

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the **COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE** hosted at Angus House, Orchardbank Business Park, Forfar and held remotely, on Tuesday, 19 January 2021, at 2.00 pm.

Present: Councillors MARK SALMOND, TOMMY STEWART, KENNY BRAES, DAVID CHEAPE, BRADEN DAVY, JULIE BELL, BILL DUFF, BRENDA DURNO, CRAIG FOTHERINGHAM, DAVID LUMGAIR, MARK McDONALD, IAN MCLAREN, RICHARD MOORE, DEREK WANN, and LOIS SPEED.

Councillor Salmond, Convener, in the Chair.

1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Lynne Devine and Ronnie Proctor MBE, with Councillors Julie Bell and Derek Wann substituting, respectively.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations intimated.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

(a) Communities Committee

The minute of meeting of this Committee of 24 November 2020 was submitted, approved as a correct record, and signed by the Convener.

(b) Arbroath Harbour Joint Consultative Committee

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the minute of the Arbroath Harbour Joint Consultative Committee meeting of 6 November 2020, attached as **Appendix 1** to this Minute; and
- (ii) to approve the Biennial Review of Charges at Arbroath Harbour for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2023, as endorsed by the Arbroath Harbour JCC at that meeting on 6 November 2020, and as **appended** to that minute.

4. STRATEGIC HOUSING INVESTMENT PLAN 2021/22 – 2025/26

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 12 November 2019, there was submitted Report No 1/21 by the Director of Communities, advising Members on the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) for the period 2021/22 – 2025 / 26, and proposals for the use of resources from the Affordable Housing Revenue Account (AHRA). The SHIP set out the strategic investment priorities for affordable housing over five years in order to deliver the strategic vision of the Angus Local Housing Strategy 2017-22.

The continuing COVID-19 pandemic, which had seen projects pushed back by approximately six months, had resulted in Scottish Government requesting that the Council produce a 'light' SHIP for the period, summarising any changes to existing priorities and outlining any consultation undertaken with its Registered Social Landlord Partners. Since construction work had restarted, good progress had been made and it was expected that the full funding allocation of £9.681 million would be achieved in the current financial year if no further complications arose in the sector.

The Service Leader (Housing) answered questions from Councillors Moore, Braes, Speed and Duff, and the Committee also heard comments from Councillors Cheape and Braes.

The Committee agreed:

- (i) to approve the content of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2021/22 – 2025/26 as detailed in Appendix 1 to the Report; and

- (ii) to approve the ongoing development of the SHIP, and its associated programme plans and procedures, with the Council's Registered Social Landlord partners during the lifetime of the Plan.

5. ANGUS TENANT SATISFACTION SURVEY 2020 AND TENANT AND CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY ACTION PLAN 2020-21

With reference to Article 8 of minute of meeting of this Committee on 24 September 2019, there was submitted Report No 2/21 by the Director of Communities, setting out the findings of the Angus Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2020.

Members generally warmly welcomed the Report, and the Committee heard from Councillors Bell, Speed, Moore, Braes, Duff, Durno and Fotheringham. The Report aimed to monitor performance to ensure quality and value for tenants and customers for the services they received. Results had been much more positive than previously, with 1,003 people responding to the survey, representing 15% of the customer base. The survey took place over the summer, three months into the current COVID-19 pandemic.

In response to members' concerns regarding people who were unable to participate in the survey, through either disability or lacking the means to go on-line, the Service Leader – Housing emphasised that the aim was to treat tenants equally and in such circumstances, the survey was completed by the tenant receiving a socially distant doorstep visit from housing officers. He also acknowledged the need, highlighted by Councillor Moore, for a glossary of the various acronyms used in the Report, and that such guidance would form part of future reports.

The Committee agreed:

- (i) to note the results of the Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2020 attached to the Report as Appendix 1;
- (ii) to approve the Angus Council Tenant & Community Strategy Action Plan 2020 – 2021 as outlined in Appendix 2 to the Report; and
- (iii) to pass on the appreciation of members to housing staff who had provided valuable assistance to tenants throughout a difficult year.

6. REVIEW OF COMMERCIAL WASTE SERVICES AND CHARGES

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of this Committee on 14 January 2020, there was submitted Report No 3/21 by the Director of Communities, presenting proposals or adjusting charges levied by the Council as waste collection authority under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, for the collection and disposal of commercial waste. In the course of discussion, the Director confirmed that the Council was legally obliged to cover its costs in providing this service, and did not make significant profit.

In response to a question from Councillor Cheape, the Director advised that in setting charges the previous year, the average weights of the contents of the largest commercial bins (1100 and 1280 litres) had been lower than the Council's charging model had assumed. As a result, it was proposed to freeze the charges at the 2020/21 level for these two capacities. In response to a question from Councillor Davy, the Director confirmed that this would also move the Council' closer to the national average as per a benchmarking exercise with other Scottish local authorities.

The Committee agreed to:

- (i) the application of reviewed charges for 2021 / 22, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the Report;
- (ii) the retention of collection and disposal charges for larger (1100 and 1280 litre) general waste bins at 2020 / 21 prices, for the reasons detailed in Section 5 of the Report;
- (iii) the retention of bin rental costs at 2020 / 21 prices, for the reasons detailed in Section 5 of the Report; and

- (iv) the revision of the charging mechanism for commercial waste bulky uplifts to bring it in line with the system used for household bulky waste collections.

7. APPLICATION FOR CONSENT TO PLACE TABLES AND CHAIRS IN A PUBLIC ROAD AT THE CORN EXCHANGE, MARKET PLACE, ARBROATH

With reference to Article 20 of the Minute of Meeting of this Committee of 21 January 2014; and also to Article 6 of the minute of the Development Standards Committee of 5 February 2019, there was submitted Report No 4/21 by the Director of Infrastructure, dealing with a retrospective application to extend an existing area and create an additional associated area for the placing of tables and chairs in a designated area where the consumption of alcohol in public was prohibited.

Councillor Speed noted that previous attempts had been made by the proprietors to extend seating arrangements which presented access issues to users of the area, particularly those with disabilities. The Director acknowledged that this was the reason for bringing this Report to Committee in order to put appropriate controls in place. The Committee also heard from Councillors Durno, Fotheringham and Stewart.

The Director of Infrastructure confirmed that the Roads Service would routinely ensure that the area was properly fenced off, and otherwise that the conditions of granting the Consent were adhered to by the applicant. The Director of Communities indicated that the Licensing Officer would likely be involved in enforcement.

Having considered the application for an extension of the existing authorised area and creation of a second authorised area, the Committee agreed to authorise the placing of tables and chairs in those areas, subject to the conditions contained in Appendix 3 to the Report.

8. LOCAL BUS SERVICE PROVISION – CONTRACTS RE-TENDER

There was submitted Report No 5/21 by the Director of Infrastructure, seeking authority to award nine local bus service contracts following the conclusion, and best value analysis, of a tender process; and detailing the decision of the Director to extend six other local bus service contracts to the end of the 2020/21 financial year.

Councillor McDonald noted that the Road Safety Member/Officer Working Group had recently had its remit extended to include Active Travel, which would include consideration of bus service routes. He also would welcome information on the tendering processes for such services. In response, the Director offered to arrange a members' briefing on the tendering process. The Committee also heard from Councillors Duff, Moore and Braes.

The Committee agreed:

- (i) to note the decision of the Director of Infrastructure to extend contracts A603, A605, A606, A607, A608 and A466 to the end of financial year 2020/21;
- (ii) to note the decision of the Director of Infrastructure to undertake a tender for the replacement local bus service contracts A371, A372, A466, A496, A603, A605, A606, A607 and A608;
- (iii) to authorise the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, to award the replacement local bus service contracts A371, A372, A466, A496, A603, A605, A606, A607 and A608 upon the conclusion of a tender and best value analysis exercise; and
- (iv) that the Director of Infrastructure provide a briefing, open to all members of the Council, on the tendering process for local bus services.

9. SURPLUS PROPERTY

There was submitted Report No 6/21 by the Director of Infrastructure, identifying a piece of ground to the south east of No 84A Panmure Street, Monifieth as being surplus to the requirements of the Council and proposing to dispose of it to the owner of the adjoining property. The land was currently unused and not maintained, and was not part of any other tenancy. It had been independently valued at £1,600.

The Committee agreed to approve that the land listed in the Report, and shown outlined in Appendix 1 to the Report, be declared surplus to the requirements of the Council, and disposed of to the owner of the adjoining property.

10. APPROPRIATION OF SURPLUS PROPERTY - INVERTAY HOUSE, MAULE STREET, MONIFIETH

With reference to Article 12 of the minute of meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee on 30 April 2019, there was submitted Report No 7/21 by the Director of Infrastructure regarding the former school building, schoolhouse, and outbuildings at Invertay House, Maule Street, Monifieth, which was surplus to requirements. The Report proposed that the Communities Committee, as having responsibility for housing matters, follow the Policy and Resources Committee in agreeing the appropriation of the site to the Housing Revenue Account.

The Committee agreed to approve the appropriation of the Invertay House, Maule Street, Monifieth, site, to the Housing Revenue Account for the delivery of affordable housing in the amount of £370,000.