

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the **NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Thursday 17 April 2008 at 4.00 pm.

Present: Councillors JIM MILLAR, COLIN BROWN, ALISON ANDREWS, FRANK ELLIS, MAIRI EVANS, DAVID FAIRWEATHER, DAVID MAY, BILL MIDDLETON, DONALD MORRISON, PETER NIELD, MARK SALMOND, BOB SPINK, MARGARET THOMSON, ALEX KING and SANDY WEST.

Councillor MILLAR, Convener, in the Chair.

1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor Sheena Welsh with Councillor Alex King substituting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Salmond, West and May declared an interest in item 3(b) as members of the William Lamb Studio Advisory Committee.

Councillor Morrison declared an interest in item 4 as he had accepted a public petition and had met with residents and officers, as a Ward Councillor, regarding the Mayfield Regeneration Project.

3. MINUTES

(a) Previous Meeting

The [minute of meeting of this Committee of 28 February 2008](#) was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

With reference to Article 5 therein, the Convener reminded the Committee that the Director of Neighbourhood Services had been instructed to bring back to the next meeting of this Committee, following full consultation with the young people involved, a Report on how a Skatepark in Montrose could be constructed on a more suitable site.

Unfortunately, due to the formal comments of Montrose Skatepark Committee only being received that afternoon, it had not been possible to complete the Report, however, he confirmed that a Report would be brought forward within this cycle of meetings.

Councillor Ellis, seconded by Councillor King, moved that the Report on Montrose Skatepark, as detailed in Article 5 of the minute of previous meeting, be brought to a special meeting of the Neighbourhood Services Committee to be held prior to the meeting of the Corporate Services Committee on 1 May 2008.

COUNCILLOR MILLAR, SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR FAIRWEATHER, MOVED AS AN AMENDMENT, THAT THE REPORT BE SUBMITTED TO THE MEETING OF THE FULL COUNCIL ON 15 MAY 2008.

On a vote being taken, members voted:-

For the motion:

Councillors Ellis, Evans, Bill Middleton, Morrison, Spink, King and West (7).

For the amendment:

Councillors Millar, Brown, Andrews, Fairweather, May, Nield, Salmond, Thomson (8).

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

(b) William Lamb Studio Advisory Committee

The minute of meeting of the William Lamb Studio Advisory Committee of 21 March 2008 was submitted and noted.

4. HOUSING CAPITAL AND PLANNED MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME – HRA BLOCK – 2007/2008

With reference to Article 9 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 28 February 2008, there was submitted [Report No 378/08](#) by the Director of Corporate Services setting out the actual spend on the HRA Capital and Planned Maintenance Programmes for the period to 29 February 2008, together with year end spend projections and updated funding proposals.

The Report advised that the actual spend achieved to 29 February 2008 on the Housing Capital Programme was £7.810 million which equated to 79.3% of the original budget of £9.850 million. Using this spend as a base and projecting forward, it was estimated that, by the end of the 2007/2008 financial year, a spend level of £9.778 million would be achieved. This would be approximately £72,000 (0.7%) below the original budget. This projection was based on actual spend levels for eleven months of the financial year and would be subject to review as the year progressed. The current level of estimated spend was consistent with the work programmes devised and being worked to by the Property Division to achieve the latest estimated spend on the capital programme for the year.

With regard to the 2007/2008 Planned Maintenance Programme, the level of spend on all elements for the period to 29 February 2008 amounted to £1.605 million, representing some 80% of the total available budget for the year of £2.005 million. The latest estimated spend for the year amounted to £2.144 million, some £139,000 above the original budget, and reasons for the projected overspend were contained in Table 4 of the Report. It had been intended that the Capital Programme underspend of £72,000 would offset to some extent the planned maintenance projected overspend of £139,000. This would no longer appear to be an option given the impact of the projected capital receipt shortfall. The planned maintenance projected overspend would therefore be met from HRA balances as previously approved in principle by this Committee on 22 November 2007 (Report No 1083/07 refers).

The Committee, for its interest, agreed:-

- (i) to note the figures presented for the Housing Capital and Planned Maintenance Programmes for the period to 29 February 2008;
- (ii) to note the capital receipt position for the period to 29 February 2008; and
- (iii) to note the projected year end capital expenditure and receipts positions and the proposed funding approach.

5. IMPROVEMENT/REPAIRS GRANT APPLICATIONS APPROVED UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

With reference to Article 10 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 28 February 2008, there was submitted and noted [Report No 379/08](#) by the Director of Infrastructure Services detailing grant applications in respect of improvement, repairs, window and gutter replacement and town centre refurbishments, all of which had been approved under delegated authority for the period 1 January to 29 February 2008.

6. SERIOUS ARREARS CASES – HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT TENANTS

With reference to Article 12 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 28 February 2008, there was submitted [Report No 380/08](#) by the Director of Neighbourhood Services regarding serious rent arrears cases in respect of ten Council house tenants as detailed in Appendix A of the Report.

The Committee agreed that all the cases detailed in Appendix A be monitored and approval be given to evict if regular payments to reduce the arrears were not received.

7. DISPOSAL OF GROUND AT 11A DISHLANDTOWN STREET, ARBROATH

There was submitted [Report No 382/08](#) by the Director of Neighbourhood Services seeking approval for the disposal of the Council's share in an area of ground at 11A Dishlandtown Street, Arbroath.

The Committee agreed, subject to Section 12 consent being received from Scottish Ministers and planning permission for change of use being granted:-

- (i) that the Council's share in an area of ground adjacent to 11A Dishlandtown Street, Arbroath be sold to the applicants of 11A Dishlandtown Street, Arbroath for the sum of £800 on appropriate terms and conditions;
- (ii) that the common rights to the area of ground currently held by the proprietor of number 11 Anderson Street be acquired by the owners of 11A Dishlandtown Street, in accordance with the suspensive condition in the missive; and
- (iii) that the purchaser be responsible for meeting all the Council's legal and survey costs.

8. DISPOSAL OF PARK HOMES

With reference to Article 15 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 28 February 2008, there was submitted [Report No 361/08](#) by the Director of Neighbourhood Services relating to the loan of three Park Homes in Kirriemuir to Strathmore Rugby Club, Forfar.

The Report indicated that the Strathmore Rugby Club had asked the Housing Division for a loan of three of the temporary housing units known as Park Homes, currently sited at Knowehead, Kirriemuir on a similar basis to those loaned to the Montrose Air Station Heritage Centre. These would be used to provide additional facilities for the large number of younger members (currently 150) of both sexes currently attending the Rugby Club and these units would assist in coping with the demand. They would also provide space for physiotherapy and injury treatment rooms. As the Club was prepared to organise the uplift, transport and relocation of these units at their expense, there would be no cost to the Council.

Having heard a number of members welcome the Report, the Committee agreed, subject to Section 12 Consent being received from Scottish Ministers:-

- (i) that three Park Homes from the site at Knowehead, Kirriemuir be lent on a long-term basis, to Strathmore Rugby Club, Forfar to assist in providing changing facilities for younger players; and
- (ii) that Strathmore Rugby Club be wholly responsible for uplifting, transporting and obtaining all necessary consents for their re-use elsewhere, at no cost to the Council.

9. REVOCATION OF CLOSING ORDER

There was submitted [Report No 383/08](#) by the Director of Infrastructure Services regarding the revocation of a Closing Order made by Angus District Council on 9 February 1989.

The Committee agreed that the Closing Order in respect of Ivy Cottage, Balnamoon, Brechin be revoked, following works having been undertaken to bring the property up to the tolerable standard as described in the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987.

10. DRAFT SCOTTISH PLANNING POLICY: SPP3 - PLANNING FOR HOUSING

With reference to Article 9 of the minute of meeting of the Infrastructure Services Committee of 4 March 2008, there was submitted [Joint Report No 255/08](#) by the Director of Infrastructure Services and the Director of Neighbourhood Services detailing a suggested response to the draft Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) 3: Planning for Housing, with the period of consultation being to 31 March 2008.

The Report concluded that the review of SPP3: Planning for Housing was to be generally welcomed as it updated and strengthened a range of existing land use planning policy relating to the provision of housing, including the establishment of a new framework to assess and identify housing requirements across housing market areas. It also continued to recognise and support the critical role of the land use planning system, and development planning in particular, and strengthened the need for joint working within and between Councils and a range of stakeholders in delivering a range of good quality affordable housing at the right location for residents of Scotland. The introduction of key requirements such as a Strategic Housing Need and Market Area Assessment and Local Housing Strategies had an input into the new style development plan and would require a review of resources to local authority planning and housing services.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed to note the proposals put forward by the Scottish Government in respect of SPP 3 - Planning for Housing and the suggested response to the consultation paper, a copy of which was appended to the Report.

11. A LOW CARBON STRATEGY FOR SCOTLAND

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of the Infrastructure Services Committee of 4 March 2008, there was submitted [Report No 250/08](#) by the Director of Infrastructure Services advising the Committee that, in August 2007, the Scottish Government had appointed an expert panel to look at ways of enhancing the energy performance of buildings in Scotland and thereby reducing carbon emissions. The Report also detailed the background to the Panel's Report, the Panel's findings, the potential for a significant increase in energy standards to all buildings and the potential for a significant increase in the workload of the Building Standards Section of the Council.

The Report concluded that the Panel's Report set a challenge for all parties involved in the procurement of buildings that was demanding and realistic, within a time frame which was both essential and achievable. The nine workstreams identified in the Report would impact considerably on the work of local authorities but would ensure that a meaningful reduction in carbon emissions would follow which would, hopefully, impact on reducing the effects of climate change.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed to note the contents of the Report entitled "A Low Carbon Building Standards Strategy for Scotland".

12. ALTERATIONS TO HOMELESS PERSONS UNIT, QUEEN'S CLOSE, 113 HIGH STREET, MONTROSE - TENDER REPORT

With reference to Article 3 of the minute of the special meeting of this Committee of 12 February 2008, there was submitted [Report No 384/08](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising the Committee on tenders received for alterations to the Homeless Persons Unit, Queen's Close, 113 High Street, Montrose.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve the acceptance of the lowest tender for the alterations to the Homeless Persons Unit, Queen's Close, 113 High Street, Montrose from R S Hill, Joiners and Buildings Contractors, Forfar in the amount of £299,822.74;
- (ii) to approve the estimated total cost of £355,791 (at outturn prices);
- (iii) to note that an allowance of £200,000 for this project was contained in the HRA Financial Plan 2007/2011 approved by the Special Neighbourhood Services Committee on 12 February 2008 (Report No 169/08 refers);
- (iv) to note that the HRA Capital Programme would be adjusted at its next review to accommodate an increase of £155,791 in the allowance for this project to meet the estimated total cost of £355,791 and to reflect the anticipated phasing of the expenditure as detailed at Section 6 of the Report; and
- (v) to note the revenue implications included in Section 5 of the Report.

13. **LOADING SHOVEL - VEHICLE TENDER**

There was submitted amended [Report No 385/08](#) by the Director of Neighbourhood Services seeking approval to purchase a tracked loading shovel, for replacement, within the Capital Budget Programme for 2008/2009.

The Report indicated that two options for the replacement of the loading shovel were available, a "like for like" wheeled loader or alternatively a tracked loading shovel. As a result of an overturning incident at the landfill site involving the existing wheeled loader the suitability of using this type of equipment on the waste mass at the landfill site had been investigated. The outcome showed, that while there was not any direct advice against using a wheeled loader in this environment, virtually all landfill site operators used a tracked loading shovel to spread the waste material and cover material. This was in the main due to the additional stability afforded by a tracked machine.

A list of tenders received for the two options for a replacement loading shovel were detailed in the Report, together with a tender and summarised financial analysis.

Having noted the corrections to full life costs in Appendix C, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to approve the acceptance of the tender for the provision of a replacement loading shovel at Restenneth Landfill site for the financial year 2008/2009 from Finning (UK) Ltd., Hamilton in the amount of £121,000.

14. **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

The Committee resolved, in terms of Standing Order 27(2) that the public and press be excluded during consideration of the following items, so as to avoid the possible disclosure of information which was exempt in terms of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, paragraphs 3, 4 and 6.

15. **ADAPTATION AND EXTENSION TO HOUSE IN KNOWEHEAD CRESCENT, KIRRIEMUIR**

There was submitted [Report No 386/08](#) by the Director of Neighbourhood Services seeking approval to carry out adaptations and an extension of an existing Council house to accommodate a homeless family, that included children with disabilities.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to approve the extension and adaptation of the property for the tenant, in order to discharge the Council's homelessness function under the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 as amended.

16. **IMPROVEMENT/ADAPTATIONS GRANT APPLICATIONS APPROVED UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

With reference to Article 5 above, there was submitted [Report No 387/08](#) by the Director of Infrastructure Services detailing grant applications in respect of improvements and adaptations, all of which had been approved under delegated authority, for the period 1 January to 29 February 2008 in respect of vulnerable people.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the Report.