

## ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the **COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Tuesday 29 September 2015 at 2.00 pm.

**Present:** Councillors DONALD MORRISON, ROB MURRAY, BRIAN BOYD, BILL DUFF, DAVID FAIRWEATHER, CRAIG FOTHERINGHAM, PAUL VALENTINE, JIM HOUSTON, DAVID MAY, IAN MCLAREN, GLENNIS MIDDLETON, LYNNE DEVINE, MARTYN GEDDES and MARK SALMOND.

Councillor MORRISON, Convener, in the Chair.

### 1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Jeanette Gaul, Iain Gaul, Helen Oswald and Ronnie Proctor MBE with Councillors Rob Murray, Paul Valentine, Lynne Devine and Martyn Geddes substituting, respectively. An apology for absence was also intimated on behalf of Councillor Ewan Smith.

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

### 3. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minute of meeting of this Committee of 18 August 2015 was submitted, approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

### 4. INFORMATION REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 19 AUGUST TO 29 SEPTEMBER 2015

With reference to Article 4 of the minute of meeting of this Committee on 18 August 2015, there was submitted and noted Report No 372/15 by the Strategic Director – Communities, together with its five schedules, providing information to members with regard to services delivered in the Communities Directorate for the relevant period.

### 5. HOUSING CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT 2015/2016

With reference to Article 26 of the minute of meeting of this Committee on 18 August 2015, there was submitted Report No 373/15 by the Head of Planning and Place, setting out the actual capital spend to 31 August 2015, together with projected outturns for the year to 31 March 2016 and any required updated capital funding proposals.

The Report advised that the actual spend achieved to 31 August 2015 on the Housing Capital Programme was £1,229,000, equating to 17% of the monitoring budget of £7,216,000. The Report also provided commentary on the significant Capital Budget Monitoring issues and updates on the Capital Receipts and Capital Funding positions for 2015/2016, with the financial implications being summarised in Table 5 of the Report.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to note the projected year end positions on Capital Expenditure, and the indicative funding proposals for the programme.

### 6. SCRUTINY PANEL REVIEWS - UPDATE

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of the Scrutiny and Audit Committee of 25 August 2015, there was submitted Joint Report No 319/15 by the Strategic Director – Communities and the Service Manager – Governance and Consultancy, presenting updates on the action plans from the 2013/2014 Scrutiny Panel Reviews, for review and challenge. The Report related to actions from the 2013/2014 Scrutiny Reviews in relation to Progress Towards Zero Waste; and Roads Maintenance. There had been slippage in completing the

actions, and revised completion dates, where appropriate, were detailed within the Appendices to the Report.

The Committee, for its interest agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the updated action plans;
- (ii) to approve the proposed change in response to recommendation 1 of the Zero Waste Review; and
- (iii) to note the revised completion dates.

## **7. PARKS MAINTENANCE PLANT AND EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME FOR 2015-2016**

With reference to Article 13 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 19 August 2014, there was submitted Report No 374/15 by the Strategic Director – Communities, seeking approval for the purchase of plant and equipment required for the 2015/2016 Parks Maintenance Capital Replacement Programme.

The Replacement Programme was prioritised to ensure that equipment scheduled for replacement represented the priority items required to maintain service provision, and also demonstrated a continued commitment to provide equipment fit for purpose, safe to use and fully compliant with current provision and use of Work Equipment Regulations, as well as all relevant legislation and regulations within the EU and HSE guidance on exposure to hand arm vibration.

The Report set out the sourcing strategy, the terms proposed and procurement procedure, as well as a contract evaluation and award basis, and also included a detailed description of the equipment intended to be purchased.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve the estimated total cost of £319,000 for the purchase of grounds maintenance plant and equipment required for the 2015/2016 capital replacement programme;
- (ii) to authorise the Strategic Director – Communities to procure grounds maintenance plant and equipment on the basis set out in the Report; and
- (iii) to note the financial implications included in section 5 of the Report.

## **8. CHARRETTE PROGRAMME UPDATE**

With reference to Article 11 of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 18 June 2015, there was submitted Report No 375/15 by the Head of Planning and Place, providing an update to members on progress in implementing actions arising from the Brechin and Carnoustie charrettes; and detailing plans for the roll out of charrettes in the current financial year.

The Report advised that the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 would require the production of a new Local Outcome Improvement Plan to replace the current Single Outcome Agreement, and that this would require to include responsive locality plans for each of the four Angus Localities. These Locality Plans would be informed by Locality Planning events and the undertaking of charrettes. It was essential that, to maintain the engagement of local communities which had participated in charrettes, there be follow-up engagement events and the development of appropriate communication strategies, to provide members of the public and partner agencies with regular updates.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the progress made in relation to the Brechin and Carnoustie charrettes;
- (ii) to note the progress made in relation to procurement for the delivery of charrettes in Forfar, Arbroath and Montrose;

- (iii) to approve the amended programme for the delivery of charrettes in the current financial year; and
- (iv) to request a further progress report on the charrettes programme and related action in summer 2016.

## **9. AFFORDABLE HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT**

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of the Neighbourhood Services Committee of 23 May 2013, there was submitted Report No 376/15 by the Head of Planning and Place, updating members on the operation of the Affordable Housing Revenue Account (AHRA) and the planned use of resources to increase the supply of affordable housing in Angus.

The Report advised that opportunities to purchase land had been limited and consequently, AHRA funding had been prioritised towards projects which increased the supply of affordable housing in Angus. In particular, funding had been used where it had enabled the Council to maximise the use of HRA Capital Resources and Affordable Housing Supply Programme monies. It was proposed therefore that the current approach to AHRA continued, and that funding was directed at projects which increased the supply of affordable housing within the Council areas.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve the direction of AHRA reserves towards projects which increased the supply of affordable housing across Angus;
- (ii) to approve contributions towards two staffing posts aimed at increasing the supply of affordable housing in Angus as set out in section 5 of the Report; and
- (iii) to note that approval to direct AHRA funding to future individual projects would be sought as appropriate, and that future updates on the use of AHRA reserves would be received through the Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) approval process.

## **10. HOME SAFETY EQUIPMENT FOR HRA TENANTS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENTS**

There was submitted Report No 377/15 by the Head of Planning and Place, highlighting concerns at a number of incidents across the country where householders with hearing impairments were unaware of the activation of fire alarms in their homes. A review of the current fire alarm equipment provision for Housing Revenue Account (HRA) tenants had recently been undertaken, following which various proposals had been formulated for improvements.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve the adoption of home safety equipment linked to pager systems for HRA tenants with hearing impairments;
- (ii) to approve the adoption of Carbon Monoxide detectors with improved visual alerts;
- (iii) to approve to the screening of new tenants for hearing impairments during the housing application process; and
- (iv) to approve the provision of home safety equipment linked to a pager system for all 23 tenants with hearing impairments, in partnership with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

## **11. CORE PATHS PLAN – PROGRAMME OF WORKS**

With reference to Article 21 of the minute of meeting of the Infrastructure Services Committee of 14 June 2012, there was submitted Report No 378/15 by the Head of Planning and Place, advising members on progress achieved with the programme of improvements to core paths.

The three year programme of improvements to core paths, agreed in 2012, comprised provision of sign posting; minor works such as vegetation clearance or installation of gates; and minor improvements to drainage and paths surfaces. The programme of works had taken considerably longer than initially anticipated due to various factors including staffing constraints, the geographic spread of the works involved and the need to consult, and in many cases, obtain agreement from a large number of land owners. 50 core paths had been signposted and improved out of the 225 originally targeted for this initiative, and it was proposed that the remaining works be reprogrammed over a further four years, ending in financial year 2018/2019. The phasing of the project was detailed in the Report.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note progress with the programme of improvements to core paths; and
- (ii) to approve the amended timescales for the delivery of the improvement programme.

## **12. PROPOSED TRAFFIC CALMING, POPLAR DRIVE, BALLUMBIE CASTLE ESTATE: RESPONSE TO PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

With reference to Article 10 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 14 April 2015, there was submitted Report No 379/15 by the Head of Technical and Property Services, setting out the results of the public consultation process regarding the proposed traffic calming installation on Poplar Drive, Ballumbie Castle Estate.

Consultation documents had been issued to local residents and the questionnaire was also available for completion on line via the Council's website. Of the 11 completed responses received by the closing date of 10 July 2015, seven had agreed and four had disagreed with the proposed traffic calming measures. Comments provided through the returned questionnaires were made available to members in the Information Hub.

Having heard from Councillors Murray and Fotheringham on the perceived need for a further traffic calming cushion on Silver Birch Drive, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the comments received during the consultation process regarding the proposed traffic calming installation on Poplar Drive, Ballumbie Castle Estate;
- (ii) to note the range of opinions expressed by those who had responded to the consultation;
- (iii) to approve the provision of traffic calming measures on Poplar Drive, Ballumbie Castle Estate;
- (iv) to instruct the Head of Technical and Property Services to proceed with the provision of traffic calming measures on Poplar Drive, Ballumbie Castle Estate as detailed in the Report;
- (v) additionally, to instruct the Head of Technical and Property Services to investigate a further traffic calming cushion on Silver Birch Drive and to progress the consultation on the additional traffic calming measure prior to any works being started on the ground; and
- (vi) that the Head of Technical and Property Services bring a further Report to this Committee as soon as possible.

## **13. CARBON REDUCTION COMMITMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2014-2015**

With reference to Article 13 of the minute of meeting of this Committee on 30 September 2014, there was submitted Report No 380/15 by the Head of Technical and Property Services, advising members of the costs for the purchase of carbon allowances for 2014-2015, in compliance with the Climate Reduction Commitment (CRC) Energy Efficiency Order 2010, and based on the reportable consumption and subsequent carbon dioxide emissions produced by Angus Council.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note that this annual report required to be accessible to members of the public; and
- (ii) to note the content of the annual report.

#### **14. UPDATE OF NEW BUILD ALLOCATIONS POLICY**

With reference to Article 10 of the minute of meeting of the Neighbourhood Service Committee of 6 October 2011, there was submitted Report No 381/15 by the Head of Planning and Place, advising members that the existing New Build Allocation Policy had, in practice, proved to be somewhat restrictive in allowing officers to meet the housing needs of more complex households. It proposed a more flexible approach towards allocations to non-tenants and clarified the position in relation to housing-related debt and anti-social behaviour as part of the Council's on-going pro-active work to contribute to the integration of health and social care services in Angus.

The Committee agreed to approve the revised new build allocations policy attached to the Report as Appendix 1.

#### **15. SERVITUDE RIGHT OF ACCESS AT 48 BLOOMFIELD ROAD, ARBROATH**

There was submitted Report No 382/15 by the Head of Planning and Place, relating to a request for a servitude right of access at Bloomfield Road, Arbroath, and setting out the circumstances surrounding this request.

The Committee agreed to grant a servitude right of access over an area of ground adjacent to 48 Bloomfield Road, Arbroath to the owner of that property on appropriate terms and conditions, subject to the purchaser meeting all costs in connection with the servitude.

#### **16. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

The Committee resolved in terms of Standing Order 28(2) that the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item, so as to avoid the possible disclosure of information which was exempt in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, Part 1, Schedule 7A, paragraph 2.

#### **17. SURPLUS PROPERTY - FORFAR**

There was submitted Report No 383/15 by the Head of Technical and Property Services regarding a property in Forfar.

The Committee agreed that the property at the location described in the Report be declared surplus to the requirements of the Council and disposed of on the open market.

*In accordance with the provisions of Standing Order 16(11)(ii) Councillor Middleton requested that her dissent be recorded from the foregoing decision.*