

DUNBARTONSHIRE AND ARGYLL & BUTE VALUATION JOINT BOARD

At a Meeting of the Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute Valuation Joint Board held in the Victoria Halls, Helensburgh on Friday, 8 December 2006 at 11.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors Robin Currie, Sidney MacDougall, Donald MacMillan and *Ellen Morton (Substitute Member), Argyll and Bute Council; Councillors Anne Jarvis and Vaughan Moody, East Dunbartonshire Council; and Councillor Jackie Maceira, West Dunbartonshire Council.

*Attended later in the meeting.

Attending: David Thomson, Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer; William Mathieson, Depute Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer; Alistair Boyd, Depute Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer; June Nelson, Principal Administrative Officer; David Connell, Treasurer; and David Rooney, Senior Administrative Officer.

Apologies: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Geoff Calvert, Gail Casey, Marie McNair and Craig McLaughlin, West Dunbartonshire Council; Provost Pat Steel and Councillors Rhondda Geekie and Margaret McNaughton, East Dunbartonshire Council; and Councillors Donald McIntosh and Daniel Kelly, Argyll and Bute Council. An apology was also submitted on behalf of Ms Tricia O'Neill, Head of Personnel Services, West Dunbartonshire Council.

Councillor Donald MacMillan in the Chair

WELCOME

The Convener, Councillor MacMillan, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of Meeting of the Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute Valuation Joint Board held on 9 June 2006 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

INSURANCE PORTFOLIO

A report was submitted by the Clerk to the Valuation Joint Board providing information on the renewal of the Joint Board's Insurance Contracts on 1 August 2006.

It was agreed:-

- (1) to note and approve the arrangements which had been made with regard to property, combined liability, computer, personal accident and business travel insurances within the terms of the Long Term Agreements; and
- (2) to approve the arrangements which had been made with regard to the Death in Service Cover.

NOTE: Councillor Ellen Morton entered the meeting at this point.

2006/07 CAPITAL PLAN – PROGRESS REPORT

A report was submitted by the Assessor and Electoral Registration officer advising of progress in respect of the 2006/07 Capital Plan.

Having heard the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer the Joint Board agreed to note:-

- (1) the progress made in respect of the Capital Plan;
- (2) the ongoing efforts in respect of the uncompleted works; and
- (3) that a further report on progress would be provided to the Board in due course.

With respect to a point which was raised concerning the disposal of computer equipment which had been replaced in accordance with the approved Capital Plan, it was noted that contact should be made with James Boyle at Clydebank or Alistair Boyd at Campbeltown regarding disposal to community groups.

ELECTORAL REGISTRATION

A report was submitted by the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer (a) providing an update on the current position with respect to Electoral Registration and (b) seeking approval for the inclusion of provisions in the 2007/2008 Revenue Estimates to take account of the extra duties required of Registration Officers to comply with the Electoral Administration Act.

Having heard the Principal Administration Officer in answer to Members' questions, the Joint Board agreed:-

- (1) to note the content of the report;
- (2) to approve the inclusion of a total provision of £70,263 in the 2007/2008 Revenue Estimates to take account of the extra duties for Registration

Officers to comply with the Electoral Administration Act and its secondary legislation; and

- (3) to convene an extraordinary meeting of the Valuation Joint Board, should the Electoral Administration Act, or its secondary legislation, have a significant impact on operations and/or expenditure.

FINANCE

(a) Annual Report and Final Accounts for Year Ending 31 March 2006

A report was submitted by the Treasurer presenting the audited Annual Report and Final Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2006.

Having heard the Treasurer, who advised that the Auditor had issued a clean audit opinion in relation to the accounts, the Joint Board agreed to approve the Annual Report and Final Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2006.

(b) Audit Scotland's Final Audit Report to Members 2005/2006

A report was submitted by the Treasurer advising of Audit Scotland's report on the audit of the Joint Board's accounts 2005/2006.

Having heard the Treasurer the Joint Board agreed to approve the management action detailed in the Action Plan appended to the report, it having been noted that satisfactory progress was being made towards meeting the target dates specified in the Action Plan.

(c) Electoral Administration Act 2006 – Supplementary 2006/07 Constituent Council Contribution

A report was submitted by the Treasurer seeking approval for the levy of a supplementary Constituent Council Requisition for 2006/07 in respect of additional duties imposed on the Assessor following the Electoral Administration Act 2006.

Having heard the Treasurer the Joint Board agreed:-

- (1) to approve the issue of a supplementary Constituent Council Requisition of £54,164 in respect of 2006/07; and
- (2) that the supplementary requisition would be based on each Council's relevant Electoral Registration Grant Aided Expenditure figure.

(d) Revenue Budgetary Control Report: Period 6 (2006/07)

A report was submitted by the Treasurer advising of the budgetary performance of the Revenue Account for the period to 15 October 2006.

Having heard the Treasurer, the Joint Board agreed to note the budgetary position of the Revenue Account.

With respect to a point which was raised by Councillor Moody concerning an adverse variance attributed to the vacation of the tenant who had previously rented office accommodation within the premises at 235 Dumbarton Road, Clydebank, it was noted that the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer was taking appropriate action to secure the lease of the accommodation to a new tenant.

(e) Revenue Estimates 2007/2008

A report was submitted by the Treasurer seeking approval of the draft Revenue Estimates for 2007/08.

Having heard the Treasurer, who advised that the Heads of Finance of the constituent Councils had been consulted in relation to the draft Revenue Estimates and no adverse comments had been received, the Joint Board agreed:-

- (1) to approve the draft Revenue Estimates for 2007/2008; and
- (2) that the requisition be apportioned to the constituent Councils on the basis of their Grant Aided Expenditure figures, as indicated in Appendix 3 to the report.

(f) Capital Estimates 2007/08

A report was submitted by the Treasurer seeking approval of the draft Capital Estimates for 2007/08.

Having heard the Treasurer the Joint Board agreed:-

- (1) the 2007/8 Capital Plan of £29,470; and
- (2) that the requisition from the constituent Councils be based on each Council's relevant Grant Aided Expenditure figures as indicated in Appendix 1 to the report.

The Convener, Councillor MacMillan, congratulated Mr. Connell on the sound handling of the Valuation Joint Board's finances.

AUDITS OF THE VALUATION JOINT BOARD

A report was submitted by the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer providing an update on the outcomes of the 2005/06 internal and external audits of the Valuation Joint Board.

Having heard the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer the Joint Board agreed:-

- (1) to note the audit reports in respect of the Main Financial Systems and the Electoral Registration Processes of the Valuation Joint Board;
- (2) to note the actions already taken in response to these reports and approve the further actions contained within the agreed Action Plans; and
- (3) to approve the Joint Board's Strategy for the Prevention and Detection of Fraud and Corruption.

BEST VALUE

A report was submitted by the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer (a) providing an update on progress in respect of the Public Performance Reporting (PPR) requirements of the statutory Best Value regime and (b) seeking approval of the Valuation Joint Board Code of Corporate Governance.

Having heard the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer the Joint Board agreed:-

- (1) to note the enhanced content/format of the 2005/06 Public Performance Report;
- (2) to note the channels for publication; and
- (3) to approve the Code of Corporate Governance attached to the report.

CUSTOMER FIRST/MODERNISING GOVERNMENT FUND (MGF)

A report was submitted the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer providing an update on progress in relation to the Scottish Assessors' Association Customer First/MGF(3) funded Assessors' Portal Project.

Having heard the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer the Joint Board agreed to note the report.

NON-DOMESTIC RATING INCLUDING THE 2005 REVALUATION

A report was submitted by the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer advising of progress in relation to (a) the 2005 Revaluation and (b) the maintenance of the Valuation Roll.

Having heard the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer the Joint Board agreed:-

- (1) to note the ongoing progress in relation to disposal of Revaluation 2005 appeals; and
- (2) to note the ongoing progress in maintaining the Valuation rolls for the Valuation Joint Board area.

DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

A report was submitted by the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer seeking approval of a draft Disability Equality Scheme.

Having heard Mr. Boyd, Depute Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer, the Joint Board agreed to approve the Disability Equality Scheme.

PAY MODERNISATION AND SINGLE STATUS

A report was submitted by the Head of Personnel, West Dunbartonshire Council (a) providing an update on the progress of the pay modernisation agenda and the implementation of the Single Status Agreement; and (b) seeking authorisation for the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer to extend any offer which falls within the provision already contained in the 2006/07 revenue budget to employees within the Valuation Joint Board.

Having heard Mr. Mathieson, Depute Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer, the Joint Board agreed:-

- (1) to note the current position in relation to implementation of the Single Status Agreement and Pay Modernisation;
- (2) to authorise the Assessor to make an offer to employees within the Valuation Joint Board, as outlined in Section 3 of the report; and
- (3) that a special meeting would be convened, if the need arises, to consider amended proposals.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was provisionally agreed that the next meeting of the Valuation Joint Board would be held on 22 June 2007 at 11.00 a.m. in Dumbarton.

CONVENER'S REMARKS

As it was likely that this would be the last meeting of the present Valuation Joint Board prior to the Local Government Elections in May 2007, unless a special meeting required to be convened, the Convener, Councillor MacMillan, took the opportunity to thank the Depute Convener, Councillor Moody, and the other Members of the Joint Board for their assistance during his term of office.

Councillor MacMillan also expressed his appreciation to Mr. Thomson for the professional manner in which he had carried out his duties since taking up the post of Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer, and to the other officers and staff of the Valuation Joint Board for their commitment and assistance. Councillor MacMillan also congratulated Mr. Connell and Mr. Rooney on the work which they had carried out for the Board.

Mr. Thomson, on behalf of the officers and his predecessor, Mr. Wilson, thanked the Convener for his kind words and expressed his own appreciation for the co-operation of the Convener and all Members of the Valuation Joint Board and of the work carried out by the officers and staff of the Joint Board during the four year term of the Board. Mr. Thomson also thanked Mr. Connell and Mr. Rooney for their assistance with the work of the Joint Board.

The meeting closed at 11.52 a.m.