

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the **INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Thursday 27 January 2005 at 4.00 pm.

Present: Councillors DAVID SELFRIDGE, KITTY RITCHIE, IAN ANGUS, FRANK ELLIS, JACK GIBB, ALEX KING, IAN MACKINTOSH, STEWART McGLYNN, JOY MOWATT, PETER NIELD, MARK SALMOND, RON SCRIMGEOUR, RICHARD SPEIRS and ROBERT SPINK.

Apology: An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor ROBERT MYLES.
Councillor SELFRIDGE, Convener, in the Chair.

Before the commencement of business the Convener acknowledged the recent sad passing of, and paid tribute to Alex Shand, former Tayside Regional and Angus Councillor and Sheila Kydd, former Tayside Regional Councillor.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Ritchie declared an interest in item 28 as a Director of RGIT Montrose.

Councillor Angus declared an interest in item 27 as an ordinary member of the Arbroath Abbey Pageant Society.

Councillor Gibb declared an interest in item 37 as a Director of Angus Digital Media Centre Limited.

Councillor King declared an interest in item 27 as a life member of the Arbroath Abbey Pageant Society and also as a Council appointed Director of the Seafest Company.

Councillor Mowatt declared an interest in item 29 as Convener of Camerata Angus - Media Access Angus and item 37 as a Director of Angus Digital Media Centre Limited.

Councillor Nield declared an interest in item 8(a) as a Council appointee to the Hospitalfield House Trust.

2. MINUTES

(a) Previous Meeting

The [minute of meeting of this Committee of 25 November 2004](#) was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

(b) Arbroath Harbour Joint Consultative Committee

The [minute of meeting of the Arbroath Harbour Joint Consultative Committee of 26 November 2004](#), a copy of which is appended hereto, was submitted and noted (**APPENDIX I**).

(c) Executive Sub-Committee

The [minute of meeting of the Executive Sub-Committee of 22 December 2004](#), a copy of which is appended hereto, was submitted and noted (**APPENDIX II**).

Prior to this item the Committee viewed a short screening of the 'Aber-Dover News: Eco-Footprint Special Video'.

3. ECO-FOOTPRINT PROJECT

With reference to Article 8 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 12 January 2003, there was submitted [Report No 1/05](#) by the Director of Planning and Transport asking the Committee to note the successful conclusion to the Eco-Footprint Project in Angus and the Project's success in achieving two Green Apple Awards (Gold Award Winners for Scottish Local Authorities 2003 and 2004).

The Report indicated that the Brechin Eco-Footprint Project had been submitted to the Green Organisation in 2003 and subsequently won a Green Apple Award - Gold Award Winner for Scottish Local Authorities. The Report also sought to inform members of a follow-up project which had built upon the good practice achieved in working with the community on environmental issues.

The Report concluded that these pioneering projects had helped to raise awareness of sustainable development within the community of Angus and that this unique initiative had been recognised by others throughout the UK. Winning the Green Apple Award had raised the profile of Angus Council's efforts towards achieving sustainable development as the award had international recognition.

The Committee agreed to note the successful conclusion of the Eco-Footprint Project and the Project's success in achieving two Green Apple Awards for the Brechin Eco-Footprint Project in 2003 and the Aber-Dover News: Eco-Footprint Special Video/DVD and "Buy Local in Angus" Digital Map for 2004.

4. RURAL SHOPS AND COMMUNITY POST OFFICE CONVERSION GRANT SCHEME - REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM INVERKEILOR POST OFFICE AND SHOP

There was submitted [Report No 7/05](#) by the Director of Planning and Transport advising the Committee that Inverkeilor Post Office and Shop had applied for grant assistance to undertake improvements to the business and the premises. The Report indicated that the Post Office and Shop at Inverkeilor was the only shop available to the community and served a function well beyond the provision of goods and services.

Having heard Councillor Spink, local member, welcome the Report, the Committee agreed to offer a grant of 90% of the cost of the improvements to the Post Office and shop at Inverkeilor up to a maximum grant of £3,000 under the Rural Shops and Community Post Office Conversion Grant Scheme.

5. PUBLIC TRANSPORT UPDATE

With reference to Article 3 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 25 November 2004, there was submitted [Report No 88/05](#) by the Director of Planning and Transport updating members on recent and proposed public transport service changes within Angus and informing of proposals for a new National Free Travel Concession Scheme for Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons from 1 April 2006.

The Report indicated that the local bus services were continually monitored and, where there was outstanding demand, then new services were secured to meet the needs of Angus residents. Where capital funding was available, then Angus Council would seek to maximise expenditure within the Council area in order to improve infrastructure and facilities available to bus users.

Having heard various members welcome the Report, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to the award of a contract to Strathtay Scottish Limited for the provision of a late evening journey on Mondays to Thursdays operating between Dundee, Forfar and Kirriemuir;
- (ii) to the award of a contract to Strathtay Scottish Limited for the provision of additional peak journeys between Letham Grange and Arbroath and re-routing of the service via the new Health Centre;

- (iii) to note the peak hour service changes introduced by Strathtay Scottish Limited on the Montrose to Dundee corridor in order to meet their operational requirements;
- (iv) to the award of a contract to Strathtay Scottish Limited for the provision of a later last bus operating between Montrose and Arbroath on Monday to Saturday evenings;
- (v) to note the fares increase to be introduced by Strathtay Scottish Limited from 31 January 2005;
- (vi) to note the proposals outlined by the Transport Minister, Nicol Stephen, for a National Free Travel Concession Scheme on buses for senior citizens and disabled persons from 1 April 2006;
- (vii) to note the progress in relation to the production of a Public Transport Information Strategy for Angus and introduction of a journey planning facility on the Council's website;
- (viii) to note the appointment of JMP Transport Consultants to assist with technical queries and, if necessary, with the contract award process in respect of the Council's tender for the extension of real-time information throughout Angus;
- (ix) to note the submission of a bid to the Scottish Executive for additional funding for capital expenditure on public transport related projects for this financial year; and
- (x) to note the details of the tenders which were to be sought for the replacement of existing contracted local bus services operating within Angus.

6. SERVICE PLAN PROGRESS/PERFORMANCE REPORT - PLANNING AND TRANSPORT

With reference to Article 3 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 2 September 2004, there was submitted [Report No 99/05](#) by the Director of Planning and Transport providing an overview of progress on nine key areas which the Service Plan indicated would be addressed over the four year period 2003/2007.

The Report indicated that actions in the Service Plan were largely progressing in accordance with Plan update targets and progress summaries were given in respect of:-

- providing for a good supply of land for housing and business development
- encouraging new development in sustainable locations
- improving public transport
- processing development proposals more quickly
- increasing the use of new technology to wider access
- tackling derelict buildings more effectively
- providing for greater access to countryside and coast
- promoting conservation of the natural inbuilt heritage
- providing increased opportunities for public involvement and taking all views into account

Having heard Councillor King welcome the Report and particularly the proactive approach being taken regarding tackling derelict buildings, the Committee, for its interest, agreed to note the progress which was being made on nine key areas which provided the broad contents for priority areas of work undertaken by the Planning and Transport Department.

7. ANNUAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT - PLANNING AND TRANSPORT

With reference to Article 13 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 27 November 2003, there was submitted [Report No 90/05](#) by the Director of Planning and Transport presenting the Annual Health and Safety Report for the Department and highlighting progress made and the actions taken.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the Report.

8. ANGUS LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

(a) Arbroath Town Statement

With reference to Article 2 of the minute of the special meeting of Angus Council of 15 December 2004, there was submitted [Report No 91/05](#) by the Director of Planning and Transport confirming the content of the text, policies and proposals of the Arbroath Town Statement as incorporated in the finalised Angus Local Plan Review.

The Report indicated that a copy of the Arbroath Town Statement section of the finalised Local Plan Review was appended to the Report and incorporated updated text, policies and proposals arising from the Council's decision on 15 December 2004. More significantly, it included proposed guidance for the development of each of the three sites which had been/were the subject of major food retail development interest at Cairnie Street/Stobcross (Westburn Foundry), Wardmill/Dens Road and Westway.

Having heard various members on the content of the Report, the Committee agreed to note the content of the Arbroath Town Statement, as appended to the Report, which was incorporated in the finalised Angus Local Plan Review for publication, including guidance for development of sites:-

- (i) A10: Cairnie Street/Stobcross (Westburn Foundry);
- (ii) A11: Wardmill/Dens Road; and
- (iii) A16: Westway - Dundee Road, Retail Park.

In accordance with Standing Order 15(9)(ii), Councillor Ritchie requested that her dissent be recorded with respect to (iii) above and Councillor Nield advised that he would refrain from voting on this item.

The following matter was on the determination of the Convener, dealt with as a matter of urgency, in order that certain amendments could be made for inclusion in the finalised Angus Local Plan Review written statement.

(b) Amendment to Friockheim Village Statement

With reference to Article 3 of the minute of the special meeting of Angus Council of 15 December 2004, there was submitted [Report No 196/05](#) by the Director of Planning and Transport seeking approval for two amendments to the Friockheim Village Statement, for inclusion in the finalised Angus Local Plan Review Written Statement.

The Report indicated that, arising from the process of final editing, two matters had been noted in the Friockheim Village text and boundary map and approval was being sought to make the necessary amendments to the finalised Angus Local Plan Review before formal publication of the document.

The Committee agreed to amend the Village Statement and proposals mapped for Friockheim, as set out in the Report, and to incorporate the changes into the finalised Angus Local Plan.

9. SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT - TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS - CONSULTATION PAPER

There was submitted [Joint Report No 92/05](#) by the Director of Planning and Transport and the Director of Law and Administration advising members of a Consultation Paper by the Scottish Executive on Tree Preservation Orders and recommending a response to the questions asked. A copy of the consultation paper was attached as Appendix A to the Report and the proposed Angus Council response to the Consultation Paper was attached as Appendix B.

Following discussion, the Committee agreed that Appendix B be submitted as the Council's response to the Consultation Paper.

10. PROPOSALS FOR THE DESIGN OF REGIONAL TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIPS

With reference to Article 3 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 25 November 2004, there was submitted [Joint Report No 93/05](#) by the Director of Planning and Transport and the Director of Roads commenting on and providing a suggested response to the Scottish Executive Consultation Paper on proposals for Statutory Regional Transport Partnerships.

The Report indicated that the aim of the Scottish Executive was that Regional Transport Partnerships would, through agreed Regional Transport Strategies, identify and focus effort on investment or key improvements that might be beyond the reach of individual Councils. This would require local authorities to focus on the strategic transport needs of people and businesses within and beyond the region. The purpose of the current consultation exercise was to gather views on a number of questions relating to the creation of Statutory Regional Transport Partnerships in Scotland. It was intended that the Regional Transport Partnerships would be constituted on the basis of recommendations of the Local Authorities, SPT and the Voluntary Partnerships themselves, informed by discussion with Community Planning Partnerships and other appropriate regional stakeholders. The boundaries of the Partnerships, and their constitution, membership and voting arrangements would only be determined by Scottish Ministers following detailed consultation of Local Authorities and other interested parties and, so far as possible, on the basis of consensus agreement amongst the constituent members.

The Report concluded that, significantly, the Consultation Paper proposed a "Central and Tay" Regional Transport Partnership encompassing the Council areas of Angus, Dundee City, Perth and Kinross and Stirling. This proposed grouping would appear to have some merit from an Angus perspective provided that the functions and powers of the Partnership were limited to the production of a Regional Transport Strategy and sharing of some concurrent functions only.

Having heard the Convener and Councillor Ritchie highlight the important issues addressed by the Report, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the significant proposals for the form and functions of new Statutory Regional Transport Partnerships covering all of Scotland as set out in the Consultation Paper and provided for in the Transport (Scotland) Bill 2004 and related documents;
- (ii) to approve the Report, including the comments in Section 5 and on consultation questions identified in Appendix 1 to the Report, as the Council's formal response to the Consultation Paper; and
- (iii) to advise the Scottish Executive of:-
 - (a) Angus Council's continuing concern over the democratic accountability of Statutory Regional Transport Partnerships as proposed; and
 - (b) the Council's qualified support of a Central and Tay Regional Transport Partnership, encompassing Angus, Dundee City, Perth and Kinross and Stirling Councils, subject to functions and powers of the partnership being limited to the minimum Model 1 approach only.

11. CYCLING, WALKING AND SAFER STREETS FUND - PROGRAMME OF WORKS

With reference to Article 22 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 8 June 2004, there was submitted [Joint Report No 89/05](#) by the Director of Planning and Transport and the Director of Roads advising the Committee on progress in delivering the programme of projects to be funded through the Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets Fund for 2004/2005.

The Report indicated that, in June 2004, the Committee had approved a programme of projects to be funded during the current financial year and that work had been progressing on the delivery of the Programme of Works. A summary of the projects being undertaken during 2004/2005 was attached to the Report.

Having heard various members express their concern on the issue of road safety and cycleways, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the current position regarding the programme of projects being undertaken during the financial year 2004/2005;
- (ii) to approve the amendments to the programme as outlined in the Report;
- (iii) to await a further report on the proposed programme of projects for the financial year 2005/2006; and
- (iv) to note that a further offer of grant for 2006/007 and 2007/2008 had been accepted.

12. TENDERS ACCEPTED

There was submitted and noted [Report No 95/05](#) by the Director of Roads detailing those tenders which he had accepted on behalf of the Council during the period 1 April 2004 to 30 September 2004, in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.

13. ADDITIONS TO THE STANDING LIST OF CONTRACTORS FOR CONSTRUCTION, CIVIL ENGINEERING AND ROAD MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS UNDER £200,000

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 8 June 2004, there was submitted [Report No 96/05](#) by the Director of Roads recommending approval of contractors for various categories of work up to a maximum value of £200,000, who were initially excluded from the current Standing Lists as a result of information/clarification being sought or who did not submit their application in time for consideration at the meeting of the Committee on 25 November 2004. This would increase the number of contractors on the Standing Lists, provide more scope for competitive tendering and would therefore provide better value for money from future works contracts.

The Committee agreed to approve the contractors listed in Appendix 1 for inclusion on the Standing Lists of Contractors for various categories of work up to a maximum contract value of £200,000 in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.

14. QUALITY ASSURANCE - ROADS DEPARTMENT'S QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM - EXTENSION OF SCOPE

With reference to Article 21 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 29 April 2004, there was submitted [Report No 97/05](#) by the Director of Roads informing the Committee of the successful extension of the Roads Department's BS EN ISO 9001:2000 Quality Management System which would now encompass the provision of civil, structural and traffic engineering services, project management, road management and road maintenance services including street lighting and administrative support.

The Report indicated that the Roads Department, over a three year period, had successfully achieved BSI registration to BS EN ISO 9001:2000 for the core activities within all five sections of the Department. The scope of registration, which defined activities covered by the Quality Management System, had been amended accordingly.

The Committee agreed to note the successful extension of the scope of the Quality Management System used by the Roads Department in compliance with BS EN ISO 9001:2000.

15. ROADSIDE MEMORIALS AND FLORAL TRIBUTES

There was submitted [Report No 98/05](#) by the Director of Roads putting forward a policy for dealing with the practice of placing floral tributes and/or roadside memorials at the scene of fatal road traffic accidents by bereaved relatives and friends.

The Report indicated that the Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS) had prepared guidance on this subject, which was attached as Appendix A to the Report. In recent times, the practice of placing floral tributes following a fatal road traffic accident had

been growing to the extent that it was now becoming the norm and this had raised concerns for road safety and sites which by their very nature might be dangerous. As a result of this increasing tendency, the SCOTS Road Safety and Traffic Management Group had set up a working party involving local authorities, Scottish Executive and the Association of Chief Police Officers (Scotland) to investigate and advise on this sensitive matter.

The Committee agreed to adopt the guidance published by the Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland as the Council's policy for dealing with the placing of floral tributes and roadside memorials at the scene of fatal road traffic accidents.

16. HYDROCARBON OIL DUTY CONSULTATION

There was submitted [Report No 100/05](#) by the Director of Roads advising the Committee of a consultation exercise being undertaken by HM Treasury regarding the use of rebated gas oil (red diesel) in road related activities and proposing a response on behalf of the Council in light of the possible severe impact on services and the economy of Angus.

The Report indicated that, as part of the Pre-Budget Report Statement delivered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on 2 December 2004, the Government had announced proposals to consult on whether to make changes to the list of vehicles entitled to use rebated gas oil (red diesel). The Director of Roads had prepared a response to the consultation paper for approval by the Committee and the main impact on the Council's road operations were summarised as follows:-

- A substantial increase in the cost of providing the current winter maintenance service. Tayside Contracts had made a preliminary estimate of the costs of the additional fuel duty/vehicle licensing charges to be in the order of £125,000 for Angus for winter alone
- Severe operational difficulties in providing alternative resources (men and plant and finance) to undertake winter maintenance activities currently undertaken by sub-contracted farmers if they were to withdraw from the current arrangements (with an associated reduction in external employment for farmers during winter)
- Possible withdrawal of self-help providers from the scheme
- Consequential reduced winter maintenance services, particularly in the more remote areas
- Substantial increase in the cost of roads maintenance/street lighting maintenance

It was noted that more details were given in the proposed response which was attached as Appendix A to the Report.

Having heard various members express their concern at the impact the proposed changes would have on winter maintenance provision in Angus, the Committee agreed to approve the proposed response by the Director of Roads to the current consultation by H M Treasury on proposed changes to the Excepted Vehicle Schedule for Hydrocarbon Oil Duty (red diesel).

17. HIGH STREET, MONTROSE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS - OUTCOME OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION

With reference to Article 29 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 8 June 2004, there was submitted [Report No 101/05](#) by the Director of Roads detailing the outcome of the public consultation exercise carried out in July/August/September 2004 regarding possible changes to the traffic management arrangements in the High Street/Hume Street/George Street/Castle Place area of Montrose and, in the light of the response to the consultation, proposing that one of these possible changes be taken forward for more detailed consideration and that further consideration be given to additional measures to discourage through traffic from using the High Street and to reduce vehicle speeds in the town centre.

The Report indicated that a comprehensive consultation exercise had been carried out to determine local public opinion and possible changes to the existing traffic management

arrangements in the High Street/Hume Street/George Street/Castle Place area of Montrose. The feedback from this consultation had indicated no strong preference for changing five out of six of the measures under consideration. The other proposal, to provide parking facilities in front of the Old Kirk for vehicles attending wedding and funeral services, had been favourably received and it was proposed therefore to consider this option in more detail to allow the financial implications to be determined.

Following a full discussion, during which members welcomed the Report and expressed their thanks to the Director of Roads and his staff, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the outcome of the public consultation exercise carried out in July/August/September 2004 regarding possible changes to the traffic management arrangements in the High Street/Hume Street/George Street/Castle Place area in Montrose;
- (ii) that the textual comments received from those who responded to the consultation questionnaire be published anonymously on the Council's web site;
- (iii) to remit to the Director of Roads to investigate in more detail the proposal to provide a parking facility on the wide slabbed area in front of the St Andrews and Old Church (the Old Kirk) for vehicles attending wedding and funeral services;
- (iv) that in the light of the response to the consultation, no changes be made to the current arrangements for:-
 - (a) the High Street/Hume Street junction;
 - (b) the High Street/George Street junction;
 - (c) the section of High Street between the Town House and Peel Place;
 - (d) the taxi rank in Hume Street;
 - (e) the bus stop in Hume Street; and
- (v) that in the light of the response to the feedback obtained from the consultation, to remit to the Director of Roads to investigate additional measures to discourage through traffic from using the High Street and to reduce vehicle speeds in the town centre.

18. BIENNIAL REVIEW OF SERVICES AND CHARGES AT ARBROATH HARBOUR

With reference to Article 5 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 25 November 2004, there was submitted [Report No 102/05](#) by the Director of Roads advising the Committee of the consultation at the Arbroath Harbour Joint Consultative Committee on 26 November 2004 on the review of charges for services provided by the Council at the harbour and asking the Committee to approve the proposed charges.

The Report indicated that the proposed charges were considered to strike a balance between increasing income and providing value for money services at Arbroath Harbour and to be equitable in terms of a comparison with charges for similar services at other facilities on the east coast of Scotland. It was therefore proposed that the Committee should approve the revised schedules of charges for services at Arbroath Harbour for the period April 2005 to March 2007 as set out, in detail, in Appendix 1 to the Report.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the outcome of the Best Value Management Review of services and associated charges provided at Arbroath Harbour as reported to the Monitoring Group on 7 October 2004 and to this Committee on 25 November 2004;
- (ii) to note that the revised Schedules of Charges for services had been discussed at the Arbroath Harbour Joint Consultative Committee meeting on 26 November 2004, when the proposed revised charges were agreed, subject to the charges for the slipway being phased in over two years; and
- (iii) to approve the revised Schedule of Charges, which would be brought into effect from 1 April 2005 and remain in force until March 2007, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the Report.

19. TRAFFIC ORDERS

(a) Temporary Traffic Orders

There was submitted and noted [Report No 103/05](#) by the Director of Law and Administration advising that, at the request of the Director of Roads, six Temporary Traffic Orders had been made, as detailed in the Report.

(b) Angus Council (Stopping Up of Section of Footpath at Ness Drive, Arbroath)

There was submitted [Joint Report No 104/05](#) by the Director of Law and Administration and the Director of Planning and Transport dealing with the proposed stopping-up of a section of footpath at Ness Drive, Arbroath in terms of Section 208 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 and asking the Committee to agree to the promotion of the Stopping-Up Order.

The Committee agreed to the promotion of a Stopping-Up Order to extinguish the public right of passage over a section of footpath at Ness Drive, Arbroath.

20. UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS

With reference to Article 13 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 25 November 2004, there was submitted Report No 116/05 by the Director of Planning and Transport providing various statistics, graphs and charts showing unemployment rates by travel to work, numbers and ages of unemployed persons, duration of unemployment and the number of vacancies in Angus and neighbouring authorities for the month of November 2004.

Having heard Councillor Mowatt advise members that Brechin West had just been accorded Rural Services Priority Area Status, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the Report.

21. HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS - 25 NOVEMBER 2004-27 JANUARY 2005

With reference to Article 18 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 25 November 2004, there was submitted and noted [Report No 105/05](#) by the Chief Executive identifying the highlights and achievements of the work within the Economic Development Unit for the period 25 November 2004-27 January 2005.

22. ANGUS VILLAGE HALL SCHEME PHASE II

With reference to Article 19 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 2 September 2004, there was submitted [Report No 106/05](#) by the Chief Executive confirming the £40,000 financial implications for Angus Council given the decommitment of the Angus Village Hall Scheme Phase II, part-funded by the Rural Stirling/Upland Tayside Objective 5b Programme 1994-1999.

The Report indicated that, at the meeting of this Committee on 2 September 2004, the Chief Executive had been asked to write to the Minister for Enterprise and Lifelong Learning advising that the timescale for processing grants had been unacceptable given that this was over a holiday period. A letter has been sent on 10 September 2004 to this effect and a response had been received on 14 October 2004 from Allan Wilson, Minister with portfolio responsibility for European Structural Funds. The letter confirmed that no *ex gratia* payment would be made for the project.

The Report concluded that the Council would meet a financial burden of £40,000 from the uncommitted balance within the Local Capital Fund and that this would conclude the negotiations to recover ERDF monies for this project.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the Report.

23. SCOTTISH COUNCIL FOR DEVELOPMENT AND INDUSTRY - OUTWARD TRADE MISSION TO THE BALTIC STATES - 8-15 NOVEMBER 2004

With reference to Article 36 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 4 March 2004, there was submitted amended [Report No 107/05](#) by the Chief Executive summarising the key outcomes and achievements arising from the Scottish Council for Development and Industry (SCDI) Trade Mission to Latvia, Lithuania and the exploratory visit to Estonia.

The Report indicated that, from an economic perspective, it was important to generate awareness of trade opportunity in the Baltic markets, particularly since the accession of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia into the European Union. The information obtained during the SCDI Trade Mission would enable a suitable programme of preparation to be made with a view to facilitating a company led trade mission to Sigulda/Riga in Latvia and Tallinn, Estonia in May 2005, provided there was sufficient demand from local companies.

The Report concluded that it was clear that there were opportunities in each of the Baltic countries for Angus companies, particularly in the fields of timber, crafts, food processing, financial services, agriculture and machinery. It was also apparent, however, that of these three Baltic countries, Estonia had made the greatest development strides and would offer a more secure business environment for Angus companies at this juncture, as long as companies proceeded with caution.

Having heard the Economic Development Manager inform members that a number of local companies had shown interest in participating in a Trade Mission to the area, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the successful outcome of the visit to Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia which took place on 8-15 November 2004;
- (ii) to note the interest by a Shipping Company in Klaipeda Port, Lithuania to visit Montrose Port in 2005 to discuss a possible joint venture;
- (iii) that against a backcloth of the information gained through this trade mission, the Economic Development Manager be instructed to identify local companies that had a specific interest in the Latvian, Lithuanian and Estonian markets and to commence an awareness programme of potential opportunities;
- (iv) to note that a formal invitation had been received by the Provost from the Chairman of Sigulda Region Council, Latvia for Angus companies and the Council to participate in the International Entrepreneurs meeting in Sigulda in May 2005; and
- (v) that, if there was sufficient company interest, the Economic Development Manager be instructed to make preparations for a business trade mission to Sigulda/Riga, Latvia and Tallinn, Estonia in May/June 2005.

24. PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A CENTRE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SMES IN THE CONCRETE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY IN THE EAST OF SCOTLAND

There was submitted [Report No 108/05](#) by the Chief Executive outlining the proposal to establish a research centre to support Small to Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the east of Scotland in the development of concrete technology.

The Report indicated that the Concrete Technology Unit at the University of Dundee was proposing to establish a research centre for the advancement of SMEs in the concrete construction industry in the east of Scotland. To enable the research centre to be established, the Concrete Technology Unit (CTU) had applied for funding from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), which had been secured subject to confirmation of match funding. Angus Council had been approached to provide match funding, in line with other public sector bodies, to assist the CTU in securing ERDF funding.

The Report concluded that establishing a research centre within the University of Dundee would enable Angus companies to improve competitiveness in an ever-changing environment and it was therefore proposed that funding should be made available towards this initiative.

The Committee agreed to funding of £5,000 over a two-year period towards the concrete construction industry research centre in conjunction with other funding bodies, with the cost being met from the Economic Development Revenue Budget.

25. ARMED FORCES MODERNISATION: R M CONDOR

With reference to Article 17 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 2 September 2004, there was submitted [Report No 109/05](#) by the Chief Executive advising members of the investigations to date and asking the Committee to note the content of representations made to the Ministry of Defence highlighting the benefits of retention of the base at R M Condor, Arbroath.

The Convener advised that a letter, dated 14 January 2005, had been received from the MoD apologising for the delay in replying to the earlier representations from the Chief Executive dated 9 September 2004 and 7 January 2005.

The Report indicated that the Chief Executive had made initial representations to the MoD in a letter dated September 2004. The letter, as well as emphasising the strategic importance of the base from a military perspective, had asked for key information required to assist in assessing the economic impact of the base on the local economy. No reply had been received. The Report continued that preliminary investigations, based on local knowledge and anecdotal evidence, suggested that the impact of a total closure of the RM Condor facility would be highly significant to the local economy of Arbroath and Angus. It would, however, have been speculative or potentially counter-productive to quantify the position without further information from the MoD. Efforts had also been made to engage a military expert to advise on the military benefits of retention of the base but this had been unsuccessful.

The Report concluded that uncertainty over the outcome of the Armed Forces Modernisation: R M Condor could have significant impact on the local economy and the representations made on behalf of the Council emphasised the significance of the base from a military viewpoint, but more information from the MoD was required to enable a detailed economic impact assessment to be carried out.

Having heard various members again express their concern on the impact the closure of the base would have on the Angus economy, and of the apparent unwillingness of the MoD to discuss these concerns, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the investigations undertaken to date, all of which were contained in Section 3 to the Report; and
- (ii) to note the terms of representations sent to the MoD by the Chief Executive dated 9 September 2004 and 7 January 2005.

26. NEW LEASES, ANGUS COUNCIL BUSINESS PROPERTY

With reference to Article 26 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 2 September 2004, there was submitted [Report No 110/05](#) by the Chief Executive recording new leases concluded by the Chief Executive under delegated powers.

The Committee agreed to note the new leases, as outlined in the Appendix to the Report.

27. POLICY FOR SUPPORT OF TOURISM AND PROMOTIONAL RELATED EVENTS

With reference to Article 13 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 14 October 2004, there was submitted [Report No 111/05](#) by the Chief Executive reviewing current activity by the Economic Development Unit and identifying a support policy for “core” and “non-core” events in the future.

The Report indicated that the Economic Development Unit was already engaged in a wide range of events and, because of staffing workload and budgetary constraints, it was necessary for the Unit to prioritise by focusing on “core” and strategic events as identified in the Report and to consider other “non-core” support on ability to address economic development objectives subject to resource availability.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the current level of activity by the Economic Development Unit; and
- (ii) to approve the policy to focus on “core” events as the top priority and consider support to other “non-core” events subject to their potential impact, resources available and assessed sustainability.

28. RGIT ANGUS VOCATIONAL TRAINING FUND

With reference to Article 34 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 8 June 2004, there was submitted [Report No 112/05](#) by the Chief Executive updating the Committee regarding the development of a vocational training grant that was being developed as a direct result of a £200,000 donation received by Angus Council from the RGIT Trust.

The Report indicated that 2003 had seen a change in operations at RGIT Montrose due to a multi-million pound management buy-out and that the proceeds had been shared between Robert Gordon University and the RGIT Trust. In her capacity as a member of the Trust, Councillor Ritchie had successfully negotiated a £200,000 donation to be used in Angus as part of a vocational training fund. Since the allocation of the money, a Steering Group had been established, with representatives from Law and Administration, Finance, Personnel and Economic Development meeting to assess how the fund should be implemented. In addition, a number of the key partners expected to apply for the fund were also consulted.

The Report concluded that Scotland had historically suffered from a “boom and bust” economy, which had brought the practices of training and economic development together. However, even within this economic climate, skills too often remained the poor relation. Today, however, it was widely recognised that lifelong learning lay at the heart of our nation’s competitiveness with so many of the traditional industries in decline. In developing a fund that took the local economic landscape into consideration, it was hoped that the fund’s broad remit would enable local residents the opportunity to benefit from vocational training that enhanced their job and employability skills.

Having heard Councillor Ritchie express her thanks to the Economic Development Unit, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to support the main conditions of the fund outlined in the Report; and
- (ii) to offer approval for its implementation, with immediate effect.

29. SERVICE PLAN PROGRESS/PERFORMANCE REPORT – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UNIT

With reference to Article 3 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 2 September 2004, there was submitted [Report No 113/05](#) by the Chief Executive presenting an overview against the priority actions identified for the Economic Development Unit in the Departmental Service Plan and additionally providing members with some key performance indicators for the service.

The Report indicated that the Service Plan targets identified for the Economic Development Unit were in the main progressing well, and although unavoidable slippage had occurred with Capital Projects associated with land acquisition servicing and development, particularly in Kirriemuir and Carnoustie, a number of alternative programme works were being advanced.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the progress which was being made to implement the actions in the Service Plan with specific attention to those actions which varied significantly from original targets;
- (ii) to note performance against key indicators identified for the Department; and
- (iii) to instruct the Chief Executive to submit the next Service Plan Update 2005-2006 to the June meeting of the Committee.

30. **ANGUS RELOCATION GUIDE (DEVELOPMENT OF AN ON AND OFF-LINE PUBLICATION) - REQUEST TO TENDER**

There was submitted [Report No 120/05](#) by the Chief Executive seeking approval to tender for an on-line and off-line publication that would be used as a relocation guide for new and existing businesses and staff looking to locate into the area.

The Report indicated that developing such a publication would not only provide an overview and practical guide to housing, health, education and employment etc, with the subjects reflecting the main themes of the Angus Community Plan, but would also encourage investment into the Angus area.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve the development of an on-line and off-line publication to be used as a relocation guide for Angus;
- (ii) to approve a £2,500 contribution to be met from the Economic Development Revenue Budget for 2005/2006 and acknowledge the £12,000 contribution received from Scottish Enterprise Tayside to further assist in its development; and
- (iii) to delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Directors of Finance and Law and Administration, to select and appoint the approved contractor.

31. **THE HAIRST 2004 AND 2005**

With reference to Article 43 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 4 March 2004, and Article 22 of the minute of meeting of the Environmental and Leisure Services Committee of 25 January 2005, there was submitted [Joint Report No 82/05](#) by the Chief Executive and the Director of Leisure Services describing the activities, programme, promotion and outcomes of the 2004 Summer Arts Festival and outlining proposals for the Hairst 2005.

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

32. **ANGUS GLENS RANGER BASE, BUSINESS PLANNING PHASE II**

With reference to Article 21 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 4 March 2004, and Article 14 of the minute of meeting of the Environmental and Leisure Services Committee of 25 January 2005, there was submitted [Joint Report No 75/05](#) by the Chief Executive and the Director of Leisure Services advising the Committee of progress to date and the results of the Phase II Business Plan for a proposed Ranger Base for the Angus Glens.

The Report indicated that the Chief Executive and the Director of Leisure Services had commissioned consultants RGA to prepare a report to investigate the feasibility and sustainability of a prospective multi-purpose centre and, if promising, to prepare a detailed development proposal and full business plan for the centre. After a detailed process including consultation with a key stakeholder group, consisting of Angus Council, Cairngorms National Park Association, Scottish Natural Heritage and Forestry Commission, the consultants had brought forward a number of recommended development options which were outlined in the Report.

The Report concluded that the development of the Ranger Centre had to be supported with a long-term commitment by the stakeholders to the Angus Glens Rangers Service. Also, if the stakeholders were committed to the Rangers Service in the Glens, given the current situation with potential European funding it would fall to Angus Council to lead the process to secure appropriate new accommodation facilities for the Rangers Service in the Glens. To this end, the Council needed to be able to develop a design for the building at the earliest opportunity using consultants who were fully acquainted with the project. This would enable early entry into the notice of intention to develop process in order to secure planning permission for the project by the European funding agency ESEP funding cut-off deadline of December 2005.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;

- (ii) to remit to the Director of Leisure Services to appoint Reiach & Hall Architects to take forward the design of the ranger centre, subject to securing funding from the stakeholder partnership up to a value of £30,000 based on a fixed cost pricing for each contract aspect;
- (iii) to approve the exemption from Financial Regulations, in line with the exemption clause 16.3.4, in order to appoint Reiach & Hall Architects subject to the conditions outlined in recommendation (ii) above;
- (iv) to remit to the Director of Leisure Services to enter into a consultation process with the local community and the wider stakeholder interests; and
- (v) to instruct the Chief Executive and the Director of Leisure Services to report the findings of the next development stage to Committee at the earliest opportunity.

33. 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 items 34–38 below, so as to avoid the disclosure of information which was exempt in terms of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, paragraphs 6, 8 and 9.

34. BALINTORE CASTLE

There was submitted [Report No 94/05](#) by the Director of Planning and Transport requesting authorisation to compulsorily acquire the category A listed building known as Balintore Castle and to transfer title to a restoring purchaser.

The Report indicated that Balintore Castle was an important listed building and the current owners had failed to act upon the Repairs Notice, despite it having been served twice. There was considerable interest in the building, there having been over the years, a steady stream of enquiries from individuals wishing to acquire it for restoration. The current interest would lead to the Castle being saved, provided the commitment to immediately carry out repairs and subsequently convert the building to a house was honoured. The restoring purchaser had remained firm throughout the entire process and had provided personal financial information to confirm that he had the resources to undertake the repairs and had repeatedly assured officers that he was committed to the project.

Having heard various members welcome the Report, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to authorise the Director of Law and Administration to commence Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) proceedings in respect of Balintore Castle, Kirriemuir by Compulsory Purchase Order in terms of Section 42 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997;
- (ii) to authorise the Director of Law and Administration, in conjunction with the Director of Planning and Transport, to enter into an agreement with the restoring purchaser to take title to Balintore Castle and immediately carry out restorative works to Balintore Castle upon completion of the CPO; and
- (iii) to note the financial implications to the Council in carrying out a CPO of the building.

35. PROPOSED SALE OF LAND, BRECHIN BUSINESS PARK, BRECHIN

There was submitted [Report No 117/05](#) by the Chief Executive seeking approval to sell Plot 15, Brechin Business Park to an expanding firm.

The Report indicated that approval of the sale would see an expanding firm make a substantial investment in, and bring employment to, the Brechin area. Furthermore, development of the highly visible Plot 15 would be a major boost for Brechin Business Park, the take-up of which continued to be encouraging.

Having heard Councillor Mowatt, a local member, welcome the Report, the Committee agreed to approve the sale of Plot, 15, Brechin Business Park to Wallace of Kelso Limited, subject to the terms and conditions detailed in the Report.

36. CARNOUSTIE EMPLOYMENT LAND AND BUSINESS UNITS

There was submitted [Report No 119/05](#) by the Chief Executive updating the Committee on the current position regarding the development of a new business centre at Carnoustie and seeking homologation of the decision to commission a survey of the potential site in the town for a business park.

The Report indicated that it was felt that the site at Clayholes could potentially accommodate the new business park in Carnoustie, which the Council had been endeavouring to introduce for a number of years. If the site survey yielded positive results, it would be the intention to accelerate plans to build a new business park on that site.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the current situation regarding the planned development of a new business centre at Carnoustie; and
- (ii) to homologate the decision taken by the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Convener, to commission the Director of Roads to undertake a feasibility study into the suitability of land at Clayholes, Carnoustie to house a new business park.

37. RENEWAL OF AGREEMENT WITH ANGUS DIGITAL MEDIA CENTRE LIMITED 2004-2008

With reference to Article 26 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 25 November 2004, there was submitted [Joint Report No 118/05](#) by the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance presenting the Business Plan for Angus Digital Media Centre Limited (ADMC) which covered the period 2004-2008 and recommending that the Council, as sole member of the company, approved it as the basis of legal agreements between the Council and the company for that period.

The Report indicated that the Angus Digital Media Centre had performed extremely well in terms of its economic development and financial targets to date and its Business Plan for the period to 2008 assumed a continuation of the past performance in a projected budget based on "measured growth".

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the content of the review of ADMC performance from inception of the company, as outlined in Section 3 to the Report;
- (ii) to note that ADMC had replaced £258,279 of grant income with "earned" or non-grant related income, which was a considerable achievement in a short timeframe;
- (iii) to approve the content of the Business Plan 2004-2008 as approved by the ADMC Board, attached as Appendix 1 to the Report, as the basis of legal agreements between the Council and ADMC Ltd for the period to 2008;
- (iv) to note that effective financial systems, monitoring, reporting procedures and controls had been put in place over the initial three year period which had ensured satisfactory levels of overall stewardship and that this would continue into the future;
- (v) to note that all Council departments tendering for supplies, services or works that could be provided by ADMC should (under paragraph 16.5(4) of the Council's Financial Regulations) give ADMC the opportunity to submit a tender;
- (vi) to note the updated assessments of risk and "following the public pound" and agree the outcome of these assessments, as contained in Section 5 of the Report, for the period to 2008;
- (vii) to include the proposed terms of the Council's "in-kind" support and underwriting arrangements as set out in Sections 5 and 6 of the Report, within the Funding Agreement between the Council and the Company; and

- (viii) to authorise the Director of Law and Administration, in consultation with the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance, to finalise the legal agreements with the Company covering funding, building lease and equipment lease for the period to 2008.

38. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF SPECULATIVE BUSINESS UNITS, BRECHIN BUSINESS PARK

There was submitted [Joint Report No 121/05](#) by the Chief Executive and the Director of Property Services seeking approval to make a financial contribution to facilitate a private sector led development of speculative business units on Brechin Business Park and requesting that the Director of Property Services be remitted to conclude a sale of land to the prospective developers.

The Report indicated that, if the project was to go ahead, it would represent one of the largest investments in speculative work space ever made by the private sector in Angus, reflecting confidence in the future prospects of both the local property market and economy. The development would also generate increased activity on Brechin Business Park, helping to stimulate interest in the remaining available plots on site. Moreover, once fully occupied, the complex would have the capacity to accommodate tens of companies and scores of jobs and would therefore have a significant positive impact on the local economy.

Having heard Councillor Mowatt, a local member, welcome the Report, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve the contribution by the Council to facilitate an ERDF grant application for the development of speculative business units on Brechin Business Park by a partnership of James Keiller Estates Limited, Dundee and Delson Contracts Limited, Forfar; and
- (ii) to remit to the Director of Property Services and the Director of Law and Administration to conclude with the developers a disposal and appropriate development agreement for Plots 17, 18 and 19, Brechin Business Park.