

# ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of the BI-ANNUAL MEETING of **REPRESENTATIVES of ANGUS COUNCIL with REPRESENTATIVES of COMMUNITY COUNCILS** held in the Canmore Room, Municipal Buildings, Forfar on Wednesday 10 June 2009 at 7.30 pm.

Provost Ruth Leslie Melville MBE in the Chair.

## 1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Provost Leslie Melville welcomed those present to the meeting which reflected a healthy representation of Community Councils in Angus.

She reminded all concerned of the importance of the Bi-Annual meetings which was a two way process of exchanging views on matters of general concern to Community Councils in addition to affording an opportunity to representatives of Angus Council to report on various issues.

## 2. LONG SERVICE AWARD

In recognition of her outstanding contribution as a Community Councillor who had achieved twenty years service, Provost Leslie Melville presented a scroll and a quaich to Patricia Millar of Arbroath Community Council.

Mrs Millar had contributed to the Arbroath Community in many ways being the current Vice-Chairman of the Arbroath and Area Partnership, a Trustee of the Arbroath Ahead Charitable Trust, a community representative on the Scottish Health Council, a volunteer member of the Care Commission and Chair of Angus Residents United Group.

*At this stage Councillor Myles took the chair.*

## 3. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minute of the Bi-Annual meeting of 10 December 2008 was submitted and approved as a correct record.

## 4. DRAFT REVISED SCHEME OF ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNITY COUNCILS

Bill Strachan, Senior Service Manager, Chief Executive's Department gave a presentation on the current position of the draft revised scheme of establishment of Community Councils.

The formal notice of the draft scheme was due to be published on Friday 12 June 2009 and following a twelve week consultation period a report would be submitted to Angus Council thereafter it was hoped to hold Community Council elections in November 2009.

Mr Strachan explained the background to the revised scheme and detailed the new areas of responsibility.

He stressed that the proposed scheme while following the national model, reflected local Angus needs and he highlighted the following points:-

- A minimum number of six meetings plus one AGM would require to be held each year.
- No one person would hold any more one office bearer position
- The financial year of Community Councils would now be in line with Angus Council being 1 April to 31 March each year. Minutes of meetings would require to be submitted to Angus Council and published within fourteen days of the meeting
- Equalities legislation required to be adhered to.

In response to a question on boundaries, Mr Strachan advised that while views on the boundaries for Community Councils would be considered sympathetically, it was vital that boundaries for Community Councils reflected local communities.

Having heard Provost Leslie Melville, Mr Strachan undertook to look at the question of Area Partnerships who in some cases overlapped the work of Community Councils.

Following some further questions, Mr Strachan was thanked for his informative presentation.

## **5. COMPUTERS FOR COMMUNITY COUNCILS**

It was noted that Angus Council had now brokered agreements with suppliers through Procurement Scotland for fixed prices for computers for Community Councils, and had provided details of the authorised hardware specification software.

Community Councils were advised that in order to purchase this equipment, they should contact their preferred supplier and state that they were to be purchasing equipment as part of Angus Council's Computer for Community Councils Scheme.

An agreement would be issued to all Community Councils in the near future covering issues such as:-

- Conditions of usage
- Computer specification
- Disposal of any existing Council equipment

On receipt of the completed agreement, Community Councils would be issued with the relevant funds, up-to a maximum of £1,000 in order to purchase computer equipment.

In response to a question as to the possibility of groups of local resident groups purchasing second hand computers, Mr Strachan advised that he would investigate this but stressed that there could be problems with regard to confidential information held on hardware and matters concerning the Council's licence.

## **6. MODERNISING PLANNING**

Iain Mitchell, Senior Service Manager, Planning and Transport Department gave a detailed presentation on the current planning reforms and emphasised the significant changes which would be brought about by the Planning etc Scotland Act 2006.

These reforms, which were intended to speed up the whole planning process, were far reaching and notwithstanding some reservations expressed by Community Councillors, Mr Mitchell stressed a balanced view was required by all involved in the process.

In response to a question, Mr Mitchell advised that he would be happy to arrange for appropriate training for members of Community Councils on the new legislation and following some further questions, Mr Mitchell was thanked for his informative presentation.

## **7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **(a) Publication of Notices**

In response to a question, Mr Strachan advised that any Community Council who did not have a facility to publish their minutes locally, might make application in terms of the Council's Community Grant Scheme.

### **(b) Insurance Premiums**

It was noted that the Council's Insurance Section had been asked to compare another insurance quote for Community Councils which was less expensive than the £79.61 requested by Zurich, although it was stressed that the latest quote might not include the same cover given by Zurich.

**(c) Data Protection**

Mr Strachan reminded Community Councils that so far as data protection was concerned, Community Councils were independent bodies and as such each required to meet the cost of the £35.00 registration fee in terms of the Data Protection Act 1998. Angus Council had agreed to reimburse Community Councils this cost on receipt of proof of registration.

**(d) General**

Councillor John Whyte of Angus Council expressed his sincere thanks to all Community Councillors and gave an example of the extremely useful role of Community Councils when involved in a recent issue.

**8. CLOSE**

Provost Leslie Melville and Councillor Myles again expressed their sincere thanks to everyone for their attendance and for the valuable and interesting contributions made by the Community Councillors and by the speakers.