

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of SPECIAL MEETING of **ANGUS COUNCIL** held remotely on Thursday 20 January 2022 at 12 noon.

Present: Provost RONNIE PROCTOR MBE, Depute Provost CRAIG FOTHERINGHAM, Councillors JULIE BELL, BRIAN BOYD, KENNY BRAES, COLIN BROWN BEM, DAVID CHEAPE, LYNNE DEVINE, BILL DUFF, DAVID FAIRWEATHER, SHEILA HANDS, ALEX KING, BEN LAWRIE, DAVID LUMGAIR, ANGUS MACMILLAN DOUGLAS OBE, MARK McDONALD, IAN McLAREN, RICHARD MOORE, BOB MYLES, GAVIN NICOL, MARK SALMOND, LOIS SPEED, TOMMY STEWART, DEREK WANN and BETH WHITESIDE.

Provost RONNIE PROCTOR, in the Chair.

1. APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor Braden Davy.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Fairweather declared an interest in Items 4 & 5, Report Nos 8/22 and 9/22, as he had attended a hospitality event at Carnoustie Golf Links in his capacity of Leader of the Council and had received a presentation from the Chief Executive of Carnoustie Golf Links Management Committee. He indicated that he would participate in any discussion and voting on these items.

Councillor Proctor declared an interest in Items 4 & 5, Report Nos 8/22 and 9/22, as he had attended a hospitality event at Carnoustie Golf Links in his capacity as Provost and had received a presentation from the Chief Executive of Carnoustie Golf Links Management Committee. He indicated that he would participate in any discussion and voting on these items.

Councillor Myles declared an interest in Items 4 & 5, Report Nos 8/22 and 9/22 as a Council appointed member of CGLMC Ltd. He indicated that he would not participate in any discussion and voting and would leave the meeting during consideration of the items.

Councillor Cheape declared an interest in Items 4 & 5, Report Nos 8/22 and 9/22 as a Council appointed member of CGLMC Ltd. He indicated that he would not participate in any discussion and voting and would leave the meeting during consideration of the items.

Councillor Whiteside declared an interest in Items 4 & 5, Report Nos 8/22 and 9/22, as she had attended the Ladies Open as a Council representative but had declined the offer of full hospitality. She indicated that he would participate in any discussion and voting on these items.

3. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

The Council resolved, in terms of Standing Order 28(2), that the public and press be excluded during consideration of item 4 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 & 9.

Having declared an interest at Article 2 above, Councillors Cheape and Myles left the meeting prior to consideration of the following items.

4. CARNOUSTIE GOLF PROVISION – FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS – CONFIDENTIAL DETAIL

There was submitted Joint Report No 8/22 by the Chief Executive, Director of Finance and Director of Legal and Democratic Services providing members with a detailed update on the background to and the assessment of options concerning the future of golf provision at Carnoustie Links. The main purpose of the report was to provide members with commercially

sensitive information which was essential to inform their consideration of Report No 9/22 – Carnoustie Golf Provision – Future Arrangements which was a public (non-exempt) report.

Having heard from a number of members and from the Director of Finance, the Council resolved to approve the recommendations as detailed in the Report.

5. CARNOUSTIE GOLF PROVISION – FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS

There was submitted Joint Report No 9/22 by the Chief Executive, Director of Finance and Director of Legal and Democratic Services seeking members views on the future arrangements for golf provision at Carnoustie Links. The report outlined the need to consider a long term, sustainable future for golf in Carnoustie and identified what options could be available to the Council and partners. The Council was being asked to agree the exploration of options, taking into account the content of the report and the accompanying confidential (exempt) report (Report 8/22) which provided restricted content.

The Council heard from the Chief Executive who thanked members who had attended the extensive briefing on the future arrangements. She indicated that the briefing had included members of Carnoustie Golf Links Management Committee who currently operated and managed the golf courses at Carnoustie Links and members had engaged in a full exploration of the potential long term future of the asset with the current managers and thereafter in a session exclusively with council key officers.

The Chief Executive thanked the Director of Finance, Director of Legal and Democratic Services and the Service Lead, Legal Services for all their work in bringing forward the report and the options, and for the comments and questions from members to get to this position.

Thereafter Councillor Fairweather took the opportunity to thank the officers for the full and comprehensive briefing that elected members had received prior to consideration of the Reports on this hugely important issue for Angus Council, the people of Carnoustie and the residents of Angus.

Following a number of questions and comments from members in relation to the number of potential options and if these should be reduced further, why the status quo was not a consideration, public consultation, the timeline and the inclusion of the Carnoustie Golf Links Management Committee, officer capacity to undertake the required work, weighting of public consultation in terms of decision making processes, potential risks if not being ambitious enough, and timescales to ensure that key partners were kept on board, and from the Director of Finance, the Chief Executive and the Director of Legal and Democratic Services in response, the Council resolved:-

- (i) to note the summary of current arrangements, the drivers for change and the economic considerations relevant to the future of golf provision at Carnoustie as set out in Sections 4 & 5 of the Report;
- (ii) to consider its strategic intent regarding the future of the golf courses at Carnoustie as set out in Section 6 of the Report, and agreed that working with partners to secure the return of The Open on a regular basis was something to be pursued as a high priority objective over the next few months;
- (iii) to note the future options which had been identified as potentially enabling recommendation (ii) to be delivered as set out in Section 7 of the Report;
- (iv) to note the criteria and weighting used to make an initial assessment of which options should be considered further;
- (v) to note the best value considerations; the summary description of the options and how these scored against the suggested assessment criteria as set out in Section 8, and Appendix B of the Report;
- (vi) to note the full content of the accompanying Exempt Report 8/22 regarding this matter which was relevant to the Council's consideration of the Options set out in Section 8 of the Report;
- (vii) to note the specific issues for elected members to consider in deciding which Options to pursue further as set out in paragraphs 8.24 to 8.26 of the Report;

- (viii) to agree that the 4 recommended Options in Table 2 of Section 8 of the Report be taken forward and developed to inform and enable Council to make a decision on a final option for implementation;
- (ix) to agree that a public consultation be planned for as part of the process of informing the Council's final decision in this regard (which Option to implement) with the detail and timing of that consultation and the proposed consultation content to be subject to a further report to Council prior to being launched;
- (x) to note the next steps and actions arising as set out in Section 10 of the Report;
- (xi) to approve the resourcing arrangements, costs and funding for the further work which would be required to develop the 4 recommended options as set out in Section 11 of the Report and in particular to approve the following delegations:-
 - (a) authority to the Director of Finance to procure specialist financial advisers and, if required, other specialist advisers to take forward the recommended options and support delivery of the actions set out in Section 10 of the Report;
 - (b) authority to the Director of Legal & Democratic Services to procure specialist legal advisers to take forward the recommended options and support delivery of the actions set out in Section 10 of the Report;
 - (c) authority to the Director of Finance to use up to £125,000 of the 2021/22 Provision for Additional Burdens revenue budget to meet the cost of specialist advisers and where feasible any backfilling of internal staff time to support this work; and
- (xii) to note that further reports would be brought to elected members as required based on the options to be pursued further.