

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE** held remotely on Tuesday 9 March 2021 at 2.00 pm.

Present: Councillors DAVID FAIRWEATHER, ANGUS MACMILLAN DOUGLAS OBE, BRIAN BOYD, GAVIN NICOL, LYNNE DEVINE, BILL DUFF, SHEILA HANDS, ALEX KING, BEN LAWRIE, IAN MCLAREN, BOB MYLES, MARK SALMOND, RON STURROCK, DEREK WANN and BETH WHITESIDE.

Councillor FAIRWEATHER, Convener, in the Chair.

1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor Braden Davy, with Councillor Gavin Nicol substituting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Boyd declared an interest in item 4 as he had been involved in the Panmure Centre for the last 2/3 years and had discussed options in the past. He indicated that he would leave the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor Devine declared an interest in items 6 and 7 as a Council appointed Director of AngusAlive. She indicated that she had a General Exclusion and would therefore participate in any discussion and voting on these items.

Councillor Duff declared an interest in items 6 and 7 as a Council appointed Director of AngusAlive. He indicated that he had a General Exclusion and would therefore participate in any discussion and voting on these items.

Councillor Wann declared an interest in items 6 and 7 as a Council appointed Director of AngusAlive. He indicated that he had a General Exclusion and would therefore participate in any discussion and voting on these items.

3. MINUTES

(i) Previous Meetings

The minutes of meetings of 8 December 2020 and 2 February 2021 were submitted and approved as correct records.

(ii) Special Meeting

The minute of the special meeting of 28 January 2021 was submitted and approved as a correct record.

Having declared an interest at Article 2 above, Councillor Boyd left the meeting during consideration of the following item.

4. COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER APPLICATION – CARNOUSTIE & MONIFIETH MEN'S SHED – PANMURE CENTRE CARNOUSTIE

The Committee heard from the Director of Communities who re-assured members that discussions between Carnoustie *Monifieth Men's Shed and Council Officers were ongoing. These discussions were proving to be open and constructive. A fully costed Dilapidation Survey had been requested by the Group. This had been carried out by an Independent Surveyor on 15 February 2021. The Group had been provided with a copy of the report and had subsequently requested and been provided with additional information regarding asbestos in the building and energy costs. The Group had raised a number of queries, one in relation to the terms of the lease and in particular break clauses, which were currently under consideration. The Director indicated that officers would try to accommodate the preferences of the Group, wherever possible and reasonable.

The Group were meeting with local members this afternoon and depending on the outcome of that meeting, it may have to be taken to their Board before a final decision could be reached. The Group had agreed on an extension to late April to allow them to fully consider all of the information that was now in their possession.

The Committee agreed to note the verbal update.

Councillor Boyd re-joined the meeting at this point.

5. INFORMATION REPORT - BREXIT

There was submitted Report No 86/21 by the Director of Strategic Policy, Transformation and Public Sector Reform providing an update to members in relation to Brexit.

Having heard from a number of members, the Committee agreed to note the Report and that the Director would look further into the Internal Market Bill to assess what implications there maybe from an Angus perspective and in particular for Angus Council.

6. CAPITAL MONITORING – GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2020/21

With reference to Article 5 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 2 February 2021 there was submitted Report No 87/21 by the Director of Finance apprising members of the capital expenditure incurred for the period from 1 April 2020 to 31 December 2021 and measuring projected capital expenditure for the year against budgeted provision.

The Report indicated that with nine months (75 per cent) of the financial year gone the actual spend levels presented in Tables 1 and 2 were extremely low, at 33.6 per cent on a gross basis and 54.8 per cent on a net basis respectively. This unprecedented low level of actual expenditure was a direct result of the lockdown imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular the shutdown of the construction industry and the delay in reopening sites (which must be compliant with new protocols introduced to ensure the health and safety of personnel on site).

Furthermore around 10 per cent of capital spend would come through as accruals at the year end. The value of work completed up to 31 March 2021 would be assessed as part of the year end process and expenditure accrued accordingly, hence the reason why spend could increase significantly in the final month of the year. It should also be noted that work was ongoing on a number of significant projects for which no payment had yet been made by virtue of the phasing of such projects. For information purposes, the 2019/20 actual spend outturn was 75.9 per cent (gross) and 80.4 per cent (net).

The Committee agreed to note the expenditure to date and projected outturn position on the General Fund Capital Programme as per Tables 1 and 2 in the Report and the accompanying capital monitoring statement.

7. REVENUE MONITORING 2020/21 AND RENEWAL AND REPAIR FUND POSITION 2020/21

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 8 December 2020, there was submitted Report No 88/21 by the Director of Finance detailing the latest projected year-end position for each main Council service area, giving a brief explanation of significant variances and providing an update on expenditure funded through the Council's Renewal and Repair Funds. The position within the Report was based upon actual spend and income information at 31 December 2020.

The Report indicated that a surplus compared to budget of £8.369 million was projected at this point in the financial year in respect of the General Fund services net adjusted budget (excluding the Angus Health & Social Care Partnership budget) of £243.876 million, i.e. 3.14 %. There were adjustments required to this total to reflect funding within Education and Lifelong Learning, Children, Families & Justice and Strategic Policy, Transformation & Public Sector Reform (paragraphs 4.2, 4.4 and 4.6 of the Report respectively) which due to accounting treatment would be carried forward into 2021/22. An adjustment was also required to reflect previously approved policy. In addition, adjustments had been made regarding 2019/20 Carry Forwards that were required to be carried forward into 2021/22 due to delays in spending these as a result of COVID-19, leaving an adjusted projected surplus of £3.182 million.

The Committee agreed:

- i) to note the content of the Report, in particular the comments on the Financial Implications section regarding the projected year end position;
- ii) to note the Renewal and Repair fund position;
- iii) to approve the virements detailed in paragraph 4.17 of the Report , noting that these were in the main as a result of revisions requiring to be made to the revenue budget recast position which Council approved at its meeting of 10 September 2020 (Report No 211/20 refers); and
- iv) that the increase in additional funding support allocated to the Council from the Scottish Government's Loss of Income Scheme as detailed in paragraph 4.18 in the Report be added to the Council's COVID-19 Contingency Reserve.

8. COMMUNITY ORDERS (CORONAVIRUS)(SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2021

There was submitted Report No 89/21 by the Director of Children, Families and Justice providing an outline on actions taken by the Scottish Government to address concerns raised by Social Work Scotland about the capacity of Justice Social Work services to deliver unpaid work requirements in Community Payback Orders as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the response to this by Angus Council's Justice Service.

The Committee agreed:

- (i) to note the draft regulations being taken forward to reduce the number of hours originally imposed in each unpaid work requirement in Community Payback Orders by 35% (except for some excluded offences), and position for individuals within the Justice Service of Angus Council;
- (ii) to approve the Council's initial response to the draft regulations and progress to date; and
- (iii) to require the Director of Children, Families and Justice to ensure that impacted individuals were advised of the status of their Court Order once guidance was received from Scottish Government.

9. GRANT AGREEMENT WITH VOLUNTARY ACTION ANGUS FOR 2020/21-23

There was submitted Joint Report No 90/21 by the Director of Strategic Policy, Transformation and Public Sector Reform and the Director of Education and Lifelong seeking approval to continue the existing grant agreement to support Voluntary Action Angus (VAA) for an additional one year (year 2 of potentially 3) to deliver services in Angus subject to annual review

The Report indicated that the total value of the grant agreement being proposed for 2021/22 was £52,980. The grant agreement could be funded in full from the existing Angus Council Community Education Revenue Budget. Due to the current and future unpredictable landscape facing service provision the level of funding for this year may be reviewed and amended depending on level of provision permitted through restrictions. Any proposed funding amendment would be reported to Committee for consideration and approval prior to inclusion within the agreement.

The Committee agreed:

- (i) to provide grant funding for the amount of £52,980 to Voluntary Action Angus (VAA) in the 2021/22 financial year (year 2 of potentially 3) for the services outlined in section 3 of the Report;
- (ii) to authorise the Director of Strategic Policy, Transformation & Public Sector Reform in consultation with the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, to agree the terms of a Grant Agreement with Voluntary Action Angus (VAA) to document the grant funding to support the provision of said services; and

- (iii) to approve the intention to extend the duration of the Grant Agreement by a further one year period subject to the condition of there being sufficient funding and commitment towards achievement of specified outcomes.

10. SCOTTISH SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL EMPLOYEE REGISTRATION POLICY

There was submitted Joint Report No 91/21 by the Director of HR, Digital Enablement, IT and Business Support advising on the introduction of an updated employee registration policy, specifically relating to the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC).

The updated policy provided specific guidance relating to:

- necessary checks during recruitment and selection process;
- responsibilities for managers and employees in relation to registration;
- actions to take for existing employees who fail to gain registration, meet requirements for registration and maintain registration;
- Temporary Orders issued to employees by the SSSC;
- implications for commencing/progressing with SQA qualifications if subject to a Fitness to Practice investigation.

The Committee agreed to approve the updated SSSC Employee Registration policy which incorporated guidance.

11. HEALTH AND SAFETY COMPLIANCE

There was submitted Report No 92/21 by the Depute Chief Executive providing an overview of the Council's Health and Safety arrangements through the Policy Statement and Health and Safety Policy which had been fully reviewed and updated to reflect changes in legislation, roles and responsibilities and the roll out of the SHE Assure safety management system.

As the council continued to transform the way in which it delivers services, the health and safety service was also transforming the way in which it managed health and safety, with the development and roll out of a software solution (SHE Assure). The SHE Assure Health & Safety Management system would enable Angus Council to effectively manage all aspects of health & safety which would ensure we are fully compliant, minimise and manage risk, and promote a culture of health & safety awareness within staff.

The Committee agreed:

- (i) to note the detail within the statement, the policy, and specifically the roles and responsibilities, including those of elected members, and
- (ii) to note the Council's statutory responsibilities and approve the revised health and safety policy statement and policy.

12. 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 Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, paragraph 6.

13. BEQUEST TO THE COUNCIL OF LAND AT CURRSLOAN, FORFAR

With reference to Article 11 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 2 February 2021, there was submitted Report No 93/21 by the Director of Infrastructure in relation to the bequest to the Council of Land at Currsloan, Forfar, setting out a number of options and asking the Committee to agree which option to pursue,

The Committee agreed to approve Option 3, as detailed in the Report.