

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the **RESOURCES AND CENTRAL SERVICES COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Thursday 3 February 2005 at 4.00 pm.

Present: Councillors ALEX KING, RON SCRIMGEOUR, JACK GIBB, IAN MACKINTOSH, GLENNIS MIDDLETON, Provost BILL MIDDLETON, PETER MURPHY, ROB MURRAY, ROBERT MYLES, PETER NIELD, GEORGE NORRIE MBE, HELEN OSWALD, BILL ROBERTON, MARK SALMOND and STEWART McGLYNN (substitute for DAVID SELFRIDGE).

Apology: An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor DAVID SELFRIDGE.

Councillor KING, Convener, in the Chair.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Scrimgeour declared an interest in item 15 as a member of the organisation renting the clubhouse (Ref 7455/003), and in item 23 as the member representing Ward No 7.

Provost Middleton declared a financial interest in item 15 as Treasurer of the organisation renting the clubhouse (Ref 7455/003) and indicated that he would not be participating in the discussion, and a general financial interest in item 23 as Provost.

Councillor Glennis Middleton declared an interest in item 15 as a member of the organisation renting the clubhouse (Ref 7455/003).

Councillor Robertson declared an interest in item 15 as a member of the organisation renting the clubhouse (Ref 7455/003).

Councillor McGlynn declared an interest in item 23 as Depute Provost.

2. MINUTES

(a) Previous Meeting

The [minute of meeting of this Committee of 2 December 2004](#) was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

(b) Executive Sub-Committee

The [minutes of meetings of the Executive Sub-Committee of 22 December 2004 and 20 January 2005](#), copies of which are appended hereto, were submitted and noted (**APPENDICES I & II respectively**).

3. INVESTORS IN PEOPLE - FINANCE AND PROPERTY SERVICES DEPARTMENTS

The Committee was advised that the Finance and Property Services Departments had successfully attained Investors in People status with effect from 3 and 21 December 2004 respectively.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the position; and
- (ii) to extend congratulations to all staff of both Departments on this achievement.

4. PROPOSED DISPOSAL OF GLENPROSEN SCHOOL AND SCHOOLHOUSE

There was submitted [Joint Report No 115/05](#) by the Director of Education and the Director of Property Services advising members that the school and schoolhouse at Glen Prosen were now surplus to the Council's requirements.

The Report indicated that the buildings were currently leased to the Superior for use as a shop, tearoom and museum and the title provided the Superior with entitlement to claim a reconveyance of the ground upon payment of all the value of the buildings.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note that this Report would be considered by the Education Committee on 24 February 2005;
- (ii) to authorise the Director of Property Services to arrange for the disposal of the property to the Superior, subject to the Education Committee declaring the school and schoolhouse at Glen Prosen surplus to requirements; and
- (iii) to authorise the Director of Property Services to advertise the subjects for sale on the open market should the Superior decide not to purchase the property.

5. PROPOSED DISPOSAL OF OFFICE AT 16 GEORGE STREET, MONTROSE

There was submitted [Report No 124/05](#) by the Director of Property Services advising members that the vacant office at George Street, Montrose was now surplus to the requirements of the Council and recommending that the subjects be marketed for sale.

The Report indicated that details had been circulated to all Council departments and no interest had been expressed in the premises.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note that this Report would be considered by the Education Committee on 24 February 2005; and
- (ii) to authorise the Director of Property Services to arrange for disposal of the property on the open market, subject to the Education Committee declaring the premises surplus to requirements.

6. PROPOSED DISPOSAL OF GUYND QUARRY, DRUMMYGAR, REDFORD, BY ARBROATH

There was submitted [Report No 125/05](#) by the Director of Property Services advising members that the quarry at Guynd, Drummygar, Redford, by Arbroath was vacant and surplus to requirements of the Council and recommending that the quarry be sold either to the original owner or on the open market.

The Report indicated that, in terms of normal practice relating to compulsory purchase, property acquired by such a method should be offered back in the first instance, to the original owner where its condition remained essentially unaltered from the time of the original acquisition.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note that the Report would be considered by the Environmental and Leisure Services Committee on 8 March 2005; and
- (ii) to authorise the Director of Law and Administration to offer the quarry back to the previous owner and thereafter, if no offer was forthcoming, to authorise the Director of Property Services to dispose of it by sale on the open market, subject to the Environmental and Leisure Services Committee declaring the subjects surplus to requirements.

7. PROPOSED DISPOSAL OF SITE AT RIVERVIEW DRIVE, MONIFIETH

There was submitted [Joint Report No 126/05](#) by the Director of Leisure Services and the Director of Property Services advising members that the site at Riverview Drive, Monifieth was surplus to the requirements of the Council as it was no longer utilised by the Leisure Services Department.

The Report indicated that the site had been used as a storage area and that details had been circulated to all Council departments, with no interest having been expressed in the site.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note that the Report would be considered by the Environmental and Leisure Services Committee on 8 March 2005; and
- (ii) to authorise the Director of Property Services to market the site for sale on the open market, subject to the Environmental and Leisure Services Committee declaring the site surplus to requirements.

8. PROPOSED DISPOSAL OF FORMER GYMNASIUM AT COMMERCE STREET, BRECHIN

There was submitted [Report No 156/05](#) by the Director of Property Services advising members that the vacant former gymnasium at Commerce Street, Brechin was surplus to the requirements of the Council and recommending that the premises be marketed for sale.

The Report indicated that details had been circulated to all Council departments and no interest had been expressed in the subjects.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note that the sale of the premises would result in a capital receipt for the Brechin Common Good Account;
- (ii) to declare the former gymnasium at Commerce Street, Brechin as surplus to the requirements of the Council; and
- (iii) to authorise the Director of Property Services to arrange for the subjects to be sold on the open market.

9. PROPOSED DISPOSAL OF ST VIGEANS PRIMARY SCHOOL

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of the Personnel and Property Services Committee of 7 May 2002, there was submitted [Report No 127/05](#) by the Director of Property Services advising members that the vacant primary school at St Vigeans was surplus to the requirements of the Council and recommending that the premises be marketed for sale.

The Report indicated that details had been circulated to all Council departments and no interest had been expressed in the subjects.

The Committee agreed to authorise the Director of Property Services to arrange for the sale of this property on the open market.

10. REQUEST FOR TETRA TELECOMMUNICATIONS MASTS ON CARNOUSTIE HOTEL

With reference to Article 22(c) of the minute of meeting of the Development Control Committee of 13 January 2005, there was submitted [Report No 128/05](#) by the Director of Property Services advising members of a request to site two Tetra telecommunications masts on the Carnoustie Hotel and recommending approval of this request.

The Report indicated that the Council had authority to grant or withhold approval to this proposal as it leased the ground on which the hotel was built, but pointed out that the planning application appeal had been upheld by the Reporter.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve a request from O₂ to site two Tetra telecommunications masts on the roof of the Carnoustie Hotel in terms of the Council's role as landlords of the site on which the hotel was built;
- (ii) to note that the proposal by O₂ had been the subject of a planning appeal and that this appeal had been upheld; and
- (iii) to authorise the Director of Property Services to negotiate with the Carnoustie Hotel Company an appropriate increase in the site rental for the Hotel, to reflect the added value from the erection of the telecommunications masts.

11. PROGRESS REPORTS 2004/2005

(a) Property Maintenance

With reference to Article 6(a) of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 2 December 2004, there was submitted [Report No 129/05](#) by the Director of Property Services setting out the current status of expenditure on the maintenance of non-housing properties as at 31 December 2004.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the Report.

(b) Energy Budget

With reference to Article 6(b) of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 2 December 2004, there was submitted [Report No 130/05](#) by the Director of Property Services setting out the current status of expenditure on the individual Council heating fuel and the electricity budgets for non-housing properties as at 31 December 2004.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the Report.

12. ENERGY PERFORMANCE OF BUILDINGS

With reference to Article 12 of the minute of meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee of 23 October 2001, there was submitted [Report No 131/05](#) by the Director of Property Services advising members of the implications of a new European Union Directive on the energy performance of buildings, while the Government prepared to enact legislation which would introduce new energy management obligations in January 2006.

The Report indicated that the new Directive was intended to ensure that building standards across Europe placed a high emphasis on minimising energy consumption without requiring high additional expenditure and at the same time increasing comfort for users.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to note that the Director of Property Services would continue to monitor developments, assess impact and submit a further report detailing the resource implications of the new legislation.

13. SUSTAINABLE PROPERTIES

With reference to Article 14 of the minute of meeting of the Strategic Policy Committee of 24 June 2003, there was submitted [Report No 132/05](#) by the Director of Property Services advising on the strategy for introducing and maintaining sustainable practices in the design, construction, maintenance and management of the Council's non-housing estate.

The Report detailed new arrangements which would be introduced in two stages, with the first stage being completed and evaluated before moving to the second stage. Stage 2 would be implemented immediately for significant projects being undertaken through the PPP or design and build procurement route.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to approve the action taken by the Director of Property Services; and
- (iii) to note that the initial cost of projects would increase, but that this would be compensated for by both the reductions in operating and maintenance costs during the life of the affected properties and the contributions made towards supporting the Council's Environmental Strategy Action Plan and Local Agenda 21 Strategy.

14. PROVISION OF ESTATES SERVICES CONSULTANCY - TENDER REPORT

There was submitted [Report No 133/05](#) by the Director of Property Services containing details of tenders received for the provision of an Estates Services Consultancy.

The Report indicated that, of the seven firms invited to tender, one was lacking in one of the key criteria and two had not submitted their tenders timeously.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to approve the appointment of Messrs Lickley Proctor, Dundee as the company considered to be providing Best Value, for the provision of an estates services consultancy for the three year period, commencing 1 March 2005.

15. PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS

With reference to Article 33 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 2 December 2004, there was submitted [Report No 134/05](#) by the Director of Property Services advising of the outcome of negotiations for property transactions, namely, lease renewals.

The Committee agreed to note the conclusion of negotiations for the transactions as contained in Appendix 1 of the Report.

16. PROPERTY SERVICES DEPARTMENT SERVICE PLAN 2003/2007 - PROGRESS REPORT

With reference to Article 3 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 9 September 2004, there was submitted [Report No 135/05](#) by the Director of Property Services outlining progress being made on the Property Services Department Service Plan for 2003/2007 as at December 2004.

The Report indicated that the main service areas identified in the plan were making satisfactory progress and were generally on target for completion by the due dates. Where slippage had occurred, this was being managed within revised timescales and reported accordingly.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to note the progress being made on the Property Services Department's Service Plan for 2003/2007 as at December 2004.

17. FUNDING OF REPAIRS FOR THE UNSTABLE HEADSTONES IN KINNETTLES CHURCHYARD

With reference to Article 34 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 2 December 2004, there was submitted [Report No 114/05](#) by the Director of Leisure Services seeking approval to utilise the capital receipt for the ground at Kinnettles Churchyard to meet the cost of stabilising the headstones within the churchyard.

The Report indicated that the estimated cost of the stabilisation was £3,500 and that the capital receipt would raise £3,250 with any balance to complete the repairs to be met from the Headstone Stabilisation Budget in the Leisure Services Revenue Estimates 2005/2006.

The Committee agreed to utilise the capital receipt for the ground at Kinnettles Churchyard to fund the repair of unstable headstones within the churchyard.

18. COMPUTERISED WASTE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

There was submitted [Joint Report No 136/05](#) by the Director of Information Technology and the Director of Environmental and Consumer Protection seeking approval to replace the existing waste management computer system and associated hardware at Lochhead landfill site.

The Report indicated that the existing system had been purchased in February 2000, operating on a single site basis and an Internal Audit report on landfill tax had identified areas of weakness within the existing process.

The Committee, agreed:-

- (i) to approve the allocation of £20,000 from existing balances in the Information Technology Renewal and Repairs Fund to procure a replacement waste management computer system;
- (ii) to approve the commencement of a tendering exercise for this purpose in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations; and
- (iii) to authorise the Director of Information Technology and the Director of Environmental and Consumer Protection, in consultation with the Director of Finance, to accept the most economically advantageous tender.

19. SERVICE PLAN UPDATE - INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

With reference to Article 3 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 9 September 2004, there was submitted [Report No 137/05](#) by the Director of Information Technology highlighting the significant issues arising from the implementation of the Service Plan for the Information Technology Department.

The Report indicated that progress had been maintained according to the Plan with the development of a formal departmental risk register and a revised process for reporting departmental performance to managers.

The period under review had also seen the timeous implementation of the Council Geographic Information System and the availability of online access to planning information on the Council website.

The Committee agreed to note the progress being made to implement the Service Plan for the Information Technology Department and in particular the measures being taken to address any significant variations from the Plan.

20. COMPUTER SYSTEM BACKUP AND RECOVERY

There was submitted [Joint Report No 155/05](#) by the Director of Information Technology and the Director of Education highlighting proposals to upgrade the process involved in providing backup and restore facilities for computer servers located throughout the Council.

The Report indicated that the Council was now heavily dependent on the use of computers and the data stored on them. Within such an environment, it was essential that adequate provision be made for the management and safekeeping of that data. This process now required to be upgraded as an increasing number of incidents and problems associated with the backup of server disk storage was now occurring.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to approve the upgrading of the current backup and recovery processes at a cost of approximately £122,000;
- (iii) to approve the procurement being exempt from competitive tendering in terms of Section 16.3.2(a) of the Financial Regulations, as a contract was required urgently to suit the exigencies of the service; and
- (iv) to authorise the Director of Information Technology, in consultation with the Director of Finance, to conclude negotiations with CommVault Systems and their UK suppliers, Wisdom IT.

21. SCHOOL ESTATE STRATEGY

With reference to Article 9 of the minute of meeting of the Education Committee of 13 January 2005, there was submitted [Joint Report No 41/05](#) by the Director of Education and the Director of Property Services seeking approval for an updated School Estate Strategy to be submitted to the Scottish Executive and outlining proposals to utilise funding available through the Schools Fund for the financial year 2005/2006.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to approve the procurement of the work identified within the Report.

22. REVISION OF FEES AND PAYMENTS - REGISTRATION STAFF; AND CIVIL MARRIAGES AT APPROVED VENUES

With reference to Article 34 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 4 September 2003, there was submitted [Report No 139/05](#) by the Director of Law and Administration seeking approval for increases in charges made for the conducting of civil marriages at approved venues and for the use of the marriage rooms within Registration Offices, with the additional income to be utilised to meet the cost of increased fee payments to registration staff. The Report also sought approval for the introduction of charges to those new citizens wishing a private citizenship ceremony either in a Registration Office or at a venue considered suitable by the Council.

The Report indicated that, to date, five citizenship ceremonies had been carried out with seventeen new citizens welcomed. All had so far participated in the Council's composite ceremony and no requests had been received for a private ceremony.

With regard to marriages, it had become clear from the results of a survey that Angus Council was one of the lowest in respect of payments to staff conducting civil marriage ceremonies.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve the following revised fees and charges from 1 April 2005:-
 - an increase in the charge for the services of a Registrar to conduct a civil marriage ceremony at an approved venue from £106.50 to £126.50;

- an increase in the accommodation fee for the use of the marriage rooms within Registration Offices from £30 to £35;
- an increase in the fee payable to Registrars and Assistant Registrars conducting a civil marriage ceremony at an approved from £50 to £70;
- an increase to the fee payable to accompanying Registrars and Assistant Registrars attending a civil marriage ceremony at an approved venue from £30 to £50;
- the introduction of a fee for any new citizen wishing a private citizenship ceremony of £126.50 at a venue deemed suitable by the Chief Registrar and £35 within a Registration Office; and

(ii) to review the foregoing fees on an annual basis in future years.

23. AGNES LOWSON FUND

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of the Council of 1 July 2004, there was submitted [Report No 140/05](#) by the Director of Law and Administration advising members of the resignation of a Trustee of the Agnes Lowson Fund.

The Report indicated that the Trustees had comprised the Provost and Depute Provost, one Forfar Councillor, and two local Forfar ministers.

Notice had been received from the Rev Robert McCrum of his resignation as a Trustee and, as the original Trust Fund did not detail the number of Trustees required, it was proposed that the Trustees should now comprise three elected members and one other Forfar minister, who was presently the Rev Graham Norrie.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to approve the Trustees of the Agnes Lowson Fund as comprising the Provost, the Depute Provost, the Councillor representing Ward 7 and one Forfar minister.

24. LAW AND ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT SERVICE PLAN - PROGRESS/ PERFORMANCE

With reference to Article 3 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 9 September 2004, there was submitted [Report No 141/05](#) by the Director of Law and Administration providing an overview of progress of significant targets contained within the Service Plan Update.

The Report indicated that, as a support department, targets for Law and Administration were in the main driven by client departments, although the targets identified in the Service Plan Update were progressing well. Where slippage was seen to be occurring, actions would be identified to ensure that the Department continued to focus on major issues.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the progress which was being made to implement the actions in the Service Plan with specific attention to the significant points of progress; and
- (ii) to instruct the Director of Law and Administration to submit the Service Plan Update 2005/2006 to the meeting of this Committee in May/June 2005.

25. PRINT AND DESIGN UNIT - RENEWAL OF EQUIPMENT

With reference to Article 21 of the minute of meeting of the Finance and Information Technology Committee of 2 September 1997, there was submitted [Report No 142/05](#) by the Director of Law and Administration advising members of the purchase of equipment by the Print and Design Co-ordinator under the special rules applied to opportunity purchases, in accordance with Section 4 of the Policy Statement governing the use of the Renewal and Repairs Fund.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note that the Print and Design Co-ordinator had negotiated the purchase of a Mitsubishi Eco 163011 CTP Polyester System following approval of the Director of Law and Administration and the Director of Finance; and
- (ii) to note the proposals in Section 5 of the Report with regard to the future use of the Print and Design Unit Renewal and Repairs Fund.

26. PERSONNEL SERVICES SERVICE PLAN - PROGRESS/PERFORMANCE

With reference to Article 3 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 9 September 2004, there was submitted [Report No 143/05](#) by the Chief Executive advising members of progress made by Personnel Services as at 30 September 2004 in actioning its priority objectives for 2004/2005 prior to inclusion within the Chief Executive's Department Service Plan and Progress Report, which would be submitted to the Strategic Policy Committee.

The Report indicated that actions within Personnel Services were largely progressing on target and highlighted key achievements completed within the first six months of the financial year.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the progress which was being made to implement the actions in the Service Plan;
- (ii) to note that this would be incorporated within the Chief Executive's Department Service Plan and Progress Report which would be submitted to the Strategic Policy Committee; and
- (iii) to instruct the Personnel Services Manager to prepare a Service Plan update for 2005/2006 for submission to the meeting of this Committee in May/June 2005.

27. ESTABLISHMENT CHANGES

With reference to Article 34 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 21 October 2004, there was submitted [Report No 144/05](#) by the Chief Executive summarising changes to the Finance, Housing, Information Technology, Law and Administration, Planning and Transport and Social Work and Health Departments during the period 26 October 2004 to 14 January 2005.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed to note the changes to the establishment of these Departments as detailed in the Report.

28. HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME - HRA BLOCK - 2004/2005

With reference to Article 3 of the minute of meeting of the Housing Committee of 20 January 2005, there was submitted [Report No 57/05](#) by the Director of Finance setting out the latest position on the HRA Housing Capital Programme and the HRA Planned Maintenance Programme for 2004/2005. The Report also detailed the latest capital estimate for the year and the capital spend figures to the end of November 2004.

The Report indicated that the actual spend achieved to 30 November 2004 on the Housing Capital Programme was £4.690million which included internal fees to 30 September 2004.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed to note the figures presented for the HRA Housing Capital Programme.

29. CAPITAL MONITORING - COMPOSITE CAPITAL PROGRAMME - 2004/2005

With reference to Article 18 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 2 December 2004, there was submitted [Report No 145/05](#) by the Director of Finance advising members of the capital expenditure incurred for the period from 1 April to 31 December 2004 and measuring projected capital expenditure for the year against budgeted provision for the year.

The Report indicated that, although the Composite Capital Programme was currently projecting an underspend, the Capital Budget Sub-Group, in conjunction with the Capital Projects Monitoring Group, would continue to review the position and address issues relating to the projected spend position, possible slippage on projects and resources potentially available for 2004/2005.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to note the position as at 31 December 2004 on the Composite Capital Programme, as detailed in the Monitoring Statement which accompanied the Report;
- (iii) to note that, as part of the Budget Process for 2005/2006, it was expected that the Capital Budget Sub-Group, in conjunction with the Capital Projects Monitoring Group, would continue to review the position on the Composite Capital Programme and address issues relating to the projected spend position, possible slippage of projects and resources potentially available for 2004/2005; and
- (iv) to note that projections of the year end position would be ongoing and brought forward to this Committee on a regular basis.

30. REVENUE MONITORING STATEMENT

With reference to Article 19 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 2 December 2004, there was submitted [Report No 146/05](#) by the Director of Finance advising members of the actual revenue expenditure incurred and income received in respect of the Council's departments for the period 1 April to 31 December 2004.

The Report indicated that, under some of the cost heads, individual departments' actual expenditure was still currently ahead of the phased budget and, while there were no particular concerns arising from these, the position would continue to be monitored closely to ensure that overall net expenditure did not exceed departmental cash limited budgets. A further revenue monitoring report would be submitted to the next meeting of this Committee.

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

31. REVENUE BUDGET OUTTURN 2004/2005

With reference to Article 20 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 2 December 2004, there was submitted [Report No 147/05](#) by the Director of Finance giving an indication of the likely revenue outturn for the financial year 2004/2005 and reflecting ongoing monitoring of budget versus actual, expenditure.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to approve virement of £300,000 to the Capital Fund (or such other sum as might be determined as the year progressed) in respect of Social Work underspend and to resolve accordingly to make such contribution;

- (iii) to approve virement of £200,000 to the Capital Fund (or such other sum as might be determined as the year progressed) in respect of Planning and Transportation and to resolve accordingly to make such contribution; and
- (iv) to note that a further report would be submitted to this Committee should there be any variances in these amounts.

32. RENEWAL AND REPAIRS FUNDS FOR PROPERTY, ROADS, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, EQUIPMENT, VEHICLE AND PRINTING AT 31 DECEMBER 2004

With reference to Article 21 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 2 December 2004, there was submitted [Report No 148/05](#) by the Director of Finance reporting on the actual financial position of the Renewal and Repairs Funds for Property, Roads, Information Technology, Equipment, Vehicle and Print Unit as at 31 December 2004, which showed a total balance available of approximately £1,605,108.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the Report.

33. REMISSION OF RATES

With reference to Article 22 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 2 December 2004, there was submitted [Report No 149/04](#) by the Director of Finance advising members of applications for Remission of Rates and recommending that these be granted, which would result in an annual cost to the Council of £161.01.

The Committee agreed to approve the applications for Remission of Rates, as detailed in the Report.

23. FINANCE DEPARTMENT SERVICE PLAN - PROGRESS REPORT

With reference to Article 3 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 9 September 2004, there was submitted [Report No 150/05](#) by the Director of Finance advising members on the progress of the Finance Department Service Plan Update 2004/2005.

The Report indicated that it was not intended as a full progress report, but an exception report drawing members' attention to those targets which would not be fully completed by the year-end and giving reasons for slippage.

It was also indicated that targets identified by the Finance Department were, in the main, progressing well and where plans had slipped from original targets, action had been planned to ensure that these objectives were achieved.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to note that most major targets in the Service Plan had been fully achieved by the Finance Department;
- (ii) to note the targets which had slipped and the reasons for the slippage; and
- (iv) to note that the Director of Finance would submit the Finance Department Service Plan 2005/2006 Update to this Committee in May/June 2005.

35. 2005/2006 GENERAL FUND AND CAPITAL BUDGETS - IMPLICATIONS OF GOVERNMENT GRANT ANNOUNCEMENTS AND BUDGET PREPARATION - PROGRESS UPDATE

With reference to Article 22 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 29 January 2004, there was submitted [Report No 151/05](#) by the Director of Finance advising members of the implications for the Council arising from the 2005/2006 Local Government Finance Settlement and providing an update on the progress being made in preparing the 2005/2006 Revenue and Capital Budgets.

The Report indicated that the Scottish Executive had increased the Council's grant support by a gross sum of £9,708million for 2005/2006 and, after allowing for the mainstreaming of specific grant, new burdens and ring-fenced resources, a balance of £3.144million was available to the Council to meet identified budget pressures. This sum was insufficient to meet these pressures and had necessitated consideration of cuts proposals to provide the Council with options for consideration to enable a balanced revenue budget to be set.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to note that the Aggregate External Finance allocation to the Council for 2005/2006 had been set at £165.777million;
- (iii) to note the budget implications arising from a substantial proportion of the Aggregate External Finance increase consisting of resources over which the Council had little or no discretion regarding the use;
- (iv) to note the capital grants which had been made available by the Scottish Executive over the period 2005/2006 to 2007/2008; and
- (v) to note that special meetings of Service Committees to consider individual departmental revenue and capital budgets and department budget cuts proposals for 2005/2006 were due to be held on 10 February 2005.

36. CHANGES TO COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNTS

There was submitted [Report No 152/05](#) by the Director of Finance outlining the implications of the changes to Council tax legislation in respect of the levels of discount which could be awarded.

The Report indicated that, with effect from 1 April 2005, new legislation would be introduced in Scotland which would give local authorities discretion to set the level of Council Tax discount on most second homes and long-term empty properties to between 10% and 50%. Any additional income, as opposed to the additional amount levied, resulting from reducing discount was required to be retained locally and routed through registered social landlords for the provision of new build affordable social housing to meet locally determined priorities.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the changes to Council Tax discount legislation;
- (ii) to note that these changes were discretionary;
- (iii) to approve the discount of second homes only being reduced from 50% to 10% throughout the area of the Council;
- (iv) to note that the policy could be reviewed and amended;
- (v) to note that the additional income generated required to be retained locally and forwarded to registered social landlords; and
- (vi) to note that a detailed analysis of the properties currently receiving discount would require to be undertaken.

37. INSURANCE TENDER - LIST OF CONTRACTORS

With reference to Article 44 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 9 September 2004, there was submitted [Report No 153/05](#) containing information in relation to the current tender for insurance services and suggesting approval of a conditional select list of contractors who might be invited to tender. The Report also sought delegated authority to the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Convener, to accept the most economically advantageous tender.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to the issue of tender documents to all contractors notifying an interest;
- (iii) to authorise the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Convener, to approve the final select list of contractors;
- (iv) to authorise the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Convener, to accept the most economically advantageous tender; and
- (v) to note that the Director of Finance would submit a further report on the results of the tendering exercise.

38. TENDER FOR SHERIFF OFFICERS SERVICES

With reference to Article 3 of the minute of meeting of the Executive Sub-Committee of this Committee of 18 November 2004, there was submitted [Report No 154/05](#) by the Director of Finance containing details of tenders received for Sheriff Officers' services and seeking approval to accept the most economically advantageous of these.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the process undertaken to invite and to evaluate tenders;
- (ii) to approve acceptance of the most economically advantageous tender, namely that of A A Hutton; and
- (iii) to authorise the Director of Finance to advise the remaining tenderers that their bids had been unsuccessful.

39. 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 Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, paragraphs 8 and 9.

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

With reference to Article 38 of the minute of meeting of the Infrastructure Services Committee of 27 January 2005, 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 at Brechin Business Park and requesting that the Director of Property Services be remitted to include a sale of land to the prospective developers.

The Report indicated that, should the project go ahead, it would represent one of the largest investments in speculative workspace made by the private sector in Angus, reflecting confidence in future prospects of both the local property market and the economy. The development would also generate increased activity on the Business Park which, when fully occupied, would have the capacity to accommodate a large number of companies, bringing more employment to the area with a significant positive impact on the local economy.

The Committee agreed to approve the retention of £40,000 of the total of £230,000 capital receipt as a contribution to the Economic Development financial input to the proposed development.