

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the **STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Tuesday 27 October 2009 at 4.00 pm.

Present: Councillors BOB MYLES, IAN MACKINTOSH, ALISON ANDREWS, IAIN GAUL, ALEX KING, DAVID MAY, GLENNIS MIDDLETON, JIM MILLAR, DONALD MORRISON, PETER MURPHY, ROB MURRAY, HELEN OSWALD, MARK SALMOND, SHEENA WELSH and JOHN WHYTE.

Councillor MYLES, Convener, in the Chair.

1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

There were no apologies intimated.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

3. MINUTES

(a) Previous Meeting

The [minute of meeting of this Committee of 8 September 2009](#) was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

(b) Executive Sub-Committee

The [minute of meeting of the Executive Sub-Committee of 15 September 2009](#), a copy of which is appended hereto, was submitted and noted (**APPENDIX I**).

(c) Appeals Sub-Committee

The [minute of meeting of the Appeals Sub-Committee of 17 September 2009](#), a copy of which is appended hereto, was submitted and noted (**APPENDIX II**).

(d) Scrutiny and Audit Sub-Committee

The [minute of meeting of the Scrutiny and Audit Sub-Committee of 29 September 2009](#), a copy of which is appended hereto, was submitted and noted (**APPENDIX III**).

4. SCOTTISH PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN - PERFORMANCE 2008/2009

With reference to Article 16 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 9 December 2008, there was submitted [Report No 769/09](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising members of complaints received by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman against Angus Council in 2008/2009.

The Report indicated that of the 22 complaints received, seven had been determined after detailed consideration, with only one report being upheld. The written decision of the Ombudsman had been posted on the Council's website with a brief résumé of the case attached as Appendix A to the Report.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the terms of the Report; and
- (ii) to note that this Report would not be referred to the Scrutiny and Audit Sub-Committee as no further action was required on all but one of the complaints and the recommendations had been implemented on the one complaint upheld.

5. STANDARDS COMMISSION FOR SCOTLAND - COMPLAINTS AGAINST ANGUS COUNCILLORS

With reference to Article 17 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 9 December 2008, there was submitted [Report No 770/09](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising of complaints received by the Standards Commission for Scotland against Angus Councillors in 2008/2009.

The Report indicated that in the period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009 Angus Councillors had been referred to the Standards Commission for investigation on nine separate occasions. No action had been taken in respect of six complaints, with three complaints still currently under investigation. This compared in 2007/08 with six separate complaints. All complaints were dealt with in Angus Council on a confidential basis and only the complainer and the member complained of received details of the investigation and its outcome.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the terms of the Report; and
- (ii) to note that this Report would not be referred to the Scrutiny and Audit Sub-Committee as no further information could be provided regarding complaints where no further action has been taken.

6. ANGUS CHILD PROTECTION ANNUAL REPORT AND BUSINESS PLAN 2008/2009

With reference to Article 4 of the minute of meeting of the Education Committee of 21 October 2009, there was submitted [Joint Report No 674/09](#) by the Chief Executive, the Director of Social Work and Health, the Acting Director of Education and the Director of Neighbourhood Services presenting the Angus Child Protection Committee Annual Report and Business Plan for 2008/2009.

The Report indicated that this was the thirteenth Annual Report and Business Plan produced by the Angus Child Protection Committee and detailed the work and activities of the Committee and Member Agencies in the field of child protection over the past year.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed to note the contents of the Report.

7. DRAFT ANGUS COUNCIL HEALTHY WORKING LIVES STRATEGY 2009-2012

There was submitted [Report No 771/09](#) by the Director of Social Work and Health in connection with the Healthy Working Lives (HWL) Scottish Programme which had been designed to promote the workplace as a major factor in improving the health of the population and supporting positive economic growth.

The Report indicated that the main purpose of the HWL programme was to contribute to the overall inequalities agenda and was not simply about improving the health of people in the workplace.

The Committee agreed to approve the Angus Council Healthy Working Lives Strategy, as appended to the Report.

8. FAIRTRADE IN ANGUS

With reference to Article 2(c) of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 13 February 2003, there was submitted [Report No 772/09](#) by the Director of Infrastructure Services seeking reaffirmation of the Council's commitment to Fairtrade, outlining the work undertaken by Angus Council since first agreeing to support Fairtrade and suggesting further action to be taken to encourage support for Fairtrade principles.

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

- (i) to congratulate the Montrose Fairtrade Town Steering Group and the residents, organisations and businesses of Montrose in becoming the first Fairtrade town in Angus and Montrose Academy on becoming the first Fairtrade secondary school in the area;
- (ii) to encourage other communities to seek Fairtrade status;
- (iii) to reaffirm Angus Council's commitment to enhancing the status of Fairtrade within the Council and the Angus area by:
 - (a) agreeing to serve Fairtrade tea and coffee at Council and committee meetings;
 - (b) encouraging the use of fairly traded goods, eg products carrying the Fairtrade mark, when catering for civic functions, internal and external Council meetings and Council led conferences and events; and
 - (c) aiming, whenever possible, and within the terms of current EU, UK and Scottish legislation and Scottish Government guidance, to include a fairly traded option in relevant tenders; and
- (iv) to further work being undertaken to investigate the requirements of Angus becoming a Fairtrade Zone.

9. SCOTLAND'S CLIMATE CHANGE DECLARATION FIRST ANNUAL REPORT

With reference to Article 10 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 5 September 2006, there was submitted [Joint Report No 773/09](#) by the Director of Infrastructure Services and the Director of Corporate Services giving details of the first Annual Report on Scotland's Climate Change Declaration which had been "signed" by Angus Council in February 2007.

The Report indicated that the Council had agreed to seven commitments with regard to climate change, with Commitment Six of the Declaration requiring the Council to publish an annual statement on the monitoring and progress of the Council's climate change response, detailing targets set, actions taken, outcomes achieved and further actions required. A copy of the first Climate Change Annual Report was appended to the Report.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note and approve the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) that the Chief Executive make arrangements for presentations to be made to appropriate community groups on the implications of the Climate Change Declaration.

10. VISITSCOTLAND AGREEMENT FOR 2009/10 AND 2010/11

With reference to Article 9 of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 15 February 2007, there was submitted [Report No 774/09](#) by the Director of Infrastructure Services seeking approval of a funding package for VisitScotland services to Angus Council over a two year period.

The Report indicated that VisitScotland now proposed to work with Angus Council to develop and deliver a range of services specific to the needs of the area, with details of the proposed Minute of Agreement outlined in paragraph 3 of the Report. The Minute of Agreement would provide assurance to the Council that with effective monitoring the Council's contribution would provide value for money and ensure that the two visitor information centres (VICs) at Arbroath and Brechin were kept open. The two year agreement would also enable the Head of Economic Development and Environmental and Consumer Protection to continue discussions about the future of the two VICs after 2011.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to proceed with a Minute of Agreement between Angus Council and VisitScotland for a two year period to manage key visitor information services within Angus at a cost equivalent to £54,000 per annum over 2009/10 and 2010/11; and
- (ii) to authorise the Head of Economic Development and Environmental and Consumer Protection, in conjunction with the Head of Law and Administration, to negotiate and conclude the Minute of Agreement on behalf of the Council.

11. LOCAL BUS SERVICE CONTRACT AWARDS

There was submitted [Report No 775/09](#) by the Director of Infrastructure Services detailing the local bus service revisions to be introduced by Stagecoach Strathtay on 16 November 2009 together with the outcome of a tendering exercise which aimed to maintain socially necessary local bus service provision in the Forfar area.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to award the contracts as detailed in Appendix 2 to the Report.

12. DEVELOPING LOCAL COMMUNITY PLANNING

With reference to Article 5 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 3 February 2009, there was submitted [Joint Report No 789/09](#) by the Chief Executive and the Director of Neighbourhood Services advising members of new support arrangements for local community planning designed to deliver the Council's community planning aspirations.

The Report indicated that the outcome of an officer review had seen the establishment of four local community planning teams which would be based within the Neighbourhood Services Department and comprise staff outposted from the Chief Executive's and Education Departments as well as from Neighbourhood Services itself. The team's key areas of activity would be to:-

- Strengthen the ability of communities and community organisations so that they were better able to define and achieve their own objectives, manage community projects and enterprises and engage effectively in community engagement activity.
- Develop and implement a local community planning framework across Angus.
- Act as the area service team by supporting collaboration at a local level and in a planned way. As a dedicated support team they would look for opportunities to facilitate services across partner agencies and, to support work in an integrated way within the wards area.
- Liaise with and keep elected members in the area fully apprised of the work to be undertaken.
- Promote and strengthen opportunities for tenants to get involved in the development, performance and decision making of public sector services in a community planning context.
- Develop opportunities for tenants to be able to critically review the council's Housing Division performance highlighting their priorities for improvement.

Having heard a number of members commend the various staff involved in local community planning, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to welcome the more focused and localised approach to community planning, as set out in the Report.

13. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

There was submitted [Report No 776/09](#) by the Chief Executive advising members of their responsibilities under equalities' legislation in respect of proposed budget savings.

The Report indicated that following publication of the Equality and Human Rights Commission document "The Public Sector Equality Duties and Financial Decisions", when developing proposals and making policy decisions, including those about finance, service provision and employment, public bodies now had to ensure that decisions were made to minimise unfairness and not have a disproportionately negative effect on people from different ethnic groups, disabled people and men or women. Key to fulfilling this obligation was the conduct of equality impact assessments which required public bodies to consider all relevant, available information, in order to anticipate any likely negative impact on people from different racial groups, people with disabilities or women or men and seek to avoid that negative impact by taking alternative action wherever possible.

All proposed budget savings in Angus Council for 2008/09 financial year had been the subject of an equality impact assessment. This assessment process would continue for the 2009/10 financial year and each subsequent year thereafter.

The Committee agreed to note the terms of the Report.

14. ESTABLISHMENT CHANGES

With reference to Article 17 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 8 September 2009, there was submitted and noted [Report No 777/09](#) by the Chief Executive summarising changes to the Chief Executive's, Corporate Services, Education, Infrastructure Services, Neighbourhood Services and Social Work and Health establishments during the period 10 August to 28 September 2009.

The Committee agreed to note the changes to the Departments' establishments, as detailed in the Report.

15. HR ORGANISATIONAL HEALTH INDICATORS 2008/2009

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 28 October 2008, there was submitted [Report No 778/09](#) by the Chief Executive detailing a range of indicators for the Council designed to help measure the effectiveness of human resource management and its contribution to organisational performance, namely:-

- industrial/employee relations;
- recruitment/retention;
- health and safety;
- training;
- equal opportunities.

The Report indicated that these organisational health indicators were not an absolute measure of effectiveness of the human resources function per se. However, through benchmarking, either externally or internally comparing performance over time, they could take on meaning, identifying trends and areas for action and assisting the human resource function in planning, review and continuous improvement.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the Report.

16. PEOPLE STRATEGY

With reference to Article 9 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 3 February 2004, there was submitted [Report No 779/09](#) by the Chief Executive seeking approval for the adoption of a People Strategy for the Council.

The Report indicated that the purpose of the Strategy was to set out a framework by which the Council could lead, manage and develop the people who worked for it and support them to achieve the Council's objectives. The Strategy was therefore a complement to other Council plans, e.g. service plans and the corporate plan, as the objectives set out in these documents could not be achieved without the people the Council employed.

Key to the success of the Strategy was that its principles and commitments were adopted and acted upon. The Strategy would therefore be extensively publicised within the Council and its principles and commitments reinforced in all aspects of leadership and management within the Council and in the development of the Council's managers.

The Committee agreed to approve the People Strategy, as attached to the Report, subject to one minor change in terminology under the Section "Dignity at Work".

17. SICKNESS ABSENCE 2008/2009

With reference to Article 9 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 28 September 2008, there was submitted [Report No 780/09](#) by the Chief Executive analysing sickness absence within the Council during the financial year 2008/2009.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the terms of the Report; and
- (ii) to refer the Report to the Scrutiny and Audit Sub Committee.

18. PREMIUM PAYMENT AND ADDITIONAL HOURS COSTS 2008/2009

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 28 October 2008, there was submitted [Report No 781/09](#) by the Chief Executive advising of premium payment and additional hours costs within the Council during the financial year 2008/2009.

The Report indicated that the figures for 2008/2009 in relation to premium payment costs of £1,603,056.56 showed a decrease in overall premium payments of £189,676.12 (10.58%). In relation to total additional hours cost in 2008/09 of £1,625,092.57, this showed an increase of £78,277.72 (4.81%), these costs being affected by the 2.5% national pay award.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the terms of the Report; and
- (ii) to refer the Report to the Scrutiny and Audit Sub Committee.

19. BUSINESS MILEAGE AND SUBSISTENCE COSTS 2008/2009

There was submitted [Report No 782/09](#) by the Chief Executive advising of business mileage and subsistence costs within the Council during the period 2008/2009 financial year.

The Report indicated that in 2008/2009 there had been business mileage and subsistence costs payments of £1,274,954.14. This was a decrease in overall business mileage and subsistence costs of £194,786.77 (13.24%) with business mileage costs falling by 12.77% and subsistence costs by 52.5%.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the terms of the Report; and
- (ii) to refer the Report to the Scrutiny and Audit Sub Committee.