

**Motherwell, 26 February 2003 at 2 pm.**

A Meeting of the **GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

**PRESENT**

Councillor Holloway, Convener; Councillor Chadha, Vice-Convener; Councillors Barrie, Cameron, Cassidy, Connelly, Devine, Gormill, Grant, Homer, Irvine, Love, Shields and Wilson.

**CHAIR**

Councillor Holloway (Convener) presided.

**IN ATTENDANCE**

The Director of Administration; Head of Central Services; Chief Solicitor (Licensing) and Senior Accountant, Department of Finance.

**APOLOGIES**

Provost McCulloch, Councillor Cefferty, McCabe, J. Martin and Selfridge.

**GENERAL PURPOSES (LICENSING) SUB-COMMITTEE**

1. There was submitted the Minutes of the meetings and special meetings of the General Purposes (Licensing) Sub-Committees held on 12 and 16 December 2002, and 20, 23 and 27 January 2003.

**Decided:** that the Minutes of the meetings and special meetings of the General Purposes (Licensing) Sub-Committees held on 12 and 16 December 2002, and 20, 23, and 27 January 2003 be approved and noted.

**GENERAL PURPOSES (PUBLIC PROCESSIONS) SUB-COMMITTEE**

2. There was submitted the Minutes of the meetings of the General Purposes (Public Processions) Sub-Committee held on 23 and 24 January 2003.

**Decided:** that the Minutes of the meetings of the General Purposes (Public Processions) Sub-Committee held on 23 and 24 January 2003 be approved and noted.

**CIVIC FUNCTIONS GROUP**

3. There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Civic Functions Group held on 12 February 2003.

**Decided:** that the Minute of the meeting of the Civic Functions Group held on 12 February 2003 be approved and noted.

**2002/2003 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION (EXCLUDING PERSONNEL) - 1 APRIL 2002 TO 3 JANUARY 2003**

4. There was submitted a report dated 15 January 2003 by the Director of Administration detailing for the period from 1 April 2002 to 3 January 2003, 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.

**COMMUNITY COUNCILS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

5. With reference to paragraph 5 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 21 March 2002, when the level of financial support afforded to Community Councils for the financial year 2001/2002 had been agreed, there was submitted a report (docketed) dated 7 February 2003 by the Director of Administration (1) advising that the current level of grant support to Community Councils in North Lanarkshire was set at £450 per Council with an additional £9 per 100 of electorate, rounded up to the nearest hundred; (2) recommending that the level of financial support for Community Councils be maintained for the financial year 2003/2004, and (3) proposing that, having regard to the Code of Guidance on Funding External Bodies, And Following The Public Pound produced by the Accounts Commission for Scotland and COSLA, Community Councils in North Lanarkshire be advised of the purpose of and restrictions on that funding.

The Director of Administration, reported orally, that to effect a smooth transition it would not be the proposal, unless necessary, to disturb current patterns of minor expenditure in the coming financial year.

**Decided:** that the report be approved and noted.

**CUMBERNAULD REGISTRATION OFFICE, BRON WAY, CUMBERNAULD**

6. With reference to paragraph 13 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 21 August 2002 when it was agreed that the Cumbernauld Registration Office be transferred from its current location in Fleming House to adapted and refurbished accommodation within the Council Offices, Bron Way, Cumbernauld, there was submitted a report dated 20 January 2003 by the Director of Housing and Property Services (1) providing details of the six tenders received in respect of the alterations to Council Offices, Bron Way, Cumbernauld; (2) advising that the lowest tender received was that from J. B. Bennett (Contracts) Limited in the corrected sum of £157,256.66 after checking, and (3) reporting that the Director of Administration, after consultation with the Convener, had accepted the tender by J. B. Bennett (Contracts) Limited.

**Decided:** that the action taken by the Director of Administration, after consultation with the Convener, in accepting the lowest tender, being that submitted by J. B. Bennett (Contracts) Limited in the sum of £157,256.66, for the alterations to the Council Offices, Bron Way, Cumbernauld be noted.

**REGISTRATION OF BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES - REGISTRATION BOUNDARY BETWEEN DENNY AND KILSYTH**

7. With reference to paragraph 10 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 21 August 2002 when it was agreed *inter alia*, that, in liaison with Falkirk Council, an approach be made to the Register General to seek adjustment of the registration boundary to accord with the local authority

boundary in that area, there was submitted a report dated 20 January 2003 by the Director of Administration advising that the Scottish Ministers had approved a Scheme submitted jointly by this Council and Falkirk Council to alter the registration district boundaries between the registration districts of Kilsyth and Denny.

**Decided:** that the report be noted.

**ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT AREA/ REGISTRATION SERVICE - PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING (PMP) IMPROVEMENT ACTION PROGRESS REPORT**

8. With reference to paragraph 11 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 23 October 2002 when it was noted that the area/registration service was selected for Performance Management and Planning (PMP) audit, there was submitted a report dated 7 February 2003 by the Director of Administration (1) recalling that as a result of this service being selected and following completion of the self assessment the PMP Action Plan was created, and (2) advising of the progress, to date, in the implementation of that PMP Action Plan for 2002/2003.

**Decided:** that the report be noted.

**TAXI LICENSING - TAXI FARES REVIEW**

9. With reference to paragraph 8 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 23 October 2002 when it was agreed 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, there was submitted a report (docketed) dated 12 February 2003 by the Director of Administration (1) advising (a) that of the three licensing areas, only the North Area submitted proposals on an increase to taxi fares; (b) that the North Area representatives had made the claim that they operate in a substantially difference environment on the basis that they all have purpose built vehicles and the topography of the North Licensing area is different from the Central and South, and (c) the fares review and the particular proposals in the North Area had attracted three representations, as contained within Appendix A to the report, and (2) setting out issues for consideration.

**Decided:**

- (1) that it be agreed that the only amendment to the taxi fares scale in the Council's North Licensing Area be an alteration from a charge of £1.50 for the first 1,470 yards to a charge of £1.50 for a distance not exceeding 1,274 yards, effective from 17 March 2003;
- (2) that it be agreed that the fares scales in the Council's Central and South Licensing areas remained unchanged, and
- (3) that the contents of the report be otherwise noted.

**PRIVATE HIRE CAR LICENSING - SPECIFICATIONS FOR PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES**

10. With reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 8 May 2002, when it was agreed that a consultation on the amendment of the private hire vehicle specifications commence, there was submitted a report (docketed) dated 6 February 2002 by the Director of Administration (1) advising of the outcome of the consultation in respect of the inclusion of people carrier type vehicles and estate cars in private hire vehicle specifications; (2) detailing the background relative thereto, and (3) proposing in Appendix A to the report, draft minimum vehicle specifications for private hire cars, to include people carrier type vehicles and estate cars.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the draft minimum vehicle specifications for private hire cars as contained within Appendix A to the report be approved, and
- (2) that the contents of the report be otherwise noted.

**EDUCATION APPEAL COMMITTEE - THE SCOTTISH COMMITTEE OF THE COUNCIL ON TRIBUNALS**

11. There was submitted a report (docketed) dated 6 February 2003 by the Director of Administration advising (1) of the general dissatisfaction expressed by the Scottish Committee of the Council on Tribunals with regard to the operation of the education appeal system in Scotland, and (2) of the positive comments provided to this Council by the Scottish Committee of the Council on Tribunals following attendance by a member of the Scottish Committee at a North Lanarkshire Education Appeal Committee Hearing.

**Decided:** that the contents of the report be approved and noted.

**ACCOUNTS COMMISSION STATUTORY INDICATOR - COUNCIL HOUSE SALES**

12. There was submitted a report dated 6 February 2003 by the Director of Administration (1) advising that one of the statutory performance indicators measured and published by the Accounts Commission through Audit Scotland is the rate of progress by each Scottish Council in dealing with statutory sales of Council houses under the "Right to Buy" legislation; (2) providing in an Appendix to the report, the national league table showing the total number of house sales undertaken by each authority in the year 2001/02 together with the percentage of house sales completed within the target time of 26 weeks, and (3) indicating that in performance terms, North Lanarkshire is now recorded as being the third best performer across the Scottish Councils with 90% of transactions being completed within 26 weeks.

**Decided:** that the report be noted.

**TOWN TWINNING**

**(1) KILSYTH TOWN TWINNING ASSOCIATION**

13. With reference to paragraph 13 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 18 December 2002 when there was noted the cancellation of a twinning visit from Meulan, France to Kilsyth planned from 31 October to 3 November 2002, there was submitted a report dated 4 February 2003 by the Director of Administration advising (1) that correspondence had subsequently been received from Kilsyth Town Twinning Association advising that the exchange visit had been rescheduled and the group would be arriving in Kilsyth between 13 to 16 February 2003, and (2) that, following consultation with the Convener, assistance was authorised in terms of Council policy in respect of the visit.

**Decided:** that the action taken, after consultation with the Convener, in authorising assistance in terms of Council policy to the Kilsyth Twinning Association be homologated.

**(2) CUMBERNAULD RUGBY CLUB**

14. There was submitted a report dated 7 February 2003 by the Director of Administration (1) advising that correspondence had been received from the Organising Secretary, Cumbernauld Rugby Club, advising that Bron Rugby Club will be arriving from their twin town of Bron, France to Cumbernauld from 18 to 21 April 2003, and (2) requesting assistance towards the visit.

**Decided:** that assistance in terms of Council policy be awarded to Cumbernauld Rugby Club in respect of the visit by Bron Rugby Club, France to Cumbernauld from 18 to 21 April 2003.

**(3) BRON**

15. There was submitted a report dated 7 February 2003 by the Director of Administration advising (1) that the Provost had received a letter from the Mayor of Bron inviting the Council to be represented at celebrations to be held in Bron between 19 and 20 June; (2) that the purpose of the visit was to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the twinning of Bron with Weingarten and also the delayed celebrations of the 30th anniversary of the twinning of Bron with Grimma; (3) that it had not, in the past, been the practice of the Council to participate in events which do not directly affect the Council, and (4) that the Council has previously agreed that an invitation be extended for an official twinning visit by representatives of the municipality of Bron to North Lanarkshire.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the invitation from the Mayor of Bron be declined, and
- (2) that the contents of the report be otherwise noted.

**(4) ST. DENIS**

16. There was submitted a report dated 7 February 2003 by the Director of Administration advising (1) that the Provost had received a letter from the Mayor of St. Denis regarding the 40th anniversary this year of the inauguration of the twinning links between the Burgh of Coatbridge and the Municipality of St. Denis; (2) that the invitation has been discussed with the Chair and the Honorary President of the St. Denis Twinning Association and, on their initiative, a Committee of local people has been set up to identify ways of recognising this occasion; (3) that it is understood that that Committee will investigate the possibility of tracing local people who, as school children, participated in early twinning trips with a view to organising an anniversary twinning trip, and (4) that the Provost had also received, from the Mayor of St. Denis and Villeteuse, a letter inviting the Council to send a party of around twelve people, of whom seven should be young sportspeople, to participate in the World Sports Forum to be held in St. Denis to coincide with the World Athletic Championships in August of this year.

**Decided:**

- (1) that it be agreed that the Council accept the invitation to participate in the World Sports Forum;
- (2) that the Director of Administration, in liaison with the Directors of Education and Community Services, be authorised to investigate the possibility of identifying suitable participants, and
- (3) the contents of the report be otherwise noted.

**WATERLOO, BRANDENBURG - INVITATION**

17. There was submitted a report dated 18 February 2003 by the Director of Administration advising (1) that following an international event organised in 1996 by the municipality of Waterloo, Belgium, and involving local authorities and other communities bearing the name Waterloo, a number of similar international events had been organised by others of those authorities; (2) that the Council had been represented at the first of those events, and (3) that an invitation had been received from the Burgermeister of Waterloo/Bluthen, Brandenburg inviting the Council to participate in a similar event in that town between 4 and 6 June 2003.

**Decided:** that the invitation received from the Burgermeister of Waterloo/Bluthen, Brandenburg inviting the Council to participate in an international event in that town be declined.

**POSTWATCH SCOTLAND - PUBLIC MEETING**

18. There was submitted a report dated 13 February 2003 by the Director of Administration advising (1) that correspondence had been received from Postwatch Scotland advising of their intention to hold a public meeting on Wednesday, 5 March 2003 in Motherwell Concert Hall, and (2) that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the unsatisfactory delivery of first class mail in the ML postcode area.

**Decided:** that the report be noted.

**FUND TO DEVELOP POST OFFICES IN DEPRIVED URBAN AREAS**

19. There was submitted a report dated 20 February 2003 by the Director of Administration advising (1) that on 30 December 2002, the Deputy Minister for Social Justice announced details of a £2 million fund, which will operate over a two year period to 31 March 2005, to develop Post Offices in deprived urban areas; (2) that the object of the fund was to contribute to the regeneration of deprived urban areas by sustaining and improving Post Office branches which provide socially important services and facilities and act as an "anchor" for other retail activities; (3) that applications for grant assistance from the fund will be accepted from 24 February 2003 and it is anticipated that the one-off grant, to a maximum of £50,000, for capital improvements to the non Post Office element of the business will be provided, and (4) that the Community Planning/Partnership Office of the Chief Executive's Department of this Council will undertake co-ordination and endorsement of all North Lanarkshire proposals.

**Decided:** that the contents of the report be noted.

**CONFERENCES**

20. There was submitted a report dated 5 February 2003 by the Director of Administration advising that two invitations had been received in respect of attendance at conferences and seeking that consideration be given to the invitations.

**Decided:** that no attendance be authorised.

**DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION - STRUCTURE REVIEW**

21. There was submitted a report (docketed) dated 20 February 2003 by the Director of Administration providing recommendations following a review of the establishment structure of the Department of Administration.

**Decided:** that the Committee for its interest approve the recommendations contained in the report and recommend accordingly to the Policy and Resources (Personnel) and Policy and Resources (Personnel Early Retirement) Sub-Committees.