DUNBARTONSHIRE AND ARGYLL AND BUTE VALUATION JOINT BOARD

At a meeting of the Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute Valuation Joint Board held in the Council Chambers, Kilmory, Lochgilphead on Friday, 18 June 2004 at 11.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors Daniel Kelly, Donald MacMillan and Al Reay (attending as substitute), Argyll & Bute Council; Provost Pat Steel and Councillors Anne Jarvis and Vaughan Moody, East Dunbartonshire Council; and Councillors Geoff Calvert and Gail Casey, West Dunbartonshire Council.

Attending: David Thomson, Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer; Brian Byrne, Depute Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer; Eric Walker, Treasurer; and Craig Stewart, Administrative Assistant (for the Clerk to the Board).

Apologies: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Robin Currie, Sidney MacDougall and Donald McIntosh, Argyll & Bute Council; Councillors Alex Hannah and Margaret McNaughton, East Dunbartonshire Council; and Councillor Marie McNair, West Dunbartonshire Council.

Councillor Donald MacMillan in the Chair

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Minutes of Meeting of the Dunbartonshire and Argyll and Bute Valuation Joint Board held on 12 December 2003 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

The Minutes of Special Meeting of the Dunbartonshire and Argyll and Bute Valuation Joint Board held on 23 January 2004 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF RECRUITMENT PANEL

The Minutes of Meetings of the Recruitment Panel of the Valuation Joint Board held on 23 January and 30 January 2004 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

RETIRAL OF TREASURER

A report was submitted by the Treasurer advising of his forthcoming retiral and making recommendation thereon.

Having heard the Treasurer it was agreed that West Dunbartonshire Council's new Section 95 Chief Financial Officer, when appointed, would become the Treasurer to the Joint Board.

At this point in the meeting, Mr. Thomson, Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer, paid tribute to the many years of dedicated service which Mr. Walker as Treasurer had provided to the Board. In so doing, Mr. Thomson, on behalf of the Board, wished Mr. Walker a long and happy retirement. Mr. Walker responded in appropriate terms and thanked Members and officers for their kind words and best wishes.

PAYMENT OF VALUATION APPEALS PANEL SECRETARIES' EXPENSES

A report was submitted by the Treasurer concerning a proposed schedule of Fees and Allowances payable to the secretaries of the Valuation Appeals Panel with effect from 1 July 2004.

The Joint Board agreed to approve the reimbursement of Assistant Secretaries' Fees and Expenses in accordance with the notes detailed in the Appendix to the report.

2003/04 EXTERNAL AUDIT OF DUNBARTONSHIRE AND ARGYLL & BUTE VALUATION JOINT BOARD

A report was submitted by the Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer advising of the findings of Audit Scotland in relation to their 2003/04 audits of the Joint Board's procedures and seeking approval of the agreed action plans resulting from the above.

Following discussion and having heard Mr. Thomson, Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer, in elaboration and the Treasurer in answer to Members' questions, the Joint Board agreed:-

(1)   to approve the Action Plans which had been agreed with Audit Scotland; and

(2)   otherwise, to note the contents of the report.

BEST VALUE AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING - UPDATE

A report was submitted by the Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer providing an update on progress in relation to Best Value; reporting on Key Performance Indicators for the year 2003/04; and advising of the current position with Performance Management and Planning (PMP).

Following discussion and having heard Mr. Thomson, Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer, in elaboration and in answer to Members' questions, it was agreed:-

(1)   to note the contents of the report; and

(2)   that a report providing an update on the matter would be submitted to the next meeting of the Joint Board for consideration.

CO-ORDINATED ONLINE REGISTER OF ELECTORS (CORE) PROJECT

A report was submitted by the Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer advising of the Co-ordinated Online Register of Electors (CORE) Project and seeking approval for the Electoral Registration Officer to take part in it.

Having heard Mr. Thomson, Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer, in answer to Members' questions, the Joint Board agreed:-

(1)   to approve the Electoral Registration Officer's involvement in the CORE Project; and

(2)   otherwise, to note the contents of the report.

ELECTORAL REGISTRATION

A report was submitted by the Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer providing an update on the current position regarding Electoral Registration.

Following discussion and having heard Mr. Byrne, Depute Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer, in answer to Members' questions, it was agreed to note the contents of the report.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

A report was submitted by the Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer providing an update on the current position relating to Freedom of Information.

It was noted that under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, public authorities and certain statutory officials had a duty to produce a Publication Scheme. In this connection, the Assessor and the Valuation Joint Board were separately required to produce such a scheme.

Having heard Mr. Byrne, Depute Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer and Councillor Calvert, the Joint Board agreed:-

(1)   to note that Publication Schemes had been published on behalf of the Assessor and the Joint Board; and

(2)   to note that the Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer would give consideration to community consultation in respect of this matter.

VALUATION JOINT BOARD INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS

A report was submitted by the Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer providing an update on the computer and other technology systems used by the Valuation Joint Board and advising of progress in relation to capital projects.

Having heard Mr. Thomson, Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer, in elaboration, the Joint Board agreed to note the contents of the report.

MODERNISING GOVERNMENT FUND (MGF)

A report was submitted by the Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer providing an update on progress in relation to the Scottish Assessors' MGF(2) Portal Project; advising of the application by the Scottish Assessors' Association for MGF(3) funding to further extend and develop the portal; and advising of the design of a logo for use in relation to the portal.

Having heard Mr. Thomson, Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer, in answer to Members' questions, it was agreed:-

(1)   to note the contents of the report; and

(2)   to note the selected logo design for the Valuation Joint Board and to approve it for general use.

REVALUATION 2000 & 2005 - PROGRESS

A report was submitted by the Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer providing an update on the final stages of disposal of appeals arising from the non-domestic Revaluation 2000 and on preparations for the next Revaluation in 2005.

Having heard Mr. Thomson, Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer, in further explanation, the Joint Board agreed to note the progress that was being made in relation to both Revaluations.

MEMBERS' REMARKS

In concluding the business of the meeting, the opportunity was taken to wish Mr. Thomson every success in his new post as Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer. In thanking Members for their kind words, Mr. Thomson issued an open invitation for Members to visit any of the two offices of the Valuation Joint Board and he particularly welcomed any comments/suggestions they might have on the format of reports and the frequency of meetings of the Board.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Having heard the Convener, it was agreed that the next meeting of the Valuation Joint Board would be held on Friday, 10 December 2004 in Kirkintilloch.

The meeting closed at 12.27 p.m. with the Convener thanking Members and officers for their attendance.