

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the **CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Thursday 12 June 2008 at 4.00 pm.

Present: Councillors IAIN GAUL, ALEX KING, ALISON ANDREWS, IAN MACKINTOSH, DAVID MAY, COLIN BROWN, BILL MIDDLETON, PETER MURPHY, ROB MURRAY, ROBERT MYLES, PETER NIELD, HELEN OSWALD, RALPH PALMER, JOHN RYMER and SANDY WEST.

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

In the absence of the Convener and the Vice Convener, Councillor Mackintosh was appointed as Chairman for the meeting, whereupon Councillor Mackintosh took the Chair.

2. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Mark Salmond and John Whyte with Councillors Colin Brown and Alison Andrews, respectively, substituting.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Brown declared an interest in item 13 as Chairman of Forfar Farmington Football Club. He indicated that he would not participate in any discussion and voting on any question arising from this item.

Councillor Gaul declared an interest in item 12 as the husband of the Chair of Forfar Area Partnership. He indicated that he would participate in any discussion and voting on any question arising from this item.

Councillor Nield declared an interest in item 12 as a Council appointed Trustee of the Patrick Allan-Fraser of Hospitalfield Trust. He indicated that he would participate in any discussion and voting on any question arising from this item.

Councillor Oswald declared an interest in item 12 as having been requested to present prizes at the annual flower show of the Carnoustie and District Horticulture Society. She indicated that she would participate in any discussion and voting on any question arising from this item.

4. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The [minute of meeting of this Committee of 1 May 2008](#) was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

5. TERM CONTRACTS - REVIEW OF MARKET SITUATION

With reference to Article 4 of the minute of meeting of the minute of meeting of the Executive Sub-Committee of this Committee of 17 August 2007, there was submitted [Report No 603/08](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising members of the outcome of investigations undertaken by the Head of Property and recommending a series of actions to increase expressions of interest from contractors for tendering opportunities in respect of term contracts.

The Report indicated that, while the review had identified that current practices for making potential contractors aware of tendering opportunities continued to be generally effective, there remained difficulties in ensuring that, in some trades, there were sufficient intimations of interest from contractors.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to approve the strategy for improving contractor awareness of construction works tendering opportunities as they arose, particularly during the procurement process for term contracts; and

- (iii) to note that this strategy would be kept under review to ensure ongoing conformity with procurement best practice and related guidance.

6. PROVISION OF MONTROSE SWIMMING POOL (CONSULTANTS AND GENERAL UPDATE)

With reference to Article 19 of the minute of meeting of the Neighbourhood Services Committee of 29 May 2008, there was submitted [Joint Report No 510/08](#) by the Director of Neighbourhood Services and the Director of Corporate Services updating members on indicative costs and funding implications of the above project and seeking approval to appoint specialist swimming pool consultants. In addition, the Report outlined the phasing of the project and the key milestones which required to be achieved in order to deliver a new Montrose Swimming Pool for public use on the proposed sports centre/school campus in 2012.

The Report indicated that information provided by Property Services Division highlighted that Montrose Swimming Pool was the highest priority for replacement/improvement of the seven swimming pools operated and managed by the Council.

Councillor King, seconded by Councillor Murray, moved that the Committee for its interest, agrees:-

- (i) that authority to appoint specialist Swimming Pool consultants to assist in the progression of the project be delegated to the Executive Sub-Committee of this Committee in the first instance, in the light of a report to be submitted by the Director of Neighbourhood Services, in consultation with the Director of Corporate Services and the Head of Property; and
- (ii) to note particularly the following specific areas of interest:-
- the need for the project would be subject to a capital project appraisal in accordance with Council policy
 - the current funding that was in place
 - any capital receipt/additional funding would require to be used to reduce overall borrowing
 - the intention to review the phasing of the project in the financial plan when more detailed costing information was available
 - the key milestones

COUNCILLOR NIELD, SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR MYLES, MOVED AS AN AMENDMENT, THAT THIS COMMITTEE, FOR ITS INTEREST, AGREES:-

- (I) TO AUTHORISE THE DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND THE HEAD OF PROPERTY, TO APPOINT SPECIALIST SWIMMING POOL CONSULTANTS TO ASSIST IN THE PROGRESSION OF THE PROJECT AND, AS THE ANTICIPATED FEE LEVEL WAS LIKELY TO EXCEED DELEGATED AUTHORITY, THE OUTCOME BE DETAILED IN A FURTHER REPORT; AND
- (II) TO NOTE PARTICULARLY THE FOLLOWING SPECIFIC AREAS OF INTEREST:-
- THE NEED FOR THE PROJECT WOULD BE SUBJECT TO A CAPITAL PROJECT APPRAISAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL POLICY
 - THE CURRENT FUNDING THAT WAS IN PLACE
 - ANY CAPITAL RECEIPT/ADDITIONAL FUNDING WOULD REQUIRE TO BE USED TO REDUCE OVERALL BORROWING
 - THE INTENTION TO REVIEW THE PHASING OF THE PROJECT IN THE FINANCIAL PLAN WHEN MORE DETAILED COSTING INFORMATION WAS AVAILABLE
 - THE KEY MILESTONES

On a vote being taken, the members voted:-

For the motion:-

Councillor Gaul, King, Bill Middleton, Murray, Oswald, Palmer and West (7).

For the amendment:-

Councillor Andrews, Brown, Mackintosh, May, Murphy, Myles, Nield and Rymer (8).

The amendment was declared carried and became the finding of the meeting.

7. ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSION TO MAISONDIEU PRIMARY SCHOOL, BRECHIN - TENDER LIST

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of the Education Committee of 6 March 2008, there was submitted [Report No 604/08](#) by the Director of Corporate Services containing details of the contractors who it was proposed be invited to tender for the alterations and extension to Maisondieu Primary School, Brechin.

The Report indicated that each firm had been asked to supply information, or had been checked using Constructionline, on its history, capability, financial standing and present and future commitments, together with other relevant areas.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to invite the undernoted six contractors to tender for the project, subject to any financial assessment as required by the Head of Finance in consultation with the Head of Property:-

R S Hill, Forfar
 Mansell Construction Services Ltd, Croyden
 Muirfield (Contracts) Ltd, Dundee
 Robertson Construction (Tayside) Ltd, Dundee
 Andrew Shepherd Construction Ltd, Forfar
 Torith Ltd, Drumoig

8. FORMATION OF VOCATIONAL LEARNING CENTRE, BRECHIN HIGH SCHOOL - TENDER REPORT

With reference to Article 3 of the minute of meeting of the Executive Sub-Committee of this Committee of 27 March 2008, there was submitted [Report No 605/08](#) by the Director of Corporate Services detailing tenders received for the formation of a vocational unit at Brechin High School.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve acceptance of the lowest tender for the formation of this unit, that of Andrew Shepherd Construction Ltd, Forfar in the amount of £307,797.40;
- (ii) to approve the estimated total cost of £466,427 (at out-turn prices);
- (iii) to note that:-
 - (a) an allowance of £380,000 had been made for this project in the Education Department's 2007/2011 Financial Plan and 2008/2009 Capital Budget, as reported to the Education Committee on 27 February 2008; and
 - (b) the balance in the amount of £86,427 between the allowance in the Financial Plan and the estimated total cost would be funded from the Education Department's Accessibility Programme in the amount of £28,000 from the Education Revenue Budget in the amount of £8,427 and by adjusting/re-profiling the Education Section of the 2007/2011 Financial Plan in the amount of £50,000 in 2007/2008; and
- (iv) to note the revenue implications arising from this project (first full year 2010/2011) as contained in the Report.

9. CORPORATE PROPERTY ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

With reference to Article 5 of the minute of meeting of the Resources and Central Services Committee of 4 May 2006, there was submitted [Report No 606/08](#) by the Director of Corporate Services presenting the second version of the Corporate Property Asset Management Plan in accordance with the Corporate Property Management Strategy and covered all properties except those held on the Education and HRA Accounts.

The Report indicated that the objective of the Plan was to minimise the cost of resources tied up in land and buildings by developing strategies and programmes to ensure that they were deployed in the most effective way to meet the Council's corporate and service objectives.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to approve the second version of the Corporate Property Asset Management Plan, with particular reference to the Implementation Plan incorporating recommendations as detailed on pages 26 and 27 of the Asset Management Plan.

10. PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS

With reference to Article 13 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 1 May 2008, there was submitted [Report No 608/08](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising members of the outcome of negotiations for lease renewals, rent review, minute of waiver/negotiated disposal and new leases.

The Committee agreed to note and approve the conclusion of negotiations detailed in Appendices 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the Report.

11. ENERGY EFFICIENCY INITIATIVE FUND INVEST TO SAVE PROJECTS 2008/2009

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 1 May 2008, there was submitted [Report No 609/08](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising members of an urgent energy "Invest to Save" project to be undertaken utilising the Energy Efficiency Initiative Fund which would assist the Council in reducing its CO₂ emissions.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to approve an urgent energy "Invest to Save" project at an estimated cost of £8,281 from the Energy Efficiency Initiative Fund in 2008/2009; and
- (iii) to note that the forecast annual savings of £4,863 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.

12. ANGUS COUNCIL COMMUNITY GRANTS SCHEME - NEW APPLICATIONS

With reference to Article 20(b) of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 1 May 2008, there was submitted [Joint Report No 610/08](#) by the Chief Executive and the Director of Infrastructure Services detailing applications for grants over £500 in terms of the Council's Community Grants Scheme and advising members of applications for £500 or less which had been approved/projected.

The Report also contained additional information relating to Brechin Arts Festival and an update of funding contributions by other local authorities to the Scottish Countryside Alliance Educational Trust which had been requested by members at the previous meeting.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;

- (ii) to approve the following awards in relation to applications for grants over £500:-
- Patrick Allan-Fraser of Hospitalfield Trust - No award
 - Friockheim Bowling Club - £4,524 subject to an updated constitution being supplied by the Club
 - Montrose Air Station Heritage Centre - £3,185
 - Samaritans - No award
 - Arbroath Events - £5,000 subject to provision of robust monitoring information on visitor numbers, details of shortfall incurred and a business plan outlining plans to achieve financial sustainability and reduce reliance on grants
 - Angus Accordion and Fiddle Festival - £2,812 subject to provision of two further quotes towards the provision of a website
 - Feis Spe - £1,000; and
- (iii) to note the following decisions in respect of applications for £500 or less:-
- Dundee and Angus Chess Congress - £300
 - Forfar Area Partnership - £500
 - Monifieth Local History Society - £450
 - Heritage Arts - Auchmithie Residents - £500
 - Ruthven Parish Festival - £500
 - Carnoustie and District Horticultural Society - £200
 - Newbigging and District Horticultural Society - £380
 - Tannadice Learning Club - £500
- (iv) to note that a further Report would be submitted on the Brechin Arts Festival to the next meeting of the Committee, which would provide further information, where available, on attendance numbers and income/expenditure details for each individual event.

13. FORFAR COMMON GOOD FUND - REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE - FORFAR FARMINGTON FOOTBALL CLUB

With reference to Article 9 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 31 January 2008, there was submitted [Report No 611/08](#) by the Chief Executive advising members of a request for financial assistance from Forfar Common Good Fund by Forfar Farmington Football Club.

The Report indicated that the Club was developing a clubroom, changing facilities and floodlights at Marketmuir, Forfar to cater for the nine teams that they currently had participating at all ages in football, which would also be made available to other clubs in Angus.

Having heard from a number of members and from the Director of Corporate Services, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to approve the request for funding of up to £50,000 from Forfar Common Good Fund to Forfar Farmington Football Club in respect of costs associated with the Club's development at Marketmuir; and
- (iii) that in light of members comments, the Director of Corporate Services, in conjunction with the Chief Executive, prepare further guidance on the Councillors' Code of Conduct and its implications for members in their capacity as members of outside bodies.

14. HOUSING CAPITAL AND PLANNED MAINTENANCE PROGRAMMES - HRA BLOCK 2007/2008

With reference to Article 5 of the minute of meeting of the Neighbourhood Services Committee of 29 May 2008, there was submitted [Report No 493/08](#) by the Director of Corporate Services setting out the latest position on the HRA Capital and Planned Maintenance Programmes for 2007/2008 and setting out the near final actual capital and planned maintenance spends to 31 March 2008, together with updated funding proposals.

The Report indicated that the indicative end of year funding position had been reviewed and aligned to the spend and receipts near final actual positions.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to note the near final actual spend figures presented for the Housing Capital and Planned Maintenance Programmes for the period to 31 March 2008;
- (iii) to note the capital receipts position for the period to 31 March 2008; and
- (iv) to note the proposed funding approach.

15. CAPITAL MONITORING - GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2007/2008

With reference to Article 22 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 1 May 2008, there was submitted [Report No 612/08](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising members of the capital expenditure incurred for the period from 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008 and measuring actual capital expenditure for the year against budgeted provision.

The Report indicated that at the close of the 2007/2008 financial year, actual gross expenditure was £4.466 million less than the revised gross budget of £27,079,000 and the actual net expenditure was lower than the revised net budget of £9,871,000 by £1.349 million.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to note the unaudited actual position on the overall General Fund Capital Programme as at 31 March 2008 as detailed in the Report and the accompanying Capital Monitoring Statement; and
- (iii) to note that the next meeting of the Capital Projects Monitoring Group was scheduled to take place on 17 June 2008 when explanations would be required on the reasons for further slippage in the programme.

16. REMISSION OF RATES

With reference to Article 22 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 13 March 2008, there was submitted [Report No 613/08](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising members of applications for Remission of Rates and recommending that these be granted, which would result in an annual cost to the Council of £916.

The Committee agreed to approve the applications for Remission of Rates, as detailed in the Report.

17. AUTHORITY TO WRITE OFF BAD DEBTS (COMMUNITY CHARGE, COUNCIL TAX, NON-DOMESTIC RATES AND HOUSING BENEFIT OVERPAYMENTS) - FINANCIAL YEAR 2007/2008

With reference to Article 16 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 21 June 2007, there was submitted [Joint Report No 614/08](#) by the Director of Corporate Services and the Head of Finance seeking authority to write off the amounts detailed in the Report as Bad Debts in respect of Community Charge, Council Tax, Non-Domestic Rates and Housing Benefit overpayments, which had either been in the hands of Sheriff Officers and Debt Recovery Agencies or were untraced debtors.

The Committee agreed that the amounts detailed in the Report be written off, it having been noted that the files would continue to remain open with every effort made to collect the debts, should circumstances change.

18. MISCELLANEOUS ACCOUNTS - DEBT WRITE-OFF

With reference to Article 20 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 13 March 2008, there was submitted [Report No 615/08](#) by the Director of Corporate Services 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 in 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 £5,061.06, inclusive of VAT totalling £18.62, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the Report, being written off as irrecoverable.

19. PREPARATION OF THE 2009/2010 GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET

With reference to Article 21 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 21 June 2007, there was submitted [Joint Report No 616/08](#) by the Director of Corporate Services and the Head of Finance advising members of the current position in relation to the 2009/2010 Revenue Budget preparation process, identifying the main stages of the budget cycle and seeking approval of the proposed approach to Revenue Budget preparation for the 2009/2010 financial year.

The Report indicated that the budgetary process, as described in the Report, was largely similar to that adopted for the 2008/2009 budget and was in line with the Council's Financial Regulations. Further reports regarding the Revenue Budget process would be brought forward, as required, as the budget cycle progressed.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to approve the approach to the budget preparation process as set out in section 4 of the Report.

20. PREPARATION OF THE 2008/2012 FINANCIAL PLAN AND 2009/2010 GENERAL FUND CAPITAL BUDGET

With reference to Article 20 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 21 June 2007, there was submitted [Joint Report No 617/08](#) by the Director of Corporate Services and the Head of Finance advising members of the main stages in the Financial Plan process and seeking approval of the proposed approach to the preparation of the 2008/2012 Financial Plan and the 2009/2010 General Fund Capital Budget.

The Report represented the starting point for the preparation of the 2008/2012 Financial Plan and 2009/2010 Capital Budget process and further reports regarding the preparation of the Plan would be submitted as required, as the budget cycle progressed.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to approve the approach to the 2008/2012 Financial Plan preparation process, as set out in section 6 of the Report.

21. COUNCIL TAX AND NON-DOMESTIC RATES COLLECTION PERFORMANCE

With reference to Article 18 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 21 June 2007, there was submitted [Joint Report No 618/08](#) by the Director of Corporate Services and the Head of Finance advising members of the collection performance details of Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates for the year ended 31 March 2008 and setting out comparisons with previous financial years.

Arrears figures and recovery action were also referred to and all figures stated which related to the accounts for 2007/2008 were still subject to audit.

The Report indicated that, subject to audit, the figures showed a continuation of improvement of in-year collection of Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates, with the collection rate for Council Tax for 2007/2008 calculated at 98.5% and the collection rate for Non-Domestic Rates for 2007/2008 calculated at 98.3%.

The Report also highlighted the success of the Council Tax Direct Debit campaign and indicated that a further promotional campaign was being considered for 2009/2010.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to note that there had been a continuation of improvement of in-year collection performance of Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates; and
- (iii) to congratulate and express thanks to all staff concerned at the continued improvement of the collection performance.