendance
The Women's World in Local Government	Haydock, Merseyside	22-24 November 2002	Two Members

and

- (2) that otherwise no attendance be authorised.

Councillor Chadha vacated the Chair for the following item of business and took no part in its consideration or determination. Councillor Connelly was appointed to and assumed the Chair.

RECEPTION FOR THE PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA

22. There was submitted a report dated 7 October 2002 by the Director of Administration advising (1) that the Vice-Convener, Councillor Chadha, had been invited by the Minister (Co-ordination), the High Commission of India to attend a reception on Saturday, 12 October 2002 for the Prime Minister of India, and (2) that in view of the significance of the event, and following consultation with the Convener, the Chief Executive had authorised attendance at the event.

Decided: that the action taken after consultation with the Convener in authorising the attendance of Councillor Chadha at a reception on Sunday, 12 October 2002 for the Prime Minister of India be homologated.