

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the **EDUCATION COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Tuesday 26 November 2002 at 4.00 pm.

Present: Councillors BRIAN MILNE, Provost Mrs FRANCES E DUNCAN OBE, Councillors JACK GIBB, DAVID LUMGAIR, STEWART McGLYNN, GLENNIS MIDDLETON, PETER NIELD, GEORGE NORRIE MBE, KITTY RITCHIE, RON SCRIMGEOUR and SANDY WEST and Father JAMES FOLEY, Rev ALAN WEBSTER, Mr PETER ANDREWS and Mr BRIAN McHARDY.

Apologies Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors SHEENA WELSH and ROBERT MYLES, and Rev KENNETH GIBSON.

Councillor MILNE, Convener, in the Chair.

1. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The [minute of meeting of this Committee of 15 October 2002](#) was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

2. 2003/2004 REVENUE BUDGET

There was submitted [Report No 1319/02](#) by the Director of Finance advising the Committee of the latest position with regard to the preparation of the Education department 2003/2004 revenue budget and associated issues. Appended to the Report was a summary of the departmental provisional base budget for 2003/2004 as submitted to, and subsequently reviewed by, the Director of Finance.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report for its interest at this stage in the budget process; and
- (ii) to note that more detailed Reports with specific recommendations would be brought forward later in the revenue budget cycle.

3. EDUCATION REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING FOR THE SIX MONTHS TO SEPTEMBER 2002

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 27 August 2002, there was submitted [Joint Report No 1393/02](#) by the Director of Finance and the Director of Education indicating that the recent HMI Report on the Education Department had recommended (in accordance with Financial Regulations) that regular budget reports be submitted to this Committee. Accordingly, the Report advised the Committee of the actual net revenue expenditure incurred in comparison to budget in respect of the Education Department for the six month period to 30 September 2002; set out the projected outturn for the year; and provided comment on the more significant variances arising.

The Report concluded that the overall expenditure/income for the Education Department to the end of September was generally in line with budgets and that no particular issues had arisen. The projected outturn for the year indicated a marginal underspend which would be carefully monitored as the year proceeded.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed to note the contents of the Report.

4. 2002/2006 FINANCIAL PLAN AND 2003/04 CAPITAL BUDGET

There was submitted [Report No 1387/02](#) by the Director of Finance advising the Committee of the latest position with regard to the preparation of the 2002/2006 Financial Plan (incorporating the 2003/2004 capital budget for the Education department). Appended to the Report were the departmental Financial Plan submissions for 2002/2006 as returned to the Director of Finance and subsequently reviewed by the Capital Budget Sub-Group.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report for its interest at this stage in the Financial Plan process; and
- (ii) to note that more detailed Reports with specific recommendations would be brought forward later in the Financial Plan cycle.

5. PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP (Ppp)

With reference to Articles 8, 11 and 7 of the minutes of meetings of this Committee of 10 October 2000, 5 June 2001 and 20 November 2001, respectively, there was submitted [Joint Report No 1388/02](#) by the Director of Education and the Director of Finance seeking the Committee's approval for the submission of outline proposals to undertake a Ppp project in Forfar and Carnoustie.

The Report indicated that the closing date for an Angus Council bid for Ppp funding from the Scottish Executive had been extended to 31 December 2002 and set out in the Appendices, reports by Audit Scotland and the Scottish Parliament Finance Committee detailing findings on the use of Ppp for financing public sector capital projects.

The Report detailed the funding mechanisms available to Angus Council and advised that for most Ppp schools projects, local authorities entered into a contract with a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) company to design, build, finance and operate the schools involved. However, an alternative model was currently being developed by Argyll & Bute Council involving the establishment of a Non Profit Distribution Organisation (NPDO). This model, if accepted by the Scottish Executive, would be most likely to bring better value to the proposed Angus project and provide a greater opportunity for Angus Council to have some control over how the contract would be administered in the future.

Following discussion of the available options, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve, in principle, the submission to the Scottish Executive of outline proposals to undertake a Ppp project aimed at improving schools in Forfar and Carnoustie;
- (ii) to note that the outline proposals to be submitted would require to be further considered should funding be made available; and
- (iii) that the preferred option of pursuing the proposed Ppp project would be by way of a Non Profit Distribution Organisation as outlined in Section 6 of the Report.

6. NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR PE AND SPORT

With reference to Article 5 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 15 October 2002, there was submitted (amended) [Report No 1197A/02](#) by the Director of Education outlining proposed projects to be part of the Council application to the New Opportunities Fund (NOF) for grant support in respect of New Opportunities for PE and Sport.

The Report indicated that NOF funding had been notionally allocated to each authority in Scotland but that applications outlining proposals for the utilisation of the funding had to be submitted to the Scottish Executive by 20 September 2002. An Officer Group had been set up to identify and prioritise potential projects and an application had duly been made by the Director of Education, subject to Education Committee approval. Subsequent discussion had resulted in some amendments being made to the original submission in relation to the Facilities Programme as set out in Appendix 1 to the Report. Appendices 2 and 3 set out the original submissions for the two strands of the Activities Programme.

Having heard Councillor Ritchie, local member, welcome the application with regard to the playing fields at Montrose Academy, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve the proposals for NOF grant funding outlined within the Report, and its Appendices; and
- (ii) to instruct the Director of Education to report back to this Committee on the outcome of the application, once known.

7. REVIEW OF PROVISION OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICES IN SCOTLAND (CURRIE REPORT, FEBRUARY 2002): PROPOSED ANGUS ACTION PLAN

There was submitted [Report No 1389/02](#) by the Director of Education seeking the Committee's approval of an Action Plan which had been drawn up to support the implementation of the recommendations of the Currie Report.

The Report indicated that, in response to concerns regarding the future supply of educational psychology services, a Review Steering Group had been set up by the Scottish Executive, chaired by Mrs Eleanor Currie, formerly Director of Education, of East Renfrewshire Council. The "Currie Report" contained 31 recommendations which had been accepted in full by the Scottish Executive and these were likely to assist both recruitment to, and the management of, educational psychology services.

The Report concluded that the Currie Report was to be welcomed and recommended that the Committee approve the Action Plan for educational psychology services in Angus which had been drawn up to support the implementation of the recommendations of the Currie Report.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the recommendations of the Currie Report set out in the Appendix;
- (ii) to note the current position in Angus vis á vis each recommendation in the Appendix; and
- (iii) to approve the actions (where required) which were proposed in the appended Action Plan to address each recommendation.

8. RACE RELATIONS (AMENDMENT) ACT 2000

With reference to Article 9 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 15 October 2002, there was submitted [Report No 1390/02](#) by the Director of Education advising the Committee of the outcome of a recent review of the requirements placed on the authority by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and seeking approval for the adoption of the documents attached to the Report as departmental policy.

The Report concluded that the policy documentation, which had drawn upon the "Tackling Racism Together" publication, produced by the Council working in collaboration with Tayside Police, would provide a sound basis for addressing new legal duties placed upon the Council in terms of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. It was intended that this exercise would be followed by a similar review of the requirements placed on the authority by the Disability Discrimination Act and that both revised policy papers would be subsumed within the department's equality opportunities policy and guideline documentation.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the terms of the Report;
- (ii) to approve the policy papers and exemplar material appended to the Report as the Education Department policy on Race Relations; and
- (iii) to instruct the Director of Education to report back periodically with the results of any monitoring exercises.

9. PROPOSED MEETING WITH SCHOOL BOARD/PARENTAL REPRESENTATIVES

The Committee agreed to note that, in accordance with previous practice, a meeting had been arranged with the School Board/parental representatives at 7.30pm on Tuesday 28 November 2002 in the Town and County Hall, Forfar to which all members of the Education Committee were cordially invited.

10. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

The Committee resolved, in terms of Standing Order 27(2), that the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items 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 1, 6, 8 and 9.

11. STAFFING ESTABLISHMENT – MINOR CHANGE

With reference to Article 9 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 25 January 2000, there was submitted [Report No 1394/02](#) by the Director of Education recommending, in light of an increased volume of work attached to a Training Assistant post, an increase in weekly hours.

The Committee agreed to approve the increase in hours of Post No 02/13 (Training Assistant) from 0.5 (fte) to 0.6 (fte).

12. DEVELOPMENT OF WEB-BASED SOFTWARE TO SUPPORT CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN SCHOOLS

There was submitted [Report No 1391/02](#) by the Director of Education advising of the need for web-based ICT support for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in relation to “A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century” and outlining a proposal to purchase web-based CPD software from “goodpractice.net” for use in all Angus schools and by all staff, with phased implementation.

The Committee agreed to award the contract to goodpractice.net, as detailed in the Report and its Appendix, on the basis that the contract process was exempted from normal contract provision in terms of Financial Regulation 16.1.3.d, due to the specialist nature of the software.

13. TENDERING FOR PIANO TUNING

There was submitted [Report No 1392/02](#) by the Director of Education detailing the results of a tendering exercise which had been undertaken in June 2002 for the piano tuning contract for Angus Council schools, indicating that no successful tender had been received for Angus and that, in agreement with the Chief Executive of Dundee City Council, a tender had been invited from the contractor currently employed by that Council.

The Committee agreed to note the award of the contract as detailed in the Report.