

ANGUS COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM NO 3(ii)(q)

MINUTE of MEETING of the **SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE** hosted at Angus House, Orchardbank Business Park, Forfar on Tuesday 28 April 2020 at 2.00 pm.

Present: Councillors DAVID FAIRWEATHER, LYNNE DEVINE, BILL DUFF, ANGUS MACMILLAN DOUGLAS OBE, RICHARD MOORE, MARK SALMOND and DEREK WANN.

Councillor FAIRWEATHER, Convener, in the Chair.

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies intimated.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Fairweather declared an interest in Item 6, Report No 133/20, as he had visited the Centre. He indicated that he would participate in any discussion and voting on the item.

3. POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

The Committee agreed that the public and press be excluded during consideration of items 10 and 11 so as to avoid the disclosure of information which was exempt in terms of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, paragraphs 6, 8 & 9.

4. INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS: INFORMATION REPORTS

There was submitted Report No 131/20 seeking approval of interim arrangements with regard to providing elected members with information reports.

A range of interim arrangements had been approved previously in relation to decision making, including the consideration of time critical or necessary business only. It was important however that during the period where special arrangements were in place, and as far as operationally possible in light of the impact of the COVID-19 epidemic, members were still provided information on Council services that would normally be provided by way of an 'Information Report' and that this information was publicly available. It was therefore proposed that officers would prepare the same information as would normally be included in information reports on a four weekly basis and these reports would be posted on the document centre for elected members and on the Council's website.

It was also proposed that the arrangements would continue once meetings resumed their normal frequency to reduce the number of reports coming before members as part of the agenda for Council or Committees as there were likely to be a significant number due to the limited nature of decision making at the moment. The situation would be kept under review and members would be advised when it was deemed appropriate to revert back to the previous practice of Information Reports being submitted to the relevant Committees.

COUNCILLOR FAIRWEATHER, SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR MACMILLAN DOUGLAS, MOVED THAT THIS COMMITTEE:-

- (I) APPROVES THE INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS IN RELATION TO THE PROVISION OF INFORMATION REPORTS AS OUTLINED IN PARAGRAPH 4 OF THE REPORT; AND
- (II) AGREES THAT THESE INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS WOULD CONTINUE TO STAY IN PLACE IN THE SHORT TERM ONCE MEETINGS RETURNED TO THEIR NORMAL FREQUENCY/PATTERN.

Councillor Devine, seconded by Councillor Moore, moved as an amendment, that this Committee does not approve recommendations (i) and (ii) as detailed above and that Information Reports continue to be submitted for members' scrutiny.

On a vote being taken, the members voted:-

For the motion:-

Councillors Fairweather, MacMillan Douglas, Salmond and Wann (4).

For the amendment:-

Councillors Devine, Duff and Moore (3).

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

5. ACTIONS TAKEN IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

With reference to Article 4 of the minute of Special meeting of Angus Council of 3 April 2020, there was submitted Report No 132/20 by the Director of Legal and Democratic Services advising of the actions taken by Council Chief Officers in response to the COVID-19 pandemic using their delegated powers.

At this stage, the Committee agreed to adjourn the meeting for 10 minutes.

The meeting resumed at 2.32 pm.

The Report detailed a number of further actions taken by the Chief Executive and the Directors using the emergency delegated powers and, where there was a requirement to report these actions to the next available Committee, further details were provided in the Appendices to the Report.

Following a number of questions, the Committee agreed to note the actions taken.

6. HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE ANGUS RESPONSE TEAM (HAART) FOR ANGUS

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of Special meeting of Angus Council of 3 April 2020, there was submitted Report No 133/20 by the Chief Executive seeking to develop the Humanitarian Assistance Centre (HAC) for Angus, now known as the Humanitarian Assistance Angus Response Team (HAART), following a nationwide initiative in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Matters in respect of humanitarian assistance were progressing at pace across Angus and it had become increasingly apparent that the need for assistance had gone beyond those identified by Scottish Government as being in need of 'shielding', and it had become vital to extend our offer of assistance to the wider community. A partnership between Angus Council, Angus Health and Social Care Partnership, Angus Alive, Voluntary Action Angus, Foodbanks and Angus Carers had been established to support people with food, medicines and befriending, which was vital to ensure movement restriction.

Due to the fast paced nature of events and the urgent need to continue to establish and extend the HAART, approval was now being sought to extend the provision of services to vulnerable individuals beyond those identified as being in need of 'shielding'.

Having heard the Chief Executive give an overview of the work of HAART, and the Convener and members praise the outstanding work being done, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the action taken so far and the further proposals detailed in the Report to extend the Humanitarian Assistance (HAART) for Angus and the provision of services as outlined to vulnerable individuals beyond those identified by Scottish Government as being in need of 'shielding';
- (ii) to note the use by the Chief Executive of the delegated emergency power as detailed in paragraphs 3.3 and 3.4 of the Report;
- (iii) to delegate authority to the Director of Strategic Policy, Transformation & Public Sector Reform, following consultation with the Chief Executive, to continue to enable the delivery of emergency service provision to vulnerable adults and families beyond the 'shielding' group for a period of up to six months in the first instance;

- (iv) to delegate authority to the Director of Strategic Policy, Transformation & Public Sector Reform, following consultation with the Chief Executive, to determine how the Council's share of the Scottish Government's Food Fund (£602,000) was used;
- (v) to delegate authority to the Director of Strategic Policy, Transformation & Public Sector Reform, following consultation with the Chief Executive, to put in place a transparent and robust governance framework with appropriate controls and in accordance with the Scottish Government Food Fund Guidance 2020 to allow the delivery of emergency service provision as outlined in recommendation (iii) above and as further detailed in the Report;
- (vi) to note that the delegation detailed in recommendation (iii) above would be limited to the use of the Council's share of the Scottish Government's Food Fund;
- (vii) to note that in the event of the aid Food Fund proving to be insufficient, a further Report would be brought to Committee outlining proposals for the necessary reallocation of existing Council budgets subject to establishing appropriate controls and operational delivery mechanisms in relation to this spend; and
- (viii) to note that regular formal progress reports on this matter would be brought to members of this Committee while it existed, supplemented by informal email updates where appropriate.

7. HOUSING DEVELOPMENT POLICY FRAMEWORK

There was submitted Report No 134/20 by the Director of Communities proposing the adoption of a Housing Development Policy Framework by the Council to guide the selection of housing development opportunities.

The Report indicated that in order to maintain an ambitious programme of housing development it was recognised that a range of development approaches were needed to ensure the Council was able to maintain the pace and scale of delivery. This would allow the Council to respond to the emerging challenges. The Housing Development Policy Framework would guide the selection of housing development opportunities by ensuring the Council took cognisance of relevant land transaction or procurement rules.

The Framework identified five base models for development with a number of variations within each model that set out the broad approach which would be used to progress the purchase. Any purchase proposed following consideration of the framework would be reported to Committee for approval.

Following a number of questions from members, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve the Housing Development Policy Framework as detailed in Appendix 1 to the Report;
- (ii) to approve the purchase of 22 units for shared equity as outlined in Section 5.3-5.6 of the Report, and the total estimated expenditure of £3.086m; and
- (iii) to delegate authority to the Director of Communities to purchase up to 20 new units per annum, adhering to the principles of the Framework, from within existing Housing Capital resources and reported annually in the Strategic Housing Investment Plan.

8. PROCUREMENT AUTHORITY REPORT – CONTRACT FOR CONSULTANT SERVICES FOR ARBROATH'S PLACES FOR EVERYONE PROJECT

With reference to Article 3(xiii) of the minute of Special meeting of Angus Council of 27 February 2020, there was submitted Report No 135/20 by the Director of Infrastructure seeking authority to undertake a procurement exercise to put in place a contract for professional services to deliver Arbroath's Places for Everyone.

The Report indicated that Arbroath's Places for Everyone project would create safe, attractive, healthier places by increasing the number of trips made by walking, cycling and wheeling for everyday journeys. The Council had previously approved the financial commitment for the project and the signing of the funding agreement between the Council and Sustrans had taken place on 27 February 2020.

Having heard from a number of members, particularly in relation to the public engagement and consultation process, the Committee agreed to authorise the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, to undertake a procurement exercise through mini-competition from the Scotland Excel Engineering and Technical Consultancy Framework Contract to award a contract for professional services to deliver the Arbroath's Places for Everyone project.

9. REVIEW OF ALLOWANCES FOR CARERS: FOSTER, KINSHIP AND ADOPTERS

With reference to Article 5(b) of the minute of Special meeting of Angus Council of 16 February 2017, there was submitted Report No 137/20 by the Director of Children, Families and Justice setting out proposals for the allowances payable by Children, Families and Justice Services for 2020-2021 to Foster and Kinship carers and Adoptive parents.

The Report indicated that allowances were paid to Foster and Kinship carers and Adoptive parents for specific services in line with statutory requirements, guidance and Angus Council policy. These rates were reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure that they remained sufficient to meet children's needs and an increase to the rates payable during 2020–2021 was proposed.

Having heard Councillor Wann give heartfelt thanks to all the carers, the Committee agreed to approve the rates specified in Appendix 1 to the Report, with effect from 1 June 2020.

Having agreed at Article 3 above to exclude the public and press during consideration of the following items, the Committee agreed to a five minute adjournment to allow the public and press to leave the meeting,

The meeting resumed at 3.43pm in private.

10. OPEN MARKET DISPOSALS: EXEMPT APPENDIX

There was submitted Appendix to Report No 132/20 providing details of offers for open market disposals which had been accepted under delegated powers following consultation with the Convener and Vice-Convener of the Communities Committee.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the Appendix.

11. PROCUREMENT AUTHORITY REPORT – FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES IN ANGUS

With reference to Article 4 of the minute of meeting of the Social Work and Health Committee of 19 May 2011, there was submitted Report No 138/20 by the Director of Children, Families and Justice seeking approval to procure a family support service in Angus.

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