

Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute Valuation Joint Board

At a meeting held on Friday, 15th December, 2000 in the Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dunbarton.

Present: Councillors Robin Currie, George Freeman, Ronald Kinloch and John Stirling, Argyll & Bute Council; Provost Robin McSkimming and Councillor Keith Moody, East Dunbartonshire Council; and Councillors Jim McCallum, Craig McLaughlin, Iain Robertson and Andrew White, West Dunbartonshire Council.

Attending: Duncan Wilson, Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer; William Mathieson, Depute Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer; Brian Byrne, Depute Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer; Martin Ritch, Senior Administrative Officer; Eric Walker, Treasurer, and David Connell, Head of Accounting (both West Dunbartonshire Council).

Apologies: Councillor Alan Brown.

Councillor Keith Moody in the Chair

COUNCILLOR ELSPETH MCTAGGART, ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL – MINUTE’S SILENCE

The meeting began with a minute’s silence in memory of Councillor Elspeth McTaggart member of the Board representing Argyll & Bute Council, who had passed away since the last meeting of the Board.

REVENUE ESTIMATES 2001/2002

There was submitted a report by the Treasurer containing the draft Revenue Estimates for 2001/2002 for the Board’s consideration.

Mr. Walker explained that while the agenda had been restricted due to the ongoing industrial action by Unison members, it was nevertheless necessary to have revenue estimates approved at an early stage, to enable the Joint Board’s constituent Councils to incorporate their contributions to the Board into their own overall budgets.

Mr. Walker highlighted the following issues:-

- (a) At 3.3, the figure shown as £29,263 should be amended to £29,231;

- (b) In Appendix 1, the “2001/02 base” column shows the revenue estimates on a standstill basis; and
- (c) In Appendix 1, the final column headed “2001/02 Estimates” includes the additional estimated costs which could be incurred as a consequence of the introduction of the Representation of the People Act 2000.

During extended discussion, Mr. Walker referred to the basis of GAE calculations, and Mr. Wilson clarified:-

- (a) that comparison was made with other Electoral Registration Officers’ methods in arriving at the estimated additional costs of rolling registration;
- (b) that a signature is likely to be required in the case of individual electors who wish to opt out of the public register, rather than for those who wish to opt in;
- (c) that contact is being made by members of his staff with departments of the Board’s constituent councils to ascertain the type of information they receive and hold which may be useful for the purposes of rolling registration; and
- (d) that in order to be able to react quickly to any problems which might be encountered in achieving a high quality return, and which may be caused by a lack of funding, he would contact the Treasurer and the Convenor as a matter of priority.

The Convenor supported Mr. Wilson’s view that areas of low return should be specifically targeted in an effort to improve the situation.

Mr. Walker explained that if additional funding was approved in these circumstances, then any resulting deficit in the outturn for the year would be incorporated into the following year’s revenue estimates.

Having heard the above, the Board approved the report and agreed that the requisition on the constituent councils be based on each council’s relevant GAE figures as before.

SALES OF ELECTORAL REGISTER

Councillor McLaughlin asked if a uniform charge was made by all Assessors for sales of Valuation Rolls etc. Mr. Wilson confirmed that a committee of the Scottish Assessors’ Association is currently seeking to establish uniformity on the basis of the charge, and agreed that the results would be provided once they have been finalised.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the date of the next meeting would be decided in due course, in the light of the current industrial action.

