

ANGUS COUNCIL

ANGUS COUNCIL - 10 FEBRUARY 2022

ANGUSALIVE: UPDATE

REPORT BY VIVIEN SMITH, DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC POLICY, TRANSFORMATION & PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM

ABSTRACT

This report presents proposals for members to consider in relation to future library/ ACCESS services provision in Monifieth; the potential ongoing use of three ANGUSalive facilities as vaccination centres; and a general operational update looking forward to financial year 2022/23.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 It is recommended that the Council:

- (i) Agree to progress proposals in principle for the integration of future library/ ACCESS service provision in Monifieth as part of the development of the new community hub being delivered by the Monifieth Community Resource Group (MCRG);
- (ii) Agree the proposal for NHS Tayside to continue to use the current vaccination centres at Reid Hall, Forfar; Arbroath Community Centre; and Montrose Town Hall up to 31 March 2023, subject to agreement on rental arrangements and to a continued effort to secure alternative venues; and
- (iii) Agree that in order to support ANGUSalive in their forward planning, and while income generation remains lower than pre-pandemic levels (currently circa 60%), along with the significant savings targets included in the Council's Change programme, ANGUSalive's temporary operating arrangements (as set out in in Appendix 1 and section 6.3 below), continue over the forthcoming financial year 2022/23, representing interim changes to the Services Specification, and agree they can form the content of a formal change notice between the Council and ANGUSalive.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE COMMUNITY PLAN/ COUNCIL PLAN

2.1 This report contributes to the following local outcome(s) contained within the Community Plan:

- An inclusive and sustainable economy
- A skilled and adaptable workforce
- Attractive employment opportunities
- The best start in life for children
- More opportunities for people to achieve success
- Improved physical, mental and emotional health and well-being
- Safe, secure, vibrant and sustainable communities

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Members have been regularly updated on the impact of the pandemic on ANGUSalive, including the significant operational and financial implications, given the resultant new operating environment and continued Management Fee savings targeted in the Council's

Change Programme, including the need to transform the organisation into a sustainable business model via the Transformation Project. The previous update report was considered by Council at its meeting on 16 December 2021 ([Report 393/21](#) refers).

- 3.2 This report has been brought forward ahead of the next scheduled update due to the timing of emerging information which will be helpful for members to consider at the earliest opportunity. The key considerations being in relation to an emerging option in relation to ANGUSalive's future library/ ACCESS services provision in Monifieth; the potential ongoing use of three ANGUSalive facilities as vaccination centres; and a general ANGUSalive operational update looking forward to financial year 2022/23.

4. MONIFIETH LIBRARY/ ACCESS OPTION

- 4.1 The ambitious Monifieth Community Resource Group (MCRG) project to bring a purpose-built community hub to the Blue Seaway Park area of Monifieth has recently moved to a position of build funding certainty. At its meeting on 16 December 2021, the Council agreed to support the project with £250,000 grant funding from the Place Based Investment Fund ([Report 390/21](#) refers), supporting MCRG to bring that project closer to fruition. That further investment by the Council now means a full funding package is in place for the MCRG community hub.
- 4.2 Confirmation of the funding package for the community hub has stimulated discussions between ANGUSalive and MCRG, initiated by Angus Council officers, regarding the potential for integrating library/ ACCESS service provision as part of the new community hub facility. This could potentially provide a sustainable long-term opportunity which is mutually beneficial for both MCRG and library/ ACCESS service provision in Monifieth, Discussions on the possibility of having a larger community hub which could incorporate library/ Access provision are at an early and exploratory stage. Although ANGUSalive and MCRG have expressed an interest in this option it is being explored further on a no commitment basis at this stage while a feasibility assessment is undertaken. MCRG will meanwhile continue to progress their initial project to no detriment.
- 4.3 There is therefore an opportunity to engage with the Monifieth community about how future library/ ACCESS service provision is delivered should current discussions between ANGUSalive and MCRG reach a positive conclusion. Development of the community hub would be enhanced through the shared use of the facilities to include the library/ ACCESS services run by ANGUSalive. This could potentially increase usage, add further value to the vibrancy and expand multi-generational participation at the new facility. It would also provide a setting where Council supported services are readily accessible in a modern fit-for-purpose environment, alongside other community-led pursuits.
- 4.4 While further detail requires to be developed in relation to space requirements and associated financial arrangements to accommodate this initiative, the immediate next step is for ANGUSalive to work with MCRG, to develop a more detailed proposal for this potential collaborative project. This feasibility study cost will be met from the existing capital budget for Access/ Library integration within the Council's capital budget.
- 4.5 Members are therefore requested to approve in principle the proposal of the library/ ACCESS service being included in the new community hub to help secure the library's long term future in the town, noting that this is still subject to ongoing dialogue with MCRG and subject to more detailed investigation/feasibility work.
- 4.6 The outcome of the further work to be undertaken, along with further details in relation to future engagement with the Monifieth community to inform how the library/ ACCESS services can be delivered in the community hub, will be reported back to Council following the elections in May 2022.

5. VACCINATION CENTRE UPDATE

- 5.1 Members will recall from recent update reports that Reid Hall, Forfar; Arbroath Community Centre; and Montrose Town Hall are being used as temporary vaccination centres in Angus, supporting a request from NHS Tayside.
- 5.2 The current arrangement for use of these facilities was due to expire on 31 March 2022. NHS Tayside have requested this arrangement be extended at the three venues for a further 12 months up to 31 March 2023.
- 5.3 Other options have been explored by the Director of Infrastructure and NHS Tayside colleagues, but no suitable alternatives have been identified at this stage. However, alternative provision will continue to be explored over the course of the year, along with final agreement on rental arrangements.
- 5.4 Due to the ongoing nature of this request and the implications for the communities who would normally utilise these facilities for a variety of purposes, members are asked to consider and agree this 12-month extension.

6. OPERATIONAL UPDATE

- 6.1 ANGUSalive's current temporary operating arrangements are set out in Appendix 1 (these are also as per Report 393/21). This includes details of the temporary opening hours at each of the charity's venues.
- 6.2 The latest restrictions imposed by the Scottish Government between 26 December 2021 and 24 January 2022, limiting the use of indoor venues during that period, had minimal impact on ANGUSalive operations during that time which were limited to:
 - indoor (adult) contact sport and physical activity not being permitted in sports centres; and
 - all performances at Webster Memorial Theatre during this period being rescheduled or cancelled since they were not financially viable with attendances at large scale indoor events limited to 200 seated.
- 6.3 Now that those restrictions have been lifted, and to support ANGUSalive in their forward planning, it is proposed that the opening hours as set out in Appendix 1 (as previously agreed in Report 393/21 Appendix 1), continue throughout the forthcoming financial year 2022/23.

The following additions are however also proposed:

- Brechin Town House Museum and Gateway to the Glens Museum, Kirriemuir, will open for the summer season on Wednesday – Saturday from 11am – 4pm between 1 April to 31 October 2022;
 - Signal Tower Museum, Arbroath; The Meffan Museum & Art Gallery, Forfar; and Montrose Museum will operate standard summer and winter opening hours from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023; and
 - Archives will operate standard opening hours from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.
- 6.4 This approach is being proposed due to income generation remaining lower than pre-pandemic levels (currently circa 60%), along with the significant savings targets included in the Council's change programme. With that in mind, agreeing to this approach will continue to support the ongoing viability of the business to continue as a 'going concern' over that period while the business attempts to recover from the pandemic and the Transformation Project is progressed. Any changes to this position during that period will be brought back to members as part of a future report.
 - 6.5 The current temporary operating arrangements as described above do not fully meet the requirements of the current operational services specification as agreed between the Council and ANGUSalive and as operated prior to COVID-19. Accordingly, members are asked to

agree they can form the content of a formal change notice between the Council and ANGUSalive which will reflect this interim position over the period described.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Members will be aware there is £675,000 identified against Monifieth library in the capital plan. The costs associated with the development work to support the proposals for integrating library/ ACCESS service provision as part of the new Monifieth community hub facility are still to be fully established, but all development work and build costs will require to be contained within existing Council capital and revenue resources.
- 7.2 Further information setting out the full financial arrangements, including any revenue and/ or capital implications in relation to the proposal will be provided as part of the update report to members following the elections in May 2022.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The Chief Executive Officer of ANGUSalive has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT/ FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY ASSESSMENTS

- 9.1 At this stage there is no update to the main Equalities Impact and Fairer Scotland Duty assessments which were prepared in relation to Report 224/20.

NOTE: No background papers, as detailed by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 - ANGUSalive Operational Plans