

# ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the **COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Tuesday, 13 August 2019, at 2.00 pm.

**Present:** Councillors MARK SALMOND, TOMMY STEWART, JULIE BELL, KENNY BRAES, DAVID CHEAPE, BRADEN DAVY, LYNNE DEVINE, BILL DUFF, BRENDA DURNO, CRAIG FOTHERINGHAM, DAVID LUMGAIR, IAN MCLAREN, RICHARD MOORE, RONNIE PROCTOR MBE, and LOIS SPEED.

Councillor SALMOND, Convener, in the Chair.

## 1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTIONS

There were no apologies intimated.

## 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

## 3. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minute of meeting of this Committee of 28 May 2019 was submitted, approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

## 4. INFORMATION NOTE

With reference to Article 5 (ii) of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 20 June 2019, on memorial alternatives to the provision of benches, the Committee noted that a policy position paper was in course of preparation, and would be submitted to this Committee at its next meeting.

## 5. INFORMATION REPORTS FOR THE PERIOD 29 MAY to 13 AUGUST 2019

With reference to Article 4 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 28 May 2019, there were submitted and noted the following:-

- (a) Report No 228/19 by the Director of Communities with one Schedule, namely Arrears Update- Housing Revenue Account. The Service Leader – Housing responded to questions from Councillors Stewart, Cheape, Proctor and Davy. The Committee also heard from Councillor Bell.
- (b) Report No 229/19 by the Director of Infrastructure with one Schedule, providing information to members with regard to services covered by the Northern Collaboration Joint Committee from May 2018 to May 2019.

## 6. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT FINANCIAL PLAN 2019-23

With reference to Article 5 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 25 September 2018, there was submitted Report No 230/19 by the Director of Communities presenting the updated 2019/23 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Financial Plan, incorporating the 2019/20 Capital Monitoring Budget.

The 2019/20 Capital Monitoring Budget amounted to £18,535,000, while the provisional 2019/20 HRA Financial Plan amounted to £24,502,000, taking account of the estimated resources available.

The Report commented on significant movement between provisional and final versions of the 2019/20 HRA Financial Plan on an exception basis under the headings of New Build; Heating Installation; Energy Saving; Kitchens; and Bathrooms. Members heard that customers were having to wait longer for completion of installation works for various reasons including the requirement to improve energy efficacy ahead of installing electric heating. Although the

Council still ran a gas replacement programme, in future, climate change considerations would bring this to an end and future installation would be all-electric.

Particular mention was made of the former Flicks Night Club premises at 79/81 High Street, Brechin which had been acquired at auction by a private purchaser. Council Braes expressed the hope that this prominent site in the City would be improved by its new owner and indicated that he would be prepared to offer whatever assistance he could to help achieve this.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note that the 2018/19 actual position on the HRA Financial Plan as at 31 March 2019 was submitted to the meeting of Angus Council on 20 June 2019, Report No 215/19 (paragraphs 4.32-4.36 inclusive and Appendix D), and Article 9 of the minute of Angus Council refers;
- (ii) to approve the contents of the updated 2019/20 HRA Financial Plan as part of the Financial Plan 2019-23, attached at Appendix 1;
- (iii) to note that the 2019/20 HRA Financial Plan represented the HRA's approved budget for capital monitoring purposes; and
- (iv) to note the provisional budget for the 2020/21 – 2022/23 HRA Financial Plan.

## **7. BELOW TOLERABLE STANDARD STRATEGY 2019-24**

There was submitted Report No 231/19 by the Director of Communities, seeking approval to publish the Below Tolerable Standard (BTS) Strategy 2019-24.

The Tolerable Standard was the basic level of repair which a property must meet to be fit for a person to inhabit. The basic level of repair was measured against 12 criteria. Failure against any of these rendered a property below tolerable standard and not acceptable as living accommodation.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve the BTS Strategy 2019-24 attached at Appendix 1 to the Report; and
- (ii) to delegate authority to the Service Leader (Housing) for the ongoing review and development of the BTS Strategy, with annual updates in line with the Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2017-22.

## **8. PROPOSAL TO DESIGNATE CENTENARY FIELDS COMMEMORATING WORLD WAR ONE**

There was submitted Report No 232/19 by the Director of Communities regarding an Angus contribution to a nationwide initiative led by Fields in Trust in conjunction with the British Legion and Poppy Scotland to provide legal protection to specific parks in commemoration of those who lost their lives in World War 1. The protected sites were to be designated Centenary Fields.

Having heard the Convener, and Councillors Lumgair, Braes and Moore, as local members, the Committee agreed to defer consideration of this matter to the meeting of Angus Council on 5 September to allow for consultation with Letham Community Council and Letham Feuars.

## **9. ESTABLISHMENT OF AN EMPTY HOMES GRANT FUND**

There was submitted Report No 233/19 by the Director of Communities seeking approval to implement an Empty Homes Grant Fund. The Council had been actively working with the Scottish Empty Homes Partnership since 2012 to develop services aimed at bringing Private Sector Empty Homes back into use, and indeed the Angus Local Housing Strategy committed to increasing the supply of Affordable Housing including the bringing of empty properties back into use and helping to ensure that people could access appropriate housing options and related services to help meet their needs.

The Report set out the parameters of an Empty Homes Grant Fund as aiming to assist Empty Homes owners to bring their property back into use, and to enable those who had contacted the Housing Service to explore their housing options to rent the homes at an affordable rate; and also outlined the main grant conditions.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to delegate authority to the Service Leader (Housing) to approve individual grant applications; and
- (ii) to approve the re-allocation of £100,000 funding previously set aside for the Angus Empty Homes Loan Fund as per Report No 217/16.

#### **10. PARKS AND BURIAL GROUNDS PLANT AND EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME 2019/2020**

With reference to Article 11 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 13 November 2018, there was submitted Report No 234/19 by the Director of Communities, seeking approval of the recommendations to purchase plant and equipment required for the 2019/2020 Parks and Burial Grounds Capital Replacement Programme.

The Council's Grounds Maintenance Machinery Replacement Programme, prioritised to ensure that equipment scheduled for replacements – as set out in Section 5 of the Report – represented the priority items required to maintain service provision and allow the Grounds Maintenance Section to continue to be competitive in the commercial market servicing external contracts which generated a significant income to the Council. Equipment provided would be fit for purpose, safe for use and fully compliant with all relevant legislative and regulatory provisions within EU and HSE guidance, enabling the Section to meet current health and safety obligations and protect the Council's workforce.

The equipment would be acquired through the Collaborative Framework Agreement with the Council's Tayside Procurement Consortium Partners which had proved to provide value for money.

Councillors Cheape suggested that details of actual spend and projected spend comparisons would be useful in such reports in the future.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve the estimated total cost of £156,000 for the purchase of grounds maintenance plant and equipment required for the 2019/20 Capital Replacement Programme;
- (ii) to authorise officers to procure grounds maintenance plant and equipment on the basis set out in this Report; and
- (iii) to note the financial implications included in Section 5 of the Report.

#### **11. NEW ARRANGEMENT TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY GROUPS**

With reference to Article 5(iii) of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 20 June 2019, there was submitted Report No 235/19 requesting the Committee consider the introduction of new measures to support community groups involved in voluntary litter picks and removal of fly-tipping within Angus.

The Report reflected upon the current arrangements whereby groups routinely involved in such activities generally had developed relationships with Council officers over many years. Whilst communications generally worked well it was on an informal basis and relied on a certain level of awareness from community groups about what was expected from them in terms of disposing of any waste generated from their activities. Recent changes to recycling centres, including the removal of general waste from the four smaller centres and increased emphasis on recycling at the three other centres, had introduced a new dynamic.

It was considered that, in the circumstances, the introduction of a Letter of Comfort would offer the best solution, and could be emailed to Groups upon request, to be produced by the Group to allow access to any of the Council's Recycling Centres, subject to the usual site rules.

The Committee agreed to the introduction of the Letter of Comfort for community groups who organised voluntary litter picks and similar activities within Angus, as detailed in the Report.

## **12. ANGUS LOCAL ACCESS FORUM - MEMBERSHIP UPDATE**

With reference to Article 13 of the minute of previous meeting of this Committee, there was submitted Report No 236/19 by the Director of Communities advising of a change to the membership to the Angus Local Access Forum, and seeking approval for the appointment of a new representative to the Forum.

In terms of Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 the Forum, established and appointed by each local authority, had responsibility for advising the local authority and other person or body consulting the forum on matters relating to the exercise of access rights, the existence of and delineation of rights of way or the drawing up and adoption of a plan for a system of core paths.

The Committee agreed to the appointment of Mairi Simms as a Community Representative.

## **13. TRAILL DRIVE, MONTROSE – PROPOSED TRAFFIC CALMING: RESPONSE TO PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

With reference to Article 9 of the minute of meeting of this Committee on 15 January 2019, there was submitted Report No 237/19 by the Director of Infrastructure, presenting results of the public consultation process regarding the proposed introduction of additional traffic calming measures on Traill Drive, Montrose.

Councillor Stewart welcomed the reports and thanked officers for the extensive consultations. He noted that the majority of responses welcomed the proposals although he and colleagues had been approached by constituents seeking a further extension to the speed limit and an additional speed hump west of Traill Drive.

COUNCILLOR STEWART, SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR SALMOND, MOVED THAT THE COMMITTEE APPROVE THE TERMS OF THE REPORT AND THAT FULL WIDTH SPEED HUMPS, AS DETAILED IN APPENDIX 6, BE INSTALLED; THAT CONSULTATION BE UNDERTAKEN ON EXTENDING THE EXISTING 20MPH SPEED LIMIT TOWARDS WHINFIELD ROAD WITH THE EXACT EXTENT TO BE DETERMINED BY THE DIRECTOR OF INFRASTRUCTURE; AND THAT CONSULTATION BE UNDERTAKEN ON A FURTHER TRAFFIC CALMING HUMP IN THIS EXTENDED SECTION.

Councillor Duff, seconded by Councillor Devine, moved as an amendment, that the Committee agree:-

- (i) not to support recommendations (i) to (v) of the Report; and
- (ii) to support recommendations (vii) and (viii) as proposed by Councillor Stewart.

On a vote being taken, the members voted:-

For the motion:-

Councillors Salmond, Stewart, Davy, Fotheringham, Lumgair, McLaren, Moore, Proctor and Speed (9).

For the amendment:-

Councillors Bell, Braes, Devine, Duff and Durno (5).

No vote: Councillor Cheape (1).

The motion was declared carried and the Committee resolved accordingly.

#### **14. WINTER SERVICE POLICY AND PROVISION FOR 2019/20**

With reference to Article 4 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 14 August 2018, there was submitted Report No 238/19 by the Director of Infrastructure, setting out the proposed Service Policy for the coming winter, and detailing the proposed service provision for preventative treatment – A Code of Practice and snow clearing during the 2019/20 winter period, together with contingency arrangements to cater for extreme conditions prevailing, in conjunction with the operational issues detailed in the Operational Details, and as recommended by *Well Managed Highway Infrastructure – A Code of Practice*.

In response to a question from Councillor Moore, the Director agreed to contact the Councillor following the meeting to clarify the position regarding the gritting of pavements in Letham in terms of the Winter Policy.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve the policy for the Winter Service during the forthcoming winter as stated in Appendix 1 to the Report;
- (ii) to note the Operational Details in Appendix 2 to the Report;
- (iii) to note the arrangements proposed to meet the costs of the Winter Service during 2019/20 as set out in the Report;
- (iv) to delegate authority to the Service Leader - Roads and Transportation to increase temporarily the level of service as proposed in the Report, in extreme conditions;
- (v) to delegate authority to the Service Leader - Roads and Transportation to deviate from the treatment decision matrix and introduce salt conservation techniques as proposed in the Report if difficulties were experienced or anticipated in the obtaining sufficient salt supplies; and
- (vi) that the Council continue with the previously adopted spread rates as set out in the Report.

#### **15. AMENDMENTS TO EXISTING SPEED LIMITS – ENTRANCES TO KIRRIEMUIR, NEWTYLE AND REDFORD**

There was submitted Report No 239/19 by the Director of Infrastructure, (1) informing the Committee of concerns raised over speeding on the A928 northbound approach into Kirriemuir; the C31 westbound approach into Kirriemuir; the B954 north and southbound approaches into Newtyle; the C16 east and westbound approaches into Newtyle; and the B961 northbound approach into Redford, and (2) requesting to reduce the speed limits. The Report detailed the findings of the engineering investigations carried out.

Having heard Councillor Bell who sought clarification with the regard to the position of Newtyle Railway Cutting, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the concerns of local residents;
- (ii) to note the findings of the engineering investigations carried out to assess the concerns;
- (iii) to implement the amendment to the existing speed limit on the A928 Glamis Road, Kirriemuir;
- (iv) to implement the amendment to the existing speed limit on the C31 Shielhill Road, Kirriemuir;
- (v) to implement the amendments to the existing speed limit on the B954 Dundee Road, Newtyle;
- (vi) to implement the amendment to the existing speed limit on the C16 Coupar Angus Road, Newtyle;

- (vii) to implement the amendment to the existing speed limit on the C16 North Street, Newtyle, with the extent of the speed limit to be determined by the Director of Infrastructure, after consultation with the Community Council with the potential to include the Newtyle railway cutting within the limit; and
- (viii) to implement the amendment to the existing speed limit on the B961 at Redford.

**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 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 8 (Item 17) and 8, 9 and 10 (Item 18).

**17. TERM CONTRACTS FOR A RESPONSIVE REPAIRS AND CHANGE TO TENANCY SERVICE TO COUNCIL HOUSING 2020 TO 2023 – PROCUREMENT AUTHORITY APPROVAL REQUEST**

There was submitted Report No 240/19 by the Director of Infrastructure, seeking authority for a proposed procurement where the maximum value of the contract was above the Chief Officer's delegated authority limit.

The Committee agreed to approve the recommendations, as detailed in the Report.

**18. ENERGY SAVING EESSH (ENERGY EFFICIENCY STANDARD SOCIAL HOUSING) PROGRAMME 2018/19 TO 2019/2020 – UPDATE**

There was submitted Report No 259/19 by the Director of Infrastructure, updating the Committee on progress in procuring the above programme, and seeking authority to proceed.

The Committee agreed to approve the recommendations, as detailed in the Report.