

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Thursday 10 April 2003 at 4.20 pm

Present: Councillors JOY MOWATT, IAN ANGUS, BILL CROWE, Provost Mrs FRANCES E DUNCAN OBE, Councillors The Hon R J LESLIE MELVILLE, BRIAN MILNE, ROB MURRAY, PETER NIELD, GEORGE NORRIE MBE, HELEN OSWALD and SANDY WEST.

Apologies: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors JACK GIBB and IAN MACKINTOSH,

Councillor MOWATT, Vice-Convener, in the Chair.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mowatt declared an interest in items 16 and 18.

2. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The [minute of meeting of this Committee of 27 February 2003](#) was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

3. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UNIT HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS - 27 FEBRUARY 2003 – 10 APRIL 2003

With reference to Article 2 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 27 February 2003, there was submitted and noted [Report No 462/03](#) by the Chief Executive identifying the highlights and achievements in the work of the Economic Development Unit for the period 27 February – 10 April 2003.

4. UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS

With reference to Article 3 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 27 February 2003, there was submitted and noted Report No 410/03 by the Director of Planning and Transport providing various statistics, graphs and charts showing unemployment rates by travel to work areas, numbers and ages of unemployed persons, duration of unemployment and the number of vacancies in Angus and neighbouring authorities for the month of February 2003.

5. PROMOTION FOR CIVIL SERVICE JOBS IN TAYSIDE

With reference to Article 3 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 1 March 2001, there was submitted [Report No 463/03](#) by the Chief Executive advising that the Convener, as a member of the Tayside Civil Service Jobs Campaign Group, had received a request for a Council contribution towards continuing the campaign to promote Tayside as a location for civil service relocation. The Report sought the Committee's approval for the contribution and set out in the Appendix, the Campaign Group's Strategy.

The Report concluded that the attraction of civil service jobs to Angus would be beneficial in terms of raising the profile of the area and would assist in widening the economic base of the area through the attraction of good quality service sector jobs.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve a contribution of up to £2,233.33 towards a partnership appointment to undertake a promotional campaign to attract civil service relocations to Tayside; and
- (ii) to instruct the Economic Development Manager to seek an appropriate financial contribution from Scottish Enterprise Tayside, as outlined in the Report.

6. A MODERN REGIONAL POLICY FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM

There was submitted [Report No 464/03](#) by the Chief Executive indicating that the DTI had released a consultative paper entitled "A Modern Regional Policy for the United Kingdom" which set out the Government's views on Devolved Regional Policy and reform of the European Structural Funds.

The Report concluded that a review of the EU Structural and Cohesion Funds Policy was inevitable and proposed that it be remitted to the Economic Development Manager to prepare a response for consideration at the first Committee meeting after the local government elections on 1 May. The Council would then need to consider, whether it was in agreement with UK reform proposals outlined in the DTI paper, or whether it would favour an alternative approach and, if so, how it would propose to lobby for adoption of such an approach.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the DTI Report "A Modern Regional Policy for the United Kingdom"; and
- (ii) to remit to the Economic Development Manager, to prepare a response for consideration at the meeting of the Economic Development Committee on 5 June 2003.

7. NORTH SEA COMMISSION 12TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY – CUXHAVEN, NIEDERSACHSEN 18-20 JUNE 2003

With reference to Article 8 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 25 April 2002, there was submitted [Report No 465/03](#) by the Chief Executive seeking the Committee's approval for member and officer representation at the North Sea Commission's 12th General Assembly to be held in Cuxhaven, Niedersachsen from 18 to 20 June 2003.

The Report indicated that attendance at this Assembly continued to be important in terms of building on progress made to date and maximising future European funding, as well as developing effective transnational links.

The Committee agreed that Angus Council be represented by an elected member nominated in consultation with the Leader of the Administration, and an officer nominated by the Chief Executive at the 2003 North Sea Commission's Annual General Assembly, to be held in Cuxhaven, Niedersachsen from 18 to 20 June 2003.

8. SLAED TOURISM CONFERENCE "TOURISM IS OUR BUSINESS" – 25 FEBRUARY 2003

With reference to Article 9 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 27 February 2003, there was submitted [Report No 466/03](#) by the Chief Executive presenting the successful outcomes of the SLAED Tourism Group's national conference "Tourism is our Business" which had been held in Stirling on 25 February 2003.

The Report indicated that the national conference had been held with a view to giving a high profile to the findings of a recent study on the role of Scottish Councils and tourism. The Report presented the conference report and outlined the key outcomes and actions arising from the conference. The Report concluded that Angus Council's pivotal role in promoting the profile of all Scottish Councils with respect to the tourism product, through the report "The Role of Scottish Councils in Tourism" and the national conference "Tourism is our Business", had succeeded in raising this profile with the Scottish Executive, VisitScotland and other key tourism agencies in Scotland.

Having congratulated the staff of the Economic Development Unit on the success of the conference and the production of the Report on the role of Scottish Councils in Tourism, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the successful outcome of the national tourism conference organised by Angus Council, in conjunction with the Scottish Local Authorities Economic Development Group (SLAED); and

- (ii) to note that the Council's Angus Tourism Framework Co-ordination Group would take forward the activities identified in the Conference Report (attached as Appendix 1) and summarised in Section 3 of the Report.

9. ANGUS GLENS WALKING FESTIVAL (PILOT) 2003

With reference to Article 12 of the minute of meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee of 10 September 2002, there was submitted [Joint Report No 449/03](#) by the Chief Executive and the Director of Leisure Services updating the Committee on the progress achieved in setting up a pilot Walking Festival in the Angus Glens in May 2003, which would take place between Thursday 29 May and Sunday 1 June 2003.

The four day event would be based in Kirriemuir with a full and varied programme of 19 walks across the Angus Glens and evening entertainment provided.

The Report concluded that a contribution from Angus Council would demonstrate its willingness to support the rural community of the Angus Glens and assist in enhancing and safeguarding employment in the rural areas.

Having heard Councillor Angus on the positive response to the event, with several of the walks already fully booked, the Committee, for its interest, agreed:-

- (i) to note the action taken so far to pursue the development of the Angus Glens Walking Festival; and
- (ii) to approve the expenditure from the Tayside Rural Development Facilitators Project which included Angus Council's contribution of £1,937.

10. RURAL TRAINING IN ANGUS – CAREERS EVENT

With reference to Article 4 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 31 May 2001, there was submitted [Joint Report No 467/03](#) by the Chief Executive and the Director of Education providing information on a proposal to hold a second one-day Careers Event in Angus to promote and raise the profile of careers in the land-based sector. The event would be held at Wester Meathie, Inverarity in September 2003 and would draw exhibitors and school children from the Tayside area.

The Report indicated that the Council, in partnership with Scottish Enterprise Tayside and the Sector Skills Council for the Environmental and Land-based Sector (LANTRA), had been requested to assist with the operation of the event. The event was estimated to cost a total of £2,000, with Scottish Enterprise Tayside to fund 50% of these costs, 25% being met by LANTRA and the remaining 25% to be met by Angus Council.

The Committee agreed to authorise a contribution of up to £250 to be met from the Economic Development Budget for 2003/2004, to assist towards the costs of holding a careers event in Angus.

11. JAGUAR F1 CHALLENGE FOR SCHOOLS

With reference to Article 5 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 6 June 2002, there was submitted [Joint Report No 469/03](#) by the Chief Executive and the Director of Education requesting the Committee's approval to contribute £1,000 in sponsorship to the Jaguar Formula One Challenge for Schools which would contribute towards the cost of enabling Angus schools to participate in the event and establish Angus Training Group as the centre for manufacturing of models and for the training of teachers for Scotland.

Having heard the Convener express appreciation to Jim Thomson, Angus Training Group for his work with the young people involved in the challenge, the Committee, for its interest, agreed to authorise £1,000 sponsorship towards the costs of Angus schools participating in the Jaguar Formula One Challenge for Schools in 2003/2004, with the costs being met jointly by the Economic Development and Education Departmental budgets for 2003/2004.

12. **ANGUS ANGLING INITIATIVE – CO-ORDINATOR, 2003**

With reference to Article 2 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 11 October 2001, there was submitted [Report No 468/03](#) by the Chief Executive reporting on a request for financial assistance by the Angus Angling Initiative Steering Committee and the Focus Group, made up of businesses in the angling and tourism industry in Angus, to finance the employment of a part-time Co-ordinator from April to September 2003.

The Report indicated that the new appointment of a part-time co-ordinator would ensure that all relevant Angus businesses bought into the Tayside Angling promotions and would encourage better communication within the Angus area between operators and providers. The estimated cost for the six month post of part-time co-ordinator was £4,250.

The Committee agreed to authorise the expenditure of up to £1,156 from the Economic Development Budget for 2003/2004 to assist towards the cost of employing a part-time co-ordinator for the Angus Angling Initiative from April to September 2003.

13. **SCOTTISH WOOD FAIR – PERTH, MAY 2003**

With reference to Article 2 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 31 May 2001, there was submitted [Report No 477/03](#) by the Chief Executive advising the Committee of a proposal to hold a two day Woodfair at the Dewars Centre, Perth on 9 and 10 May 2003 to raise the profile and promote the use of Scottish timber to the general public and to the industry.

The Report indicated that, in partnership with Scottish Enterprise Tayside, Perth and Kinross Council, the Small Business Gateway Perthshire and the Forestry Commission, Angus Council had been asked to assist with the implementation of a second two-day Scottish Woodfair. The total cost of the event was estimated at £31,400 with a maximum contribution sought from Angus Council of £1,000.

The Committee agreed to authorise the expenditure of up to £1,000 to assist towards the costs of a second Scottish Woodfair in Tayside to promote the use of Scottish timber, to be met from within the Economic Development Budget for 2003/2004.

14. **DEVELOPMENT OF CRAFT SECTOR IN ANGUS**

There was submitted [Report No 470/03](#) by the Chief Executive proposing the establishment of an Angus Craft Association to support the development of the craft sector and seeking the Committee's approval for funding to retain a consultant to help develop this initiative.

The Report indicated that, although in the past, Angus Council's Economic Development Unit had helped individual craftworkers with marketing and market development support, it was now felt that this was not a cost effective way to support the sector and that a group-based activity would be likely to be more effective. The Report therefore proposed the appointment of a consultant, managed by the Angus Rural Development Facilitator, to assist in the establishment of an Angus Craft Association. The total cost of the project would not exceed £5,000 and it should be eligible for ERDF support at a rate of 45% through the Rural Development Facilitator Project.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to endorse the proposed development of an Angus Craft Association;
- (ii) to note that, once the first meeting of the Craft Association had taken place, no further individual applications for Market Development Grant would be allowed from individual craftworkers;
- (iii) to contribute up to £5,000 towards the cost of retaining a consultant to undertake a short life exercise, as detailed in the Report; and
- (iv) to note that a further Report would be brought to this Committee once the Craft Association was established, detailing potential projects, and seeking authority to support these financially, if necessary.

15. WEATHERFORD INTERNATIONAL LTD., ARBROATH – ANNOUNCEMENT OF FACTORY CLOSURE

There was submitted [Report No 478/03](#) by the Chief Executive informing the Committee of developments regarding the recently announced closure of the Weatherford International Ltd Completion Systems Division in Arbroath.

The Report advised that, on Wednesday 2 April 2003, Weatherford International Ltd had announced the forthcoming closure of one of its two Arbroath based factories. The announcement had come as a complete surprise as there had been no prior indication or discussion with Council officials and previous contact had been very positive. A copy of the press release from the company was appended to the Report, together with the official Angus Council press release.

The Chief Executive indicated that the first meeting with the company's European Manufacturing Director and Head of HR had taken place. The meeting had been organised by Angus Council's Economic Development Unit with representatives from Scottish Enterprise Tayside and Job Centre Plus. It was evident that there was very little prospect of saving the plant at this time, despite helpful discussions with the company. Company representatives had emphasised that this announcement did not affect the company's other plant (Weatherford DIS) (previously known as BBL). A first meeting had also been held with the Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE), regarding practical assistance to employees in relation to retraining, employment and benefits from the public sector. Employees with the company were considered to be highly employable, with most of their skills being in demand. Accordingly, Angus Council was working with the company to try and identify local engineering firms which might be able to take on some of the 11 apprentices which the company had in training at present. Letters were being issued to a number of firms in this regard, with follows-up by the company Development Officer. A meeting was also due to be held with the Arbroath Plant Manager and Training Manager regarding relocation of the apprentices. In addition, an investigation was also being carried out as to how to assist the company market the facility, given that it contained engineering infrastructure machines which could be adapted for other markets.

Having heard various members on the effects this closure would have on the economy of Arbroath and having extended their best wishes to the individuals affected by the closure, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to remit to the Chief Executive to continue working with the company, Scottish Enterprise Tayside and the Partnership Action for Continuing Employment, to assist the employees affected and secure future investment in the plant and Arbroath area.

Provost Duncan took the Chair for items 16, 17 and 18 below.

16. ANGUS DIGITAL MEDIA CENTRE (ADMC) – CHAIRMAN'S REPORT COVERING THE PERIOD MARCH 2002 – FEBRUARY 2003

With reference to Article 10 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 16 January 2003, there was submitted [Report No 471/03](#) by the Chief Executive presenting the Angus Digital Media Centre's Chairman's Report for the past year, covering activities, client groups, visitor numbers, links established with external agencies and potential future partnerships.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the content of the Chairman's Report for Angus Digital Media Centre Ltd., as presented to the Annual General Meeting of the Company held on 6 March 2003 and attached as Appendix 1 to the Report; and
- (ii) to note that a separate Quarterly Financial Monitoring Report had been presented as part of the agenda for this meeting (Article 18 refers).

17. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

The Committee resolved in terms of Standing Order 27(2), that the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items, so as to avoid the disclosure of information which was exempt in terms of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, paragraphs 6, 8, 9 and 10.

18. ANGUS DIGITAL MEDIA CENTRE – FINANCIAL MONITORING STATEMENT FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 JANUARY 2003

With reference to Article 16 above, there was submitted [Joint Report No 472/03](#) by the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance outlining the financial performance of Angus Digital Media Centre Limited for the ten month period ended 31 January 2003. The Report advised that Angus Digital Media Centre Limited had generated a surplus of £35,491 for the first ten months of the financial year. The surplus generated at this point in the year had been higher than originally estimated, but this had been due to the strict control of expenditure rather than as a result of additional income.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report and the surplus generated by Angus Digital Media Centre Limited for the period ended 31 January 2003; and
- (ii) to note that the accounting reference date of the company was 31 March each year.

19. BUSINESS GATEWAY OFFICE – ANGUS – ACCOMMODATION OF CAREERS SCOTLAND

With reference to Article 13 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 31 May 2001, there was submitted [Joint Report No 460/03](#) by the Chief Executive and the Director of Property Services informing the Committee of a proposal to accommodate the Arbroath Office of Careers Scotland within the Business Gateway Office in Arbroath, for which the Council held the head lease, and recommending that the Chief Executive and Director of Property Services be granted delegated authority to agree the proposal on behalf of the Council.

The Committee agreed to authorise the Chief Executive and Director of Property Services to participate in negotiations on the sub-rental of office space within the Business Gateway Offices, Arbroath to Careers Scotland and to agree the terms of the sub-rental, in accordance with the terms of the Report.

20. DUNDEE AND ANGUS OIL VENTURE GROUP – A REVIEW OF SERVICES

With reference to Article 13 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 21 November 2002, there was submitted [Report No 473/03](#) by the Chief Executive advising the Committee that the services and structure of the Dundee and Angus Oil Venture Group had recently been reviewed, summarising the findings of the study and setting out the likely outcomes. A copy of the draft Executive Summary was attached to the Report.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the findings of the “Strategic Review of Dundee and Angus Oil Venture Group”; and
- (ii) to authorise the Economic Development Manager to work with colleagues in Dundee City Council, Scottish Enterprise Tayside and the Dundee and Angus Oil Venture Group Management Group to achieve the improvements in service delivery and structure identified therein.

21. ANGUS GOLF PRODUCT AUDIT

There was submitted [Report No 474/03](#) by the Chief Executive advising that the Angus Golf Liaison Group had identified the requirement for an audit/study to inform golf product development in Angus. Given the amount of time and dedicated work required to undertake proper market research, the Report proposed to commission a consultant to complete the study by June 2003.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the content of the consultancy proposal attached to the Report as Appendix 1;
- (ii) to approve commissioning of the research work, at an estimated cost of £3,400; and
- (iii) to exempt the contract from competitive tender arrangements in terms of Financial Regulation 16.1.3e.

22. LEASE OF UNIT 2, MONTROSE BUSINESS CENTRE, BROOMFIELD INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, MONTROSE

There was submitted [Report No 475/03](#) by the Chief Executive dealing with the lease of Unit 2 Montrose Business Centre, Broomfield Industrial Estate, Montrose.

The Committee noted that the Chief Executive, acting under delegated powers, had agreed to lease this Unit to Loch Duart Ltd. on the terms and conditions referred to in the Report.

23. ORCHARDBANK, FORFAR INDUSTRIAL ESTATE EXTENSION – PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee agreed to defer consideration of Report No 476/03 by the Chief Executive meantime.