

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the **EDUCATION COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Tuesday 15 April 2003 at 4.00 pm.

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

Apologies: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors JACK GIBB and KITTY RITCHIE, Rev KENNETH GIBSON and Mr BRIAN McHARDY.

Councillor MILNE, Convener, in the Chair.

1. VALEDICTORY REMARKS

As this was the last meeting of this Committee to be held before the elections, the Convener thanked all the officers for the support which he had received over the last four years. In particular, he paid tribute to the support received from the Director of Education and his staff.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Committee agreed to note that no declarations of interest were made.

3. MINUTES

(a) Previous Meeting

The [minute of meeting of this Committee of 4 March 2003](#) was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

(b) Staffing Sub-Committee

The Director of Law and Administration reported on the meeting of the Staffing Sub-Committee held earlier this day. The Committee noted the decision as set out in the minute, a copy of which is appended hereto ([APPENDIX I](#)).

4. EDUCATION SERVICE PLAN 2001/2004: 2003/2004 UPDATE

With reference to Article 4 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 21 January 2003, there was submitted [Report No 479/03](#) by the Director of Education advising the Committee of progress which had been made in implementing the Education Service Plan 2002/2003 update and describing the arrangements being made for the finalisation of the 2003/2004 update and the production of 2003/2004 School Development Plan returns.

The Report concluded that, in order to continue to ensure effective articulation between the Education Service Plan, and Service and School Plans, the views of schools, individual services and School Boards should be sought on the proposed priorities identified in the draft 2003/2004 update. Amendments would be made in the light of consultation and the Committee's approval of a finalised Service Plan update would be sought at the meeting scheduled for 10 June 2003.

The Report therefore recommended that the draft 2003/2004 Service Plan be issued to schools, services and School Boards for consultation.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the considerable progress made in relation to development priorities set out in the Education Service Plan 2002/2003 update, contained within the draft 2003/2004 Service Plan update;
- (ii) to note the impact of the five national priorities on service planning and school development planning;
- (iii) to note that the Director of Education would consult widely on the draft 2003/2004 update of the Education Service Plan; and
- (iv) to instruct the Director of Education to report back to the Committee on the outcomes of the consultative exercise.

5. CONSULTATION ON DRAFT EDUCATION (ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING) (SCOTLAND) BILL

There was submitted [Report No 480/03](#) by the Director of Education advising the Committee of the publication of a consultation paper on the Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Bill and seeking approval of the officer response to this consultation paper, a copy of which was appended to the Report.

The Report indicated that the draft Bill attempted to more accurately reflect the needs of children who had "special educational needs", (by replacing this terminology with the description "additional support needs") and to simplify the procedures associated with the current recording process.

The Report concluded that the draft Bill was to be welcomed as it provided much needed attention to the area of educational provision, but that there were still areas which required more attention and a degree of rethinking if the Bill was to be introduced as an Act later this year. Copies of the draft Bill had been placed in the Members Lounge.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the terms of the Report; and
- (ii) to endorse the officer response to the draft Bill appended to the Report.

6. ALEXANDER MACHARDY LAW BURSARY FUND - UPDATE

With reference to Article 9 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 21 January 2003, there was submitted [Report No 456/03](#) by the Director of Law and Administration advising that, following the publication of the proposed re-organisation of the Alexander MacHardy Law Bursary Fund, no objections or amendments had been received within the time limit. Accordingly, the Committee was now asked to approve the making of the Scheme.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note that there were no objections to the advertised proposal to re-organise the Fund; and
- * (ii) to recommend that the Council resolve to make the Scheme in terms of the draft Scheme already circulated and to authorise the Director of Law and Administration to sign the Scheme.

7. SCOTTISH ARTS COUNCIL: CREATIVE LINKS PROGRAMME

There was submitted [Report No 482/03](#) by the Director of Education seeking the Committee's approval for a funding submission to be made to the Scottish Arts Council.

The Report indicated that, in August 2002, the Scottish Arts Council had announced a new proposal, as part of its "Creative Links Programme", which aimed to extend across Scotland a network of links or Arts Education Co-ordinator posts by offering each Council partnership funding to create its own such post. A number of Councils had already taken advantage of the links programme, and in those Councils where the scheme operated, it was much valued by local communities. The funding application form which had been compiled by a Staff Working Group comprising members from Education and Leisure Services was appended to the Report. The funding package offered by the Scottish Arts Council amounted to a total of £60,000 for any participating Council, spread over four financial years, with any residual costs resting with the Council.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to endorse the funding application to the Scottish Arts Council; and
- (ii) to approve, in principle, the funding arrangements set out in Section 4 of the Report and in the application to the Scottish Arts Council.

8. SCHOOLS PPP PROJECT

With reference to Article 5 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 26 November 2002, there was submitted [Joint Report No 483/03](#) by the Director of Education and the Director of Finance advising the Committee of the successful outcome of the submission to the Scottish Executive of outline proposals to undertake a PPP Project aimed at improving schools in Forfar and Carnoustie. A copy of the formal notification was appended to the Report. The Scottish Executive's letter made clear that the award of revenue support for the project in the amount of £3.58million per annum over 30 years was a capped, indicative offer which would only be realised if, and when, the Council produced a final business case for the project which met the Executive's criteria.

The Report indicated that considerable detailed work now required to be undertaken by Angus Council and further progress reports would be submitted periodically to the appropriate Council Committees, as and when there was specific progress to report on the project.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the letter from the Scottish Executive Education Department attached to the Report; and
- (ii) to note that further reports would be prepared for Committee consideration as the detailed planning process for the project took shape.

9. CORTACHY PRIMARY SCHOOL

There was submitted [Joint Report No 484/03](#) by the Director of Education and the Director of Property Services outlining the requirement to provide an extra extension to Cortachy Primary School to replace hutted accommodation.

The main building which dated back to the 19th century was in generally good condition with temporary hutted accommodation added in the early 1970's. However, structural problems had recently been discovered in one of the classrooms and it was no longer accessible for pupils. Although it would be possible to carry out improvement work, this would only delay the inevitable requirement to replace the hutted accommodation. The Report therefore recommended the provision of a permanent extension to the school and other improvements to the main building.

Outline plans to redevelop the school had been discussed with the Head Teacher and wider consultation was proposed with the whole school community early in the new term to discuss both the plans and school arrangements during the construction period.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed:-

- (i) to approve the extension/improvement to Cortachy Primary School at an estimated cost of £360,000;
- (ii) to note that a further Report on procurement would be considered by the Policy and Resources Committee; and
- (iii) to note that a further Joint Report on the School Estate Plan would be brought forward to future Committee meetings.

10. JAGUAR F1 CHALLENGE FOR SCHOOLS

With reference to Article 11 of the minute of meeting of the Economic Development Committee of 10 April 2003, there was submitted [Joint Report No 469/03](#) by the Chief Executive and the Director of Education requesting the Committee's approval to contribute £1,000 in sponsorship to the Jaguar Formula One Challenge for Schools. This would contribute towards the cost of enabling Angus Schools to participate in the event and establish Angus Training Group as the centre for manufacturing of models and for the training of teachers for Scotland.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed to authorise £1,000 sponsorship toward the costs of Angus schools participating in the Jaguar Formula One Challenge for Schools in 2003/2004, with the cost being met jointly by the Economic Development and the Education Departmental Budgets for 2003/2004.

11. RURAL TRAINING IN ANGUS - CAREERS EVENT

With reference to Article 10 of the minute of meeting of the Economic Development Committee of 10 April 2003, there was submitted [Joint Report No 467/03](#) by the Chief Executive and the Director of Education providing information on a proposal to hold a second one day careers event in Angus to promote and raise the profile of careers in the land based sector. The event would be held at Wester Meathie, Inverarity in September 2003 and would draw exhibitors and school children from the Tayside area.

The Report indicated that the Council, in partnership with Scottish Enterprise Tayside (SET) and the Sector Skills Council for the Environmental and Land Based Sector (LANTRA) had been requested to assist with the operation of the event. The event was estimated to cost a total of £2,000, with SET to fund 50% of these costs, 25% being met by LANTRA and the remaining 25% being met by Angus Council.

Having heard Provost Mrs Duncan welcome the Report, the Committee agreed to authorise the contribution of up to £250 to be met from the Education Revenue Budget for 2003/2004, to assist towards the costs of holding a careers event in Angus.

12. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

The Committee resolved, in terms of Standing Order 27(2), that the public and press be excluded during consideration of the following item so as to avoid the possible disclosure of information which was exempt in terms of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, paragraphs 6, 8, 9 and 10.

13. EDUCATION DEPARTMENT MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM

There was submitted [Report No 481/03](#) by the Director of Education setting out the need for a robust electronic system to be purchased in order to link schools effectively to centrally based services and to improve the effectiveness of the management information needs of the service.

The Report indicated that, due to the specialist nature of the software, it had not been appropriate to undertake the normal tendering procedures and a staff working group had issued an outline specification, based on the key objectives to four suppliers identified in the Report. Following detailed evaluation of the products as set out in Appendix A, the Working Group had recommended the purchase of software from Capita Education Services as the most efficient and effective solution.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed:-

- (i) to award the contract for the provision of a Management Information System to Capita Education Services;
- (ii) to note the decision taken by the Director of Education (in consultation with the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance) to exempt the contract from normal tendering and contract arrangements in accordance with Financial Regulation 16.1 (3) b(ii), due to the specialist nature of the services required; and
- (iii) to note that budget allowance had been put in place for the service provision in the financial year 2003/2004 and that any future years' impact would be accommodated in future year budget preparation exercises.