

SOUTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 4 December 2019

Chair:

Provost Ian McAllan

Councillors Present:

Councillor Alex Allison, Councillor John Anderson, Councillor John Bradley, Councillor Walter Brogan, Councillor Robert Brown, Councillor Archie Buchanan, Councillor Janine Calikes, Councillor Stephanie Callaghan, Councillor Graeme Campbell, Councillor Andy Carmichael, Councillor Maureen Chalmers, Councillor Gerry Convery, Councillor Margaret Cowie, Councillor Peter Craig, Councillor Maureen Devlin, Councillor Mary Donnelly, Councillor Isobel Dorman, Councillor Fiona Dryburgh, Councillor Joe Fagan, Councillor Allan Falconer, Councillor Grant Ferguson, Councillor Alistair Fulton, Councillor Geri Gray, Councillor George Greenshields, Councillor Lynsey Hamilton, Councillor Eric Holford, Councillor Graeme Horne, Councillor Mark Horsham, Councillor Martin Grant Hose, Councillor Ann Le Blond, Councillor Martin Lennon, Councillor Richard Lockhart, Councillor Eileen Logan, Councillor Katy Loudon, Councillor Joe Lowe, Councillor Hugh Macdonald, Councillor Julia Marrs, Councillor Catherine McClymont, Councillor Kenny McCreary, Councillor Mark McGeever, Councillor Jim McGuigan, Councillor Davie McLachlan, Councillor Gladys Miller, Councillor Lynne Nailon, Councillor Richard Nelson, Councillor Carol Nugent, Councillor John Ross, Councillor Graham Scott, Councillor David Shearer, Councillor Collette Stevenson (Depute), Councillor Bert Thomson, Councillor Margaret B Walker, Councillor Jared Wark, Councillor David Watson, Councillor Josh Wilson

Councillors' Apologies:

Councillor Jackie Burns, Councillor Margaret Cooper, Councillor Poppy Corbett, Councillor Ian Harrow, Councillor Monique McAdams, Councillor Colin McGavigan, Councillor Mo Razzaq, Councillor Jim Wardhaugh

Attending:

Community and Enterprise Resources

M McGlynn, Executive Director

Education Resources

T McDaid, Executive Director

Finance and Corporate Resources

P Manning, Executive Director and Depute Chief Executive; G Bow, Administration Manager; G McCann, Head of Administration and Legal Services; S Somerville, Administration Manager

Housing and Technical Resources

D Lowe, Executive Director

Social Work Resources/Health and Social Care

L Purdie, Head of Children and Justice Services

1 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the South Lanarkshire Council held on 25 September 2019 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

The Council decided: that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

3 Minutes of Risk and Audit Scrutiny Committee

The minutes of the meeting of the Risk and Audit Scrutiny Committee held on 19 June 2019 were submitted for noting.

The Council decided: that the minutes be noted.

4 Notice of Motion – A Real Living Wage of £10.00 Per Hour

In terms of Standing Order No 19, a motion proposed by Councillor Fagan, seconded by Councillor Logan, was submitted as follows:-

“The Council notes:-

- ◆ That Living Wage Week was marked from 11 November to 17 November 2019 in South Lanarkshire and across the country.
- ◆ That a real Living Wage is a wage rate calculated based on the minimum workers require to meet the basic cost of living and live a decent life.
- ◆ That the Living Wage Foundation's independently calculated real Living Wage exceeds the UK Government's National Living Wage and that the UK Government's National Living Wage does not fully take into account the real cost of living.
- ◆ That paying the real Living Wage has been shown to enhance quality of work, reduce absenteeism and improve recruitment and retention.
- ◆ That South Lanarkshire Council is an accredited Living Wage Employer and must meet or exceed the real Living Wage in order to maintain its accreditation and set an example to other employers.

The Council resolves:-

- ◆ To maintain its status as a Living Wage Employer and an exemplar to other employers in South Lanarkshire and across Scotland and the UK.
- ◆ To increase the hourly rates of the lowest paid council workers in financial year 2020/2021 over and above the local government pay settlement.
- ◆ To pay a real Living Wage of at least £10.00 per hour from April 2020.”

In moving his motion, Councillor Fagan referred to the fact that most of the low paid were frontline workers and predominantly women. Councillor Logan seconded the motion.

Councillor Miller stated that, as Chair of Finance and Corporate Resources Committee, she understood changes to the Council's pay scale could be challenging and asked the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) to outline the benefits, risks and level of complexities in adopting such a proposal.

In response, the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) indicated that there would be a cost of at least £1.9 million involved to both enable people to earn, as a minimum, £10.00 per hour and also to take account of the resultant impact on pay differentials. He added that without another source of funding, changes would be required to the savings target. He highlighted that, at the current time, the extent of next year's funding was unknown as the UK and Scottish Parliaments had not yet set their budgets. He continued by saying that the proposal could impact on the response to the Living Wage consolidation exercise being co-ordinated by COSLA. In the past, when paying the Living Wage, some councils had made a separate payment of an allowance rather than consolidate it within their pay model. The trades unions now wanted clear guidance for councils to implement the Living Wage properly. This Council was at an advantage in that it had consolidated the Living Wage into its pay model and might, therefore, have to increase more than the lowest pay levels to maintain differentials. He concluded by stating that there was potential exposure to additional risk and his preference would be to bring a full report back, detailing for the Council the benefits, costs and risks associated with this potential decision, preferably presenting that in the context of a grant settlement received by the Council.

Having heard the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources), Councillor Miller, seconded by Councillor Wilson, moved the following as an amendment:-

“The Council resolves:-

- ♦ To maintain its status as Living Wage Employer and an exemplar to other employers in South Lanarkshire and across Scotland and the UK.
- ♦ To request that the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) investigate the benefits, complexity and risks associated with this proposal in relation to the current council pay scale and report back to members within the budget setting timescale.”

Councillor Fagan confirmed he was not willing to accept the amendment by Councillor Miller.

Councillor McGeever, seconded by Councillor Brown, tabled a further amendment that the text of the 2nd and 3rd bullet point of the motion be altered and that a 4th bullet be added. The amendment to read as follows:-

“The Council resolves:-

- ♦ To maintain its status as a Living Wage Employer and an exemplar to other employers in South Lanarkshire and across Scotland and the UK.
- ♦ To request the Executive Director of Finance report on the costs of increasing the hourly rates of the lowest paid council workers in financial year 2020/2021 over and above the local government pay settlement, and consider potential consequences to the Council's service delivery partners.
- ♦ To consider in the budget process measures that would enable this council to pay all workers a rate of at least £10 per hour, from April 2020, without imposing cuts to either jobs or services.
- ♦ To call on the Scottish Government to ensure the budget it proposes to the Scottish Parliament includes a fair funding package for local authorities, which will allow this Council to fully protect jobs and services while paying all staff more than the real Living Wage, and enabling our service providers to do likewise.”

In moving his amendment, Councillor McGeever stated that no-one should be poor, however, as the level of grant funding was unknown, the proposal might be a promise to employees that was impossible to deliver and could impact on the Council's partners and their pay scales.

In response to the Provost's question on whether she was willing to accept Councillor McGeever's amendment, Councillor Miller confirmed she would, subject to the addition of 'and report back to members within the budget setting timescales' at the end of the 2nd bullet point. Councillor McGeever confirmed his agreement to this.

Following further discussion, on a vote being taken by roll call, members voted as follows:-

Motion

Walter Brogan, Andy Carmichael, Gerry Convery, Margaret Cowie, Maureen Devlin, Joe Fagan, Allan Falconer, Lynsey Hamilton, Martin Lennon, Eileen Logan, Catherine McClymont, Davie McLachlan, Graham Scott, Bert Thomson, Margaret B Walker

Amendment

Alex Allison, John Anderson, John Bradley, Robert Brown, Archie Buchanan, Janine Calikes, Stephanie Callaghan, Graeme Campbell, Maureen Chalmers, Peter Craig, Mary Donnelly, Isobel Dorman, Fiona Dryburgh, Grant Ferguson, Alistair Fulton, Geri Gray, George Greenshields, Eric Holford, Graeme Horne, Mark Horsham, Martin Grant Hose, Ann Le Blond, Richard Lockhart, Katy Loudon, Joe Lowe, Hugh Macdonald, Julia Marrs, Ian McAllan, Kenny McCreary, Mark McGeever, Jim McGuigan, Gladys Miller, Lynne Nailon, Richard Nelson, Carol Nugent, John Ross, David Shearer, Collette Stevenson, Jared Wark, David Watson, Josh Wilson

41 members voted for the amendment and 15 for the motion. The amendment was declared carried.

The Council decided:

- (1) to maintain its status as a Living Wage Employer and an exemplar to other employers in South Lanarkshire and across Scotland and the UK;
- (2) to request that the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) report on the costs of increasing the hourly rates of the lowest paid council workers in financial year 2020/2021 over and above the local government pay settlement, and consider potential consequences to the Council's service delivery partners and report back to members within the budget setting timescales;
- (3) to consider, in the budget process, measures that would enable this Council to pay all workers a rate of at least £10.00 per hour, from April 2020, without imposing cuts to either jobs or services; and
- (4) to call on the Scottish Government to ensure that the budget it proposed to the Scottish Parliament included a fair funding package for local authorities, which would allow this Council to fully protect jobs and services while paying all staff more than the real Living Wage, and enabling the Council's service providers to do likewise.

5 Climate Change and Sustainability Committee Update

A report dated 21 November 2019 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted providing an update on action taken to progress the decision of South Lanarkshire Council, at its meeting held on 25 September 2019, to establish a Climate Change and Sustainability Committee.

A Terms of Reference and arrangements for a Climate Change and Sustainability Committee had been drafted for consideration by the Standards and Procedures Advisory Forum at its next meeting scheduled for 9 December 2019. The recommendations of the Forum would then be reported to the next meeting of the Council in 2020 for approval.

The committee report template had been updated to include climate change and sustainability paragraphs and associated committee report writing guidance had been updated to include advice for officers on completion of those paragraphs.

Awareness sessions on the various aspects of climate change and sustainability would be arranged for elected members early in the New Year.

It was intended that the new committee would replace the Sustainable Development Member/Officer Working Group, although officers at a senior level would continue to progress outcomes resulting from the new committee at an operational level.

The Council decided:

- (1) that the actions taken to progress the decision of South Lanarkshire Council on 25 September 2019 to establish a Climate Change and Sustainability Committee be noted; and
- (2) that it be noted that a further report would be brought for consideration to the first meeting of South Lanarkshire Council in 2020.

[Reference: Minutes of 25 September 2019 (Paragraph 7)]

6 Amendments to Memberships of Committees Etc

A report dated 6 November 2019 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted advising of a number of changes to the membership of Committees/Forums, Joint Boards and Outside Bodies etc following recent changes to the composition of the Council.

The Council decided:

- (1) that the current committee memberships, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, be noted;
- (2) that it be noted that the vacant position on the IT Working Group had been filled by Councillor McClymont;
- (3) that it be noted that the vacant position on the South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture Board had been filled by Councillor Cooper;
- (4) that it be noted that Councillor Burns had replaced Councillor Cooper on the cross-party working group to review South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture;
- (5) that it be noted that Councillor McGavigan had replaced Councillor McGeever on the Safer South Lanarkshire Board;
- (6) that it be noted that Councillor Devlin had replaced Councillor Hamilton on the South Lanarkshire Cycling Partnership;
- (7) that it be noted that Councillor Logan had replaced Councillor Hamilton on the Lanarkshire Educational Trust;
- (8) that it be noted that Councillor McAdams had replaced Councillor Razzaq as a substitute member on Strathclyde Partnership for Transport;
- (9) that it be noted that the vacant substitute position on the South Lanarkshire Integration Joint Board had been filled by Councillor Walker; and
- (10) that the finalised membership of the cross-party working group on Tackling Poverty, as detailed at paragraph 3.3 of the report, be noted.

7 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

Provost's Closing Remarks

The Provost wished all members the compliments of the season and, having been made aware by Councillor Convery, acknowledged the achievement of Councillor Fagan in winning 'New Councillor of the Year' at the LGiU Scotland and CCLA Councillor Awards 2019.