

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the **CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Thursday 22 October 2009 at 4.00 pm.

Present: Councillors MARK SALMOND, JOHN WHYTE, IAIN GAUL, ALEX KING, JEAN LEE, DAVID LUMGAIR, IAN MACKINTOSH, BILL MIDDLETON, PETER MURPHY, ROBERT MYLES, PETER NIELD, HELEN OSWALD, RALPH PALMER, JOHN RYMER and SANDY WEST.

Councillor SALMOND, Convener, in the Chair.

1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors David May and Rob Murray with Councillors David Lumgair and Jean Lee, respectively, substituting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Whyte declared an interest in item 22 as a former member of Monifieth Amateur Dramatics Club and having advised them on grant applications. He advised that he would not take part in discussion and voting.

Councillor Nield declared an interest in item 25 as he had given assistance to organisers of The Arbroath Community Fireworks Display. He advised that he would be taking part in discussion and voting.

Councillor Palmer declared an interest in item 12 as he was a casual acquaintance of one of the project owners. He advised that he would be taking part in discussion and voting.

3. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The [minute of meeting of this Committee of 3 September 2009](#) was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

4. ENERGY BUDGET END OF YEAR REPORT 2008/2009

With reference to Article 12 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 4 September 2008, there was submitted and noted [Report No 752/09](#) by the Director of Corporate Services presenting the 2008/2009 end of year status of expenditure on the individual Council heating, fuel and electricity budgets for non-housing properties, which showed an overspend of £257,907 on energy.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF ENERGY CONSUMPTION END OF YEAR REPORT 2008/2009

With reference to Article 11 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 4 September 2008, there was submitted [Report No 753/09](#) by the Director of Corporate Services presenting the 2008/2009 end of year status of the environmental impact of energy consumed by the non-housing building stock and the progress towards meeting the targets of a 12.5% reduction in CO₂ emissions by 1 April 2010.

The report indicated that the Council had achieved a reduction of 0.86% in 2008/2009 compared to 2007/2008.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the Report.

6. PROPERTY MAINTENANCE END OF YEAR REPORT 2008/2009

With reference to Article 10 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 4 September 2008, there was submitted and noted [Report No 754/09](#) by the Director of Corporate Services presenting the 2008/2009 end of year status of expenditure on the maintenance of non-housing properties.

7. ENERGY EFFICIENCY FUND INVEST TO SAVE PROJECTS 2009/2010 - PHASE 2

With reference to Article 5 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 4 September 2008, there was submitted [Report No 755/09](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising members of the programme of energy "Invest to Save" projects to be undertaken utilising the Energy Efficiency Initiative Fund in 2009/2010 which would assist the Council in reducing CO₂ emissions.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to approve Phase 2 of the programme of "Invest to Save" projects at an estimated total cost of £98,722 from the Energy Efficiency Initiative Fund in 2009/2010;
- (iii) to note the forecast annual savings of £30,949 which would be retained by the Council, with a proportion of the Energy Bill Savings being used to repay the initial investment by flowing back into the Fund; and
- (iv) to authorise the Head of Property to procure this programme of equipment installations on the basis of single quotations from a sole supplier, in accordance with Section 16.22.3(b)(ii) of Financial Regulations.

8. PROPERTY RENEWAL AND REPAIR FUND: UPDATE OF FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS AND PLANNED PROGRAMME OF URGENT REPAIRS 2009/2010 - PHASE 3

With reference to Article 15 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 4 September 2008, there was submitted [Report No 756/09](#) by the Director of Property Services advising members of the next programme of urgent repairs to be undertaken utilising the Property Renewal and Repair Fund.

The Report indicated that the programme should be undertaken at the earliest possible date to ensure that the properties concerned were quickly brought up to standard.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to note that the next phase of work being undertaken at Bruce House, as set out in tables 1, 2 and 3 of the Report utilising the Property Renewal and Repair Fund and capital provisions in 2009/2010 was estimated at £307,000;
- (iii) to approve the provision of £17,000 supplementary funding from the Property Renewal and Repair Fund in 2009/2010; and
- (iv) to approve the next phase of urgent works as set out in table 3 of the Report being undertaken at an estimated cost of £71,300, to be met from available funding within the Property Renewal and Repair Fund 2009/2010.

9. TENDERS ACCEPTED UNDER AUTHORITY DELEGATED TO THE HEAD OF PROPERTY

With reference to Article 9 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 29 January 2009, there was submitted [Report No 757/09](#) by the Director of Corporate Services containing details of tenders accepted by the Head of Property under delegated authority during the period 1 April to 30 September 2009.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to note that a further Report would be submitted detailing tenders accepted during the next six month period.

10. DISPOSAL OF ANGUS HOUSE, EDZELL

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 30 April 2009, there was submitted [Report No 758/09](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising members of the outcome of a recent marketing exercise to dispose of Angus House, Edzell.

The Report indicated that the property had been marketed for sale on the open market, resulting in three offers being received, with the highest offer being subject to planning consent for an ambitious development which might take some considerable time to achieve an acceptable planning permission.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to approve disposal of Angus House, Edzell on the terms and conditions contained in the second highest offer, as detailed at 3(b) of the Report, in the amount of £405,555 subject to the purchaser obtaining planning consent within a period of six months from the date of conclusion of missives and making payment to the Council immediately upon receipt of planning consent.

11. PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 3 September 2009, there was submitted [Report No 759/09](#) by the Director of Property Services advising members of the outcome of negotiations for rent reviews.

The Committee agreed to note and approve as appropriate, the conclusion of these negotiations as detailed in the Appendix of the Report.

12. A92 SURPLUS LAND

With reference to Article 21 of the minute of meeting of the Infrastructure Services Committee of 13 October 2009, there was submitted [Joint Report No 738/09](#) by the Director of Infrastructure Services and the Director of Corporate Services outlining a proposal to declare land at the A92 surplus to the requirements of the Council and to offer the surplus land back to the original landowners.

The Report indicated that, as the construction of the road was now complete, work was ongoing to identify any land not required for the construction, operation and maintenance of the new road and twelve plots of land along the length of the A92 had been identified as being surplus to requirements.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to authorise the Director of Corporate Services to negotiate appropriate terms and conditions for disposal of the twelve plots of land detailed in the Appendix to the Report.

13. CORPORATE INFORMATION PORTAL

There was submitted [Report No 760/09](#) by the Director of Corporate Services seeking approval to procure software to facilitate the development and implementation of a revised Corporate Information Portal as the standard product for information access across the Council.

The Report indicated that this procurement would enable development and deployment of an enhanced corporate intranet, improving the effectiveness of information dissemination to Council staff in support of front line service delivery.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to approve the purchase of software products and licences from Microsoft Select supplier, Insight Direct (UK) Limited at an estimated cost of £97,788.59.

14. UPGRADE OF COMMVAULT SOFTWARE AND RELATED HARDWARE

There was submitted [Report No 761/09](#) by the Director of Corporate Services seeking approval for the upgrade of Commvault back-up software and related hardware to enable the back-up and recovery of Unix systems.

The Report indicated that the current hardware required to operate this software was nearing the end of its useful life, including core hardware which was over five years old and required to be replaced.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to approve expenditure and funding for the procurement of the software and hardware necessary to increase the capacity and resilience of the Commvault system, at a cost of £81,870; and
- (iii) to note that the element of procurement from NVT, the current supplier of and support provider for Commvault, in the amount of £35,565 had been granted exemption from normal competitive tendering in terms of criteria 16.22.4(b)(vi) of the Financial Regulations, as detailed in section 4 of the Report.

15. PUBLIC HOLIDAYS FOR LOCAL TRADERS IN 2010

With reference to Article 22 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 4 September 2008, there was submitted [Report No 762/09](#) by the Director of Corporate Services setting out proposed public holiday dates for local traders in 2010.

The Committee agreed to approve the recommended public holiday dates for local traders in 2010, as detailed in the Report.

16. THE CURRENT STATUS AND FUTURE FUNDING OF THE ANGUS REPUTABLE TRADER SCHEME (ARTS)

With reference to Article 12 of the minute of meeting of the Infrastructure Services Committee of 13 October 2009, there was submitted [Joint Report No 728/09](#) by the Director of Infrastructure Services and the Director of Corporate Services detailing the current progress and success of the Angus Reputable Trader Scheme and seeking the release of additional funding set aside for 2009/2010.

The Report indicated that the Scheme which had been launched on 28 April 2009 had received a positive response from many organisations, both within the public sector and amongst the business community.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed:-

- (i) to note the progress and success of the development of the Angus Reputable Trader Scheme;
- (ii) to authorise the release of funding of £17,000 to support the development of the Scheme for the remainder of the current financial year; and
- (iii) to note that the need for further funding to continue the Scheme into 2010/2011 would require to be considered as part of the 2010/2011 budget setting exercise.

17. EDUCATION REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING FOR THE PERIOD TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2009

With reference to Article 13 of the minute of meeting of the Education Committee of 21 October 2009, there was submitted [Joint Report No 750/09](#) by the Acting Director of Education and the Director of Corporate Services advising members of the projected revenue expenditure in comparison to budget in respect of the Education Department for the period to 30 September 2009 and providing comment on the more significant variances arising.

The Report indicated that, based on the actual income and expenditure to the end of September 2009, the Education Department had a projected underspend of £344,000.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to note that the Acting Director of Education and the Head of Finance would continue to closely monitor the position to ensure the most effective use was made of available resources, in conjunction with Financial Regulations.

18. HOUSING CAPITAL AND PLANNED MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME - HRA BLOCK - 2009/2010

With reference to Article 4 of the minute of meeting of the Neighbourhood Services Committee of 8 October 2009, there was submitted [Joint Report No 698/09](#) by the Director of Neighbourhood Services and the Director of Corporate Services setting out the actual capital and planned maintenance spends to 31 August 2009, together with a projected outturn for the year to 31 March 2010 and updated funding proposals.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to note the expenditure figures presented for the Housing Capital and Planned Maintenance Programmes for the period to 31 August 2009;
- (iii) to note the Capital Receipts position for the period to 30 June 2009;
- (iv) to note the projected year end Capital and Planned Maintenance expenditure positions and updated indicative funding proposals; and
- (v) to note that appropriate officers were endeavouring to ensure that the Capital Programme and Planned Maintenance Programme remained within overall available resources.

19. CAPITAL MONITORING - GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2009/2010

With reference to Article 17 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 3 September 2009, there was submitted [Report No 763/09](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising members of the capital expenditure incurred for the period from 1 April to 31 August 2009 and measuring projected capital expenditure for the year against budgeted provision.

The Report indicated that the latest year end estimate of gross expenditure was £100,000 lower than the budgeted level of £26.847 million and that net expenditure remained in line with the budget of £17.875 million.

Having heard Councillor Whyte who confirmed that at the meeting of the Capital Projects Monitoring Group held prior to this meeting no particular areas of concern had been identified, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to note the expenditure position on the General Fund Capital Programme as at 31 August 2009, as per tables 1 and 2 of the Report and the accompanying Capital Monitoring Statement; and

- (iii) to note that projections of the 2009/2010 year-end position on the General Fund Capital Programme would be ongoing and brought forward on a regular basis to future meetings of this Committee.

20. REVENUE MONITORING/PROJECTED OUTTURN STATEMENT 2009/2010

With reference to Article 19 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 3 September 2009, there was submitted [Report No 764/09](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising members of the actual revenue expenditure incurred and income received for the period 1 April to 31 August 2009, together with the anticipated year end position in respect of each Council Department.

The Report indicated that, in the main, expenditure was currently behind the phased budget, although there were no particular concerns arising from these areas at present but the position would continue to be monitored closely during the course of the financial year.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to note in particular the comments on the financial implications section regarding the projected year end position; and
- (iii) to approve the virement requests within the 2009/2010 financial year by the Director of Neighbourhood Services and the Director of Social Work and Health as they exceeded the delegated virement limit conferred under Section 4.3 of the Financial Regulations.

21. RENEWAL AND REPAIRS FUNDS AS AT 31 AUGUST 2009

With reference to Article 20 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 3 September 2009, there was submitted [Report No 765/09](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising members of the actual financial position of the Renewal and Repairs Funds for Property, Information Technology, Roads and Transport, the Print and Design Unit and Recreation, as at 31 August 2009, which showed an effective uncommitted balance of £946,680.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the Report.

22. REMISSION OF RATES

Councillor Whyte, having declared an interest at Article 2 above, left the meeting during consideration of this item.

With reference to Article 21 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 3 September 2009, there was submitted [Report No 766/09](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising members of an application for remission of rates and recommending that this be granted, which would result in an annual cost of £129.65 to the Council.

The Committee agreed to approve the application for remission of rates, as detailed in the Report.

23. MISCELLANEOUS ACCOUNTS - DEBT WRITE-OFF

With reference to Article 23 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 29 January 2009, there was submitted [Joint Report No 767/09](#) by the Director of Corporate Services and the Head of Finance containing details of miscellaneous accounts which it was recommended be written off.

The Report indicated that a relatively small number of accounts had been identified for write-off and the number and value of these accounts within the context of the total number issued throughout the year were relatively insignificant, although they would continue to be pursued in light of any further information which might become available.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to authorise accounts amounting to £17,772.03 (including £1,815.20 of VAT) as detailed in Appendix 1 of the Report, being written off as irrecoverable.

24. IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL REPORTING STANDARDS

There was submitted [Joint Report No 768/09](#) by the Director of Corporate Services and the Head of Finance outlining forthcoming changes arising from implementation of the International Financial Reporting Standards.

The Report indicated that the move towards international financial reporting standards for public bodies was intended to bring benefits in terms of consistency and comparability between financial reports and to follow private sector best practice. The new reporting regime would bring significant challenges for Local Government organisations requiring revisions to accounting policies, changes in the format of financial statements and systems and a significant number of additional disclosures in the annual accounts.

The Report also detailed the impact on the annual accounts of the new reporting standards, including the practical implications and planning had commenced to begin the transition process and consultants had been engaged to assist.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the Report.

25. COMMON GOOD MATTERS - BRECHIN AND ARBROATH

There was submitted [Report No 783/09](#) by the Chief Executive seeking the views of members on expenditure being committed from the Brechin Common Good Fund and the Arbroath Common Good Fund for repainting and cleaning works at Brechin City Hall and for a contribution towards the cost of a fireworks display in Arbroath.

The Convener indicated that a letter had been received from Brechin Community Council expressing concern at the possible use of Brechin Common Good Funds for the cleaning works at Brechin City Hall.

(a) Brechin Common Good Fund

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to authorise expenditure from the Brechin Common Good Fund for the external repainting and internal "deep clean" of Brechin City Hall at an estimated cost of £6,000 and £2,000, respectively; and
- (ii) to note that a further report on internal repainting of Brechin City Hall would be submitted to this Committee in due course.

(b) Arbroath Common Good Fund

Having heard from the Convener and a number of members, the Committee also agreed:-

- (i) to authorise expenditure from the Arbroath Common Good Fund in the amount of £1,500 towards the cost of the Arbroath Community Fireworks Display in November 2009, following a request by "Arbroath Events" and subject to evidence of local sponsorship being in place; and
- (ii) to refer to the Council the policy implications of this request should it be considered as a one off payment.

26. ELECTORAL REGISTRATION SERVICE

There was submitted [Report No 790/09](#) by the Director of Corporate Services reminding members of the Council's responsibilities in respect of Electoral Registration and seeking authority to continue the appointment of the Assessor appointed by the Tayside Valuation Joint Board, as the Electoral Registration Officer for Angus.

The Report indicated that the Council had a duty to appoint an Electoral Registration Officer in terms of the Representation of the People Act 1983 and this officer was responsible for maintaining a Register of Parliamentary Electors, a Register of Electors and a Register of Citizens of the European Union who were entitled to vote at European Parliamentary Elections.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to approve the continued appointment of the holder of the office of Assessor to the Tayside Valuation Joint Board as Electoral Registration Officer for Angus, on the terms detailed within the Report.

27. HOUSING BENEFITS - NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES OF CIRCUMSTANCES

With reference to Article 24 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 3 September 2009 when it was agreed to detail the time taken to process housing benefit notification of changes of circumstances, it was reported:-

- (i) that amendments had been made to the definition of what constituted a change of circumstances by the Department for Work and Pensions and the method of reporting this performance measure had also changed for 2008/2009. These changes presented the software provider with difficulties and the number of days reported for processing change of circumstances contains an element of inaccuracies. As a result an accurate or like for like comparison between 2007/2008 and 2008/2009 performance could not reliably be made;
- (ii) that a prolonged disruption to the Council's IT communications network severely restricted processing capacity during February 2009 which caused a significant backlog of work and had a significant effect on processing times over the period;
- (iii) that there had been a significant increase in overall workload in the section due to the end of the Pension Credit Five Year Assessed Income Period and increased benefit claims due to rising unemployment levels; and
- (iv) that there had been staffing issues caused by long term sickness and other absences.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the position; and
- (ii) to note that efforts were being applied to ensure that the next publication of figures would show an improvement in the position.