

**Motherwell, 27 October 2004 at 2 pm.**

**A Meeting of the GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

**PRESENT**

Councillor Holloway, Convener; Councillor Saunders, Vice-Convener; Councillors Barrie, Gorman, Gormill, Homer, Irvine, Love, McAuley, J. Martin, Shields, Stocks and Wilson.

**CHAIR**

Councillor Holloway (Convener) presided.

**IN ATTENDANCE**

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

**APOLOGIES**

Councillors Burrows, Chadha, Devine, McCabe and McKenna.

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

1. There were submitted the Minutes of the meetings and Special Meetings of the General Purposes (Licensing) Sub-Committee held on 19 and 23 August and 10, 16 and 21 September 2004.

**Decided:** that the Minutes of the meetings and special meetings of the General Purposes (Licensing) sub-Committee held on 19 and 23 August and 10, 16 and 21 September 2004 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 26 August 2004.

**Decided:** that the Minute of the meeting of the General Purposes (Public Processions) Sub-Committee held on 26 August 2004 be approved and noted.

**CIVIC FUNCTIONS GROUP**

3. There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Civic Functions Group held on 6 October 2004.

**Decided:** that the Minute of the meeting of the Civic Functions Group held on 6 October 2004 be approved and noted.

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### 2004/2005 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION (EXCLUDING PERSONNEL) - 1 APRIL TO 17 SEPTEMBER 2004

4. There was submitted a report dated 17 September 2004 by the Director of Administration detailing, for the period from 1 April to 17 September 2004, outturn and income against the estimates contained in the 2004/2005 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.

### REVENUE BUDGET 2004/2005 - VIREMENT OF EXPENDITURE

5. There was submitted a report dated 19 October 2004 by the Director of Administration (1) advising (a) that there was currently an underspend within the Central Services Revenue Budget in respect of Employee Costs budget heading, and (b) that in respect of the Registration Services there was an over-recovery of income from Fees and Charges, and (2) proposing that the sum of £45,000 be transferred from the Employee Costs budget heading, and, an over-recovery of £15,000 income to the Registration Services be transferred to the Supplies and Services Budget Heading to fund minor works.

**Decided:** that it be agreed that the sum of £45,000 be transferred from the Employee Costs budget heading and an over-recovery of £15,000 income in the Registration Service be transferred to the Supplies and Services budget heading within Central Services to fund minor works.

### REVIEW OF TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING

6. With reference to paragraph 7 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 25 August 2004, when it was agreed to review Taxi and Private Hire Licensing, there was submitted a report (docketed) dated 29 September 2004 by the Director of Administration (1) setting out detailed recommendations on the implementation of a number of policy changes in respect of Taxi and Private Hire Licensing, and (2) providing details thereon.

**Decided:** that it be agreed that:-

- (1) the age limit for non purpose built taxis be set at five years old from the date of first registration to the date of licence renewal or vehicle substitution, to come into effect at the licence renewal due on 31 December 2005;
- (2) an age limit for purpose built taxis be agreed, in principle, and that the Head of Legal Services, in conjunction with the Convener, be authorised to consult with trade representatives on the actual limit to be applied and thereafter report to a future meeting of this Committee;
- (3) all non purpose built taxis in the South Licensing Area be White, to come into effect at the licence renewal due on 31 December 2005;
- (4) all non purpose built taxis in North Lanarkshire be fitted with a full width roof sign, to come into effect at the licensing renewal due on 31 December 2005;
- (5) the Head of Legal Services be authorised to invite views from private hire operators on vehicle age limits and colours and thereafter report to a future meeting of this Committee;

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- (6) the non purpose built taxi specification and the private hire specification be harmonised, with regard to engine capacities, to come into effect at the licence renewal due on 31 December 2005;
- (7) the Head of Legal Services be authorised to invite all persons on the South area waiting list to apply for a Taxi Licence by 30 April 2005;
- (8) the acceptance of applications for variation of Taxi Licence Holders, on the basis that such applications may be granted subject to all concerned being fit and proper persons to hold a Taxi Licence and to the operation of an approved wheelchair accessible vehicle;
- (9) that all existing taxi operators be allowed the opportunity to apply to vary their licences in terms of licence holders, by 31 December 2005, and if made during that time frame, not be subject to a requirement on the part of the transferee to operate an approved wheelchair accessible vehicle, and
- (10) that all non purpose built taxis be fitted with a swivel seat approved by the Council by the time of their annual vehicle inspection due in 2006.

### ACCESSIBLE TAXIS

7. There was submitted a report dated 29 September 2004 by the Director of Administration (1) seeking approval of the Citroen Voyager le Cab Noir, the Fiat Dakota Cab and the Fiat Hackney Euro Cab as suitable for use as Licensed Taxis, and (2) confirming that the Council's Transport Manager had recommended these vehicles as suitable for use as Licensed Taxis based on their disabled access, comfort, appearance and "type approval".

**Decided:** that it be agreed to approve the Citroen Voyager le Cab Noir, the Fiat Dakota Cab and the Fiat Hackney Euro Cab as suitable for use as Licensed Taxis in North Lanarkshire.

### REGISTRATION, COATBRIDGE

8. With reference to paragraph 13 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 25 August 2004, when an update on the Registration Services located in Coatbridge was noted, there was submitted a report dated 1 October 2004 by the Director of Administration (1) advising of the outcome of the investigation of interim measures to facilitate disabled access to that service, and (2) indicating (a) that the only option available, in the short term, will be to provide limited registration facilities within the Council's First Stop Shop at Coatbridge, via a bell alert system together with the purchase of computer hardware, and (b) that the operational arrangements will be monitored to evaluate the viability of this provision.

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

### REGISTRATION SERVICE - "WEDDING PRIVILEGE CARDS"

9. There was submitted a report dated 12 October 2004 by the Director of Administration advising (1) that an organisation, AD-vise, a company based in Freckleton near Preston, had approached the Council with a proposal to enter into an agreement to allow the company to provide a "Wedding Privilege Card" in Registration Offices in North Lanarkshire; (2) that the Wedding Privilege Card is designed to permit the display of the names and telephone numbers of local businesses specialising in wedding related services and would entitle holders to discounts from the businesses listed on the card, and (3) that the revenue generated from the privilege card enables the service to be provided

free of charge, although the Council would receive a royalty payment equivalent to a £500 one-off payment for each Registration Office or, alternatively, a royalty payment equivalent to 10% of advertising profits.

**Decided:** that it be agreed, subject to the Director of Administration being satisfied as to the necessary safeguards to protect the Council's interests, to enter into an agreement with AD-vice, initially, for a two year period, to provide Wedding Privilege Cards in the Council's Registration Offices for a one-off royalty payment of £500 per office.

#### **MEMBERS' EQUIPMENT**

10. With reference to paragraph 11 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 23 August 2003, when it was agreed, that as a pilot project, and in order that maintenance costs be ascertained, one laptop computer be provided to an elected Member as part of the home working project, there was submitted a report dated 1 October 2004 by the Director of Administration (1) advising that, to minimise the risk to the corporate network of using locally installed applications, the software requirements of the laptop involved an additional cost of £190 to safeguard the security of the information stored, and (2) indicating (a) that on the basis of the pilot project, the provision of a laptop was, in certain circumstances, a viable alternative to the provision of a desktop computer, and (b) that on the basis of no additional maintenance costs and a sole additional software cost of £190, provision of laptop could be accommodated for Members embarking on home working and for other Members who currently operate home working at the stage at which current equipment is due for renewal.

**Decided:**

- (1) that it be agreed that, for any Member initiating home working arrangements and for any Member currently operating home working arrangements at the stage of renewal and replacement of the computer, the option to provide a laptop be made available, and
- (2) that otherwise the contents of the report be noted.

#### **MEMBERS' EQUIPMENT: BROADBAND**

11. There was submitted a report dated 5 October 2004 by the Director of Administration (1) advising of progress made in providing a facility for Broadband communication links between elected Members' homes and the Council's corporate IT network; (2) outlining the background relative thereto, and (3) recommending that, having regard to the prospects of improved service, and potential cost savings, the Council connect to Broadband.

**Decided:** that it be agreed:-

- (1) that the five elected Members who are now either embarking for the first time on the use of Members' home based computing links or, have had an ISDN connection for a period in excess of 12 months, be now connected by means of Broadband to the Council's corporate IT network;
  - (2) that those Members be asked to provide feedback on reliability and speed of access;
  - (3) that subject to satisfactory feedback on performance, and with the agreement of the Members concerned, existing ISDN lines be replaced with Broadband links at a point where cost savings can be achieved, and
  - (4) that to minimise disruption and ensure continuity, this exercise be undertaken on a phased basis in order of frequency of use.
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**REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY PARADES AND SERVICES AND NATIONWIDE TWO MINUTES SILENCE**

12. There was submitted a report dated 11 October 2004 by the Director of Administration advising (1) of proposals in respect of the Council's involvement in, and representation at, Remembrance Day Commemoration Ceremonies on Sunday, 14 November 2004, and (2) of the Council's participation in the nationwide two minutes silence to observe the significance of the eleventh hour, of the eleventh day, of the eleventh month.

Thereon Councillor Wilson asked that the Committee note the involvement of the Motherwell United Services Club in the arrangements for the ceremony in Motherwell.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the Director of Administration be authorised to organise Remembrance Sunday Parades and Services in Coatbridge at 11 am and, with the involvement of the Motherwell United Services Club, in Motherwell at 3 pm on Sunday, 14 November 2004;
- (2) that approval be given to participate in the invitation of the Royal British Legion Scotland in ceremonies in Cumbernauld and Kilsyth organised by that organisation;
- (3) that the Council be represented at other traditional Remembrance Day ceremonies held in North Lanarkshire, and
- (4) that the Council support the nationwide two minutes silence at 11 am on Thursday, 11 November 2004.

**DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION – PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT**

13. With reference to paragraph 20 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 14 January 2004, when it was noted that the performance of the Service Plans would be reported to Service Committees on a six monthly basis, there was submitted a report dated 1 October 2004 by the Director of Administration (1) providing an update on the progress of his Departmental Service Plan from 1 April to 30 September 2004 together with the Departmental absence statistics from the period April to August 2004, and (2) providing, as an Appendix to the report, key actions identified in the Service Plan and the progress of these between 1 April and 30 September 2004.

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

**POST OFFICE**

**(1) BROOMFIELD BRANCH, 15 GARTLEA ROAD, AIRDRIE**

14. There was submitted a report dated 18 October 2004 by the Director of Administration (1) advising (a) that towards the end of June 2004, Morrisons had indicated to the Post Office that they no longer wish to operate the Post Office branches in the former Safeway stores and had therefore tendered their resignation in respect of the Broomfield Post Office branch, 15 Gartlea Road, Airdrie, and (b) that the period of notice for this branch is 12 months, and (2) indicating (a) that after considering the network in the area, it is the intention of the Post Office to seek to maintain a Post Office branch within the vicinity, and (b) that Post Office will advertise for potential partners through external advertising and following local leads and are hopeful that they will be able to establish a new branch without a break in the service.

**Decided:** that the position be noted meantime.

**(2) PROPOSALS TO CLOSE POST OFFICES WITHIN THE COUNCIL'S AREA**

15. There was submitted a report (docketed) dated 19 October 2004 by the Director of Administration (1) advising that correspondence had been received from Post Office setting out proposals for branches of the Post Office they are putting forward as potential closures; (2) indicating (a) that the potential branch closures, in the Council's area, include Clarkston, West Crindledyke, Kirkshaws, Sikeside, Greenfaulds, Holytown and Viewpark, and (b) that the consultation began on 7 October and ends on Wednesday, 17 November 2004, and (3) detailing Post Office's justification for these closures.

The Head of Central Services orally advised that he had received a representation from Councillor Cameron, opposing the closure of the Clarkston branch and, in the course of discussion, the Committee were advised by Members of the adverse consequences of closure of the other branch post offices.

**Decided:** that the Director of Administration be authorised to respond to Post Office setting out the Council's opposition to the closure of these Post Offices.

**TWINNING**

**(1) CUMBERNAULD/BRON TWINNING ASSOCIATION**

16. There was submitted a report dated 18 October 2004 by the Director of Administration (1) advising of action taken, after consultation with the Convener, in awarding assistance in terms of Council's policy to Cumbernauld/Bron Twinning Association in respect of a twinning visit to Bron, France from 13-20 October 2004, and (2) seeking homologation in this regard.

**Decided:** that, the action taken, after consultation with the Convener, in awarding assistance in terms of Council policy to Cumbernauld/Bron Twinning Association in respect of a twinning visit to Bron, France from 13-20 October 2004 be homologated.

**(2) ABRONHILL THISTLE FOOTBALL CLUB**

17. There was submitted a report dated 18 October 2004 by the Director of Administration (1) advising that correspondence had been received from the Secretary, Abronhill Thistle Football Club indicating (a) that a group of 17 young people together with four coaches and four additional assistants would be travelling to Bron, France during May 2005 to participate in a football tournament, and (b) that it was proposed that the Secretary would be travelling to Bron on 13 October with the Cumbernauld/Bron Twinning Association, as noted in the previous report, to meet the local twinning representatives with a view to furthering the arrangements for the visit in May 2005, and (2) recommending assistance in terms of Council policy.

**Decided:** that assistance in terms of Council policy be awarded to Abronhill Thistle Football Club in respect of the two visits to Bron, France, during October 2004 and May 2005.

**CONFERENCES**

18. There was submitted a report (docketed) dated 20 October 2004 by the Director of Administration advising that five 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.