

## ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the **RESOURCES AND CENTRAL SERVICES COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Thursday 15 June 2006 at 4.00 pm.

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

**Apologies:** Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Provost BILL MIDDLETON and Councillor ROB MURRAY.

Councillor KING, Convener in the Chair.

### 1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Norrie and Salmond declared an interest in item 13 as Council appointees to the William Lamb Studio Advisory Committee.

Councillor Myles declared an interest in item 33 as a Council appointee to the Glenesk Trust.

### 2. VALEDICTORY

The Convener, on behalf of the Committee paid tribute to Alan Cairns, Catherine Coull, Andy Greenhill and Mike Lunny who were due to retire from their posts as Systems Support Manager, Director of Law and Administration, Director of Information Technology and Director of Property Services, respectively, in the near future as part of the Council's management restructure. Each of these officers had served the Council since local government reorganisation in 1996.

### 3. MINUTES

#### (a) Previous Meeting

The [minute of meeting of this Committee of 4 May 2006](#) was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

#### (b) Audit Sub-Committee

The [minute of meeting of the Audit Sub-Committee of 18 May 2006](#), a copy of which is appended hereto, was submitted and noted (**APPENDIX I**).

### 4. MINOR PROPERTY IMPROVEMENTS 2006/2007

With reference to Article 9 of the minute of meeting of the Education Committee of 25 May 2006, there was submitted [Joint Report No 635/06](#) by the Director of Education and the Director of Property Services outlining minor property improvements to education properties during the financial year 2006/2007.

The Report indicated that it was proposed to undertake these minor projects to further improve the teaching and learning environment in Angus schools.

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

## 5. DISPOSAL OF PROPERTY

### (a) Land at Andover Hill, Brechin

There was submitted [Report No 757/06](#) by the Director of Property Services advising members that an area of land extending to 0.014 hectares at Andover Hill, Brechin, held on the Brechin Common Good Account, was surplus to the requirements of the Council.

The Report indicated that expressions of interest in acquiring the site had been received and disposal of the land would result in a capital receipt for the Brechin Common Good and relieve the Common Good account of a maintenance liability.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to authorise the Director of Property Services to market the site at Andover Hill, Brechin extending to 0.014 hectares for sale on the open market.

### (b) Land at Albert Place, Brechin

With reference to Article 10 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 2 February 2006, there was submitted [Report No 758/06](#) by the Director of Property Services advising members of the outcome of the marketing exercise to dispose of a site extending to 0.1967 hectares at Albert Place, Brechin.

The Report indicated that prior to marketing the site, the Director of Property Services had received a request from Tayside Fire and Rescue to jointly market their adjoining site with the Council's site as this would maximise the capital receipt by both parties, with the receipt being apportioned between the two parties on the basis of the respective areas of land.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to approve disposal of the site to Stevens (Scotland) Ltd on the provisional terms and conditions contained in the Report; and
- (iii) to authorise the Director of Law and Administration to proceed with the disposal on the basis of these conditions and any other terms and conditions deemed necessary by the Director of Law and Administration when completing the legal formalities of the sale.

### \* (c) Land at East Grimsby, Arbroath

There was submitted [Report No 759/06](#) by the Director of Property Services advising members that the tenant of a site at East Grimsby, Arbroath had applied to purchase the site, which extended to 0.01 hectares.

The Report indicated that the land was held on the Arbroath Common Good account and had been leased to E & O Fish, who had owned the shop and processing building situated on the site, since 1986 with the lease terminating on 30 June 2013.

Disposal of the property to the existing tenant would result in a capital receipt for the Common Good account and would give E & O Fish future business security.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to authorise the sale of the land to E & O Fish at a valuation to be determined by the Council's retained external consultants.

**\* (d) Former Fire Station at Southesk Street, Brechin**

There was submitted [Report No 760/06](#) by the Director of Property Services advising members that the tenant of the former Fire Station at Southesk Street, Brechin had applied to purchase the property.

The Report indicated that this property, which was held on the Brechin Common Good account, had been leased to Mr Mottram, T/A Revivals, since 1991 with the current lease terminating on 17 February 2007.

Ownership of the property would enable Mr Mottram to invest in upgrading the building for his continued use and sale of the property would enable the Brechin Common Good account to receive a capital receipt.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to authorise sale of the former Fire Station, Southesk Street, Brechin to Mr Mottram, T/A Revivals at a valuation to be determined by the Council's retained external consultants.

**(e) Site at Links Parade, Carnoustie**

With reference to Article 47 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 17 March 2005, there was submitted [Report No 761/06](#) by the Director of Property Services advising members of a revised capital receipt for the disposal of the site at Links Parade, Carnoustie.

The Report indicated that it had originally been agreed to sell the site to Scotia Homes Ltd at a price of £2,000,000, but the concluded missives of sale included a condition requiring the purchase price to be increased if the final design resulted in a total floor area in excess of 5,500 sq. metres. The total floor area of the development was now 5,893 sq. metres and the disposal price had consequently increased to £2,142,909.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to note the conclusion of the disposal of the site at Links Parade, Carnoustie to Scotia Homes Ltd at the revised price of £2,142,909.

**6. INVERBROTHOCK PRIMARY SCHOOL, ARBROATH – INSTALLATION OF MEZZANINE FLOOR**

With reference to Article 21 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 4 May 2006, there was submitted [Report No 762/06](#) by the Director of Property Services seeking homologation of a decision to instruct the installation of two new mezzanine floors at Inverbrothock Primary School, due to the urgent and specialist nature of the works.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to homologate the decision taken by the Director of Property Services in consultation with the Convener and other members of the Executive Sub-Committee, the Chief Executive, the Director of Education and the Acting Director of Finance to instruct the works;
- (iii) to note that the contract had been awarded to Aarcweld (Scotland) Ltd, Glasgow in the amount of £48,928;
- (iv) to note that the works would be funded from an allowance of £500,000 which had been included in the 2006/2007 Final Revenue Budget Volume incorporating the updated Provisional Capital Programme 2006/2007; and

- (v) to note the revenue implications as detailed in the Report.

## **7. PROPOSED ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS, WHARF STREET, MONTROSE**

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of the Infrastructure Services Committee of 8 June 2006, there was submitted [Joint Report No 721/06](#) by the Director of Planning and Transport and the Chief Executive updating members on the outcome of consultations undertaken on the proposed environmental improvements at Wharf Street, Montrose and seeking authority to proceed with the improvement works.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed:-

- (i) to note and approve the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to approve an allocation of £5,000 from the Montrose Common Good fund as a contribution to this project.

## **8. RELOCATION OF PUBLIC ANALYST, DUNDEE**

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of the Environmental and Consumer Protection Committee of 6 June 2006, there was submitted [Joint Report No 707/06](#) by the Director of Environmental and Consumer Protection and the Acting Director of Finance advising members that due to the deteriorating condition of the building at Maryfield, Dundee, it was necessary to consider relocation of the Public Analyst service to a new purpose built laboratory.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed:-

- (i) to approve the relocation of the Public Analyst service to a new purpose built laboratory at Hawkhill, Dundee;
- (ii) to meet Angus Council's negotiated share of the new provision which would require to be built into the revenue budget from 2007/2008 onwards;
- (iii) to note that Dundee City and Perth and Kinross Councils were also required to enter into this agreement and meet their share of the cost; and
- (iv) to note that a further Report would be submitted when Dundee City Council had concluded all project arrangements and reported the outcome through their committee process.

## **9. WILLIAM LAMB STUDIO OPENING ARRANGEMENTS 2006**

With reference to Article 15 of the minute of meeting of the Environmental and Leisure Services Committee of 6 June 2006, there was submitted [Report No 715/06](#) by the Director of Leisure Services recommending the appointment of a seasonal assistant to the William Lamb Studio to open the studio during the summer of 2006.

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

## **10. MONTROSE SKATEPARK - UPDATE**

With reference to Article 10 of the minute of meeting of the Environmental and Leisure Services Committee of 6 June 2006, there was submitted [Report No 710/06](#) by the Director of Leisure Services seeking approval of the design of the proposed Montrose Skate Park, for authorisation to seek the necessary planning consent and to consider a request for a new location for the development at Marine Drive.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to authorise the site to be relocated to Marine Drive, Montrose.

## 11. UPGRADE OF THE PEOPLE'S NETWORK FACILITIES

With reference to Article 18 of the minute of meeting of the Environmental and Leisure Services Committee of 6 June 2006, there was submitted [Joint Report No 714/06](#) by the Director of Information Technology and the Director of Leisure Services seeking approval to upgrade specific elements and provide improved availability and management of the People's Network facilities.

The Report indicated that the existing People's Network infrastructure was now four years old and the hardware fell outwith the Council's specification for desk top PCs and peripherals.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to allocate the sum of £140,000 from the existing balances of the Information Technology Renewal and Repairs Fund; and
- (iii) to authorise this expenditure to upgrade specific elements and provide improved availability and management of the People's Network facilities.

## 12. HOME COMPUTER INITIATIVE SCHEME

With reference to Article 19 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 20 October 2005, there was submitted [Report No 763/06](#) by the Chief Executive advising members of the successful take-up of the Home Computer Initiative scheme by 15% of eligible Council staff.

The Report indicated that the scheme had been launched on 20 March 2006 and required to close on 5 April 2006 which was earlier than originally scheduled in view of the removal of the tax basis for such schemes agreed in the Chancellor's recent budget.

Fujitsu Siemens, in conjunction with the Scottish Executive, were now working on a replacement scheme and a full assessment of any proposed replacement would be undertaken when the details of the scheme were made available.

The Committee agreed to note:-

- (i) the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Scottish Executive advising of this Committee's concern at the removal of the tax basis for the take-up of home computer schemes.

## 13. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY RENEWAL AND REPAIRS FUND - CAPITAL PROJECTS

There was submitted [Report No 764/06](#) by the Director of Information Technology seeking approval for part of the current available balances in the Information Technology Renewal and Repair Fund to fund a number of IT capital projects in the Financial Plan during the current year.

The Committee agreed to approve the allocation of £190,000 from the Information Technology Renewal and Repairs Fund to fund the ongoing replacement of computer desktops and servers across the Council during 2006/2007.

## 14. HEALTH AND SAFETY – ANNUAL REPORTS 2005/2006

With reference to Article 5 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 16 June 2006, there were submitted the following annual Health and Safety Reports, 2005/2006:-

- (a) Information Technology Department – [Report No 765/06](#) by the Director of Information Technology;
- (b) Law and Administration Department – [Report No 767/06](#) by the Director of Law and Administration;

- (c) Personnel Services – [Report No 774/06](#) by the Chief Executive; and
- (d) Finance Department – [Report No 786/06](#) by the Acting Director of Finance.

The Reports detailed the range of health and safety issues which had been raised during the course of the year within these departments and highlighted actions taken to reduce risks, through planned improvements.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the Reports.

## 15. COMMUNITY COUNCIL ELECTIONS

With reference to Article 16 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 19 June 2003, there was submitted [Report No 766/06](#) by the Director of Law and Administration seeking approval of the proposed arrangements for the conduct of Community Council elections in 2006.

The Report indicated that, in accordance with the Community Council Scheme, the term of office of all Community Council members expired on Monday 2 October 2006 and arrangements would require to be made to conduct appropriate elections where required to fill the resultant vacancies. The Scheme had been slightly amended since 2003 and it was now proposed that candidates' personal statements should be issued with ballot papers and not placed in public libraries and other Council buildings as in previous years, which it was hoped would raise the profile of candidates with electors and improve turnout.

Details of the elections and nominations papers would also be available on the Council's website.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve, in principle, the Scheme of Electoral Arrangements for Community Council elections, as appended to the Report;
- (ii) to authorise the Director of Law and Administration, in consultation with the Convener and the Vice-Convener, to make any appropriate changes to the Scheme, following consultation with Community Councils; and
- (iii) to note that the Council would be asked at its meeting on 29 June 2006, to approve the appointment of the Head of Law and Administration as Returning Officer for these elections and to remit to the Head of Law and Administration as Returning Officer to undertake all the detailed arrangements in respect of the elections.

## 16. REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS (SCOTLAND) ACT 2000 OFFICE OF SURVEILLANCE COMMISSIONERS - INSPECTION REPORT

There was submitted [Report No 827/06](#) by the Director of Law and Administration advising members of a recent inspection of the Council's investigation procedures under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000.

The Report indicated that, following an inspection undertaken earlier this year, the Chief Surveillance Commissioner had congratulated Angus Council on the Inspector's conclusion that the Council had fulfilled its statutory responsibilities and, within this context, was one of the best local authorities in Scotland. A number of very minor issues for improvement had been highlighted and these were detailed on the Action Plan appended to the Report.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the terms of the Inspection Report by the Office of Surveillance Commissioners;
- (ii) to approve the action plan as detailed in the Appendix to the Report; and
- (iii) to congratulate all staff concerned of this achievement.

**17. SICKNESS ABSENCE JANUARY - MARCH 2006**

With reference to Article 18 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 16 March 2006, there was submitted and noted [Report No 768/06](#) by the Chief Executive advising of the level of sickness absence within the Council for the period 1 January to 31 March 2006.

**18. MONITORING EMPLOYEE TURNOVER 2005/2006**

With reference to Article 24 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 1 September 2005, there was submitted and noted [Report No 769/06](#) by the Chief Executive advising members of the levels of employee turnover within the Council during the financial year 2005/2006.

**19. QUARTERLY JOINT STAFFING WATCH**

With reference to Article 23 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 2 February 2006, there was submitted and noted [Report No 770/06](#) by the Chief Executive advising members of the Council's quarterly Joint Staffing Watch return to the Scottish Executive for the period to 31 March 2006 and the detailed comparisons with the return for the previous quarter.

**20. EARLY RETIRAL/VOLUNTARY REDUNDANCY**

With reference to Article 24 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 16 June 2005, there was submitted and noted [Joint Report No 771/06](#) by the Chief Executive and the Acting Director of Finance advising members of the number of employees released on early retiral/voluntary redundancy and ill health retirement during the period 2005/2006.

**21. PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL AND DEVELOPMENT SCHEME FOR MANUAL WORKERS**

There was submitted [Report No 772/06](#) by the Chief Executive advising members of the introduction of a Performance Appraisal and Development Scheme for manual workers which fulfilled a commitment in the Human Resource Strategy.

The Report indicated that the Scheme had been developed in line with the principles of the Council's existing appraisal arrangements and took into account the particular needs of manual workers and the practical issues involved in operating an appraisal system outwith an office environment.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to approve the Performance Appraisal and Development Scheme for manual workers, as appended to the Report.

**22. EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME - ANNUAL REPORT 2005/2006**

With reference to Article 28 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 16 June 2005, there was submitted [Report No 773/06](#) by the Chief Executive advising members of the usage of the employee assistance programme provided by Care First during the financial year 2005/2006.

The Report indicated that overall usage for the year was 2.4% of employees and of the issues raised, 61% were personal and 39% work related.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the Report.

**23. PERSONNEL SERVICES – TRAINING SERVICES PROGRESS REPORT**

With reference to Article 25 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 16 June 2005, there was submitted [Report No 775/06](#) by the Chief Executive describing the activities of the Training Services Section of Personnel Services during the period 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006.

The Report indicated that the Section had again been particularly active in dealing with Skillseekers, New Deal 18 – 24 – Environment Task Force, New Deal 25+, Job Centre Plus Contract 2006 – 2008, Programme Centre, Training for Work and IT training.



The Committee agreed to note the contents of the Report.

#### **24. ESTABLISHMENT CHANGES**

With reference to Article 15 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 4 May 2006, there was submitted and noted [Report No 776/06](#) by the Chief Executive summarising changes to the Chief Executive's, Education, Environmental and Consumer Protection, Housing, Property Services, Roads and Social Work and Health Departments during the period 8 April to 17 May 2006.

#### **25. COMMUNITY GRANT SCHEME**

With reference to Article 16(a) of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 4 May 2006, there was submitted [Report No 777/06](#) by the Chief Executive recommending payments of over £500 in respect of applications received in terms of the Council's Community Grant scheme and advising members of applications for £500 or less which had been approved.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to make the following decisions in respect of applications for grants over £500;
  - Kilry Hall Management Committee - £1,000
  - Montrose and District Athletic Club - £2,500
  - Angus Canoe Club - £3,354
  - Arbroath United Cricket Club - £4,000
  - Strathmore Vintage Vehicle Club Ltd – No award
  - Dundee & Angus Battalion – The Boys Brigade - £2,500
  
- (ii) to note the following decisions in respect of applications for £500 or less;
  - The Council for Scottish Archaeology - £500
  - Forfar Chabannais Twinning Association - £500.

#### **26. HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME – HRA BLOCK – 2005/2006**

With reference to Article 3 of the minute of meeting of the Housing Committee of 1 June 2006, there was submitted [Report No 673/06](#) by the Acting Director of Finance setting out the near final actual capital spend figures for the financial year 2005/2006 in respect of the HRA Housing Capital Programme and the HRA Planned Maintenance Programme 2005/2006.

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

#### **27. AMENDMENTS TO THE SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH CAPITAL PLAN 2006/2007**

With reference to Article 3 of the minute of meeting of the Social Work and Health Committee of 30 May 2006, there was submitted [Joint Report No 621/06](#) by the Director of Social Work and Health and the Acting Director of Finance seeking approval for amendments to the capital programme for Social Work and Health as a result of developments since the original budget was agreed.

The Report indicated that these proposals would allow the department to meet emerging priority needs within existing resources, while delivering all other aspects of the Capital Plan.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed to note the amendments to the capital programme for 2006/2007.

#### **28. CAPITAL MONITORING – COMPOSITE CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2005/2006**

With reference to Article 18(b) of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 4 May 2006, there was submitted [Report No 778/06](#) by the Acting Director of Finance advising members of the capital expenditure incurred for the period from 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006 and measuring actual capital expenditure for the year against budgeted provision and available resources for the year.



The Committee, for its interest, agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to note the position on the Composite Capital Programme as at 31 March 2006, as detailed in the Capital Monitoring Statement which accompanied the Report;
- (iii) to note that the Acting Director of Finance had utilised capital financing resources to bring about the most advantageous year end position on the Composite Capital Programme for 2005/2006;
- (iv) to note that slippage encountered in the final month of 2005/2006 would be considered by the Capital Projects Monitoring Group and appropriate follow-through measures would be applied; and
- (vi) to note the intention to review the 2005/2006 Capital Expenditure year end position with a view to determining the 2006/2007 Capital Monitoring Budget and the updated 2005/2009 Financial Plan.

### **29. REMISSION OF RATES**

With reference to Article 29 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 16 March 2006, there was submitted [Report No 779/06](#) by the Acting 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 £653.46.

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

### **30. MISCELLANEOUS ACCOUNTS - DEBT WRITE-OFF**

With reference to Article 30 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 16 March 2006, there was submitted [Report No 780/06](#) by the Director of Finance containing details of miscellaneous accounts which it was recommended be written off.

The Report indicated that a relatively small number of accounts had been identified for write off. The number and value, in the context of the total number and value of accounts issued throughout the year, was relatively insignificant although they would continue to be pursued in light of any further information which might become available.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to authorise the accounts amounting to £38,099.11 as detailed in Appendix I of the Report being written off as irrecoverable.

### **31. AUTHORITY TO WRITE OFF BAD DEBTS (COMMUNITY CHARGE, COUNCIL TAX, NON DOMESTIC RATES AND HOUSING BENEFIT OVERPAYMENTS) 2005/2006**

With reference to Article 36 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 16 June 2005, there was submitted [Report No 781/06](#) by the Acting Director of Finance seeking authority to write off the amounts detailed in the Report as bad debts in respect of Community Charge, Council Tax, Non-Domestic Rates and Housing Benefits over payments, which had either been in the hands of Sheriff Officers and Debt Recovery Agencies or were untraced debtors.

The Committee agreed that the amounts detailed in the Report be written off, it having been noted that the files would continue to remain open with every effort made to collect the debts, should circumstances change.

### **32. COUNCIL TAX AND NON DOMESTIC RATES COLLECTION PERFORMANCE**

With reference to Article 34 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 16 June 2005, there was submitted [Report No 782/06](#) by the Acting Director of Finance giving members an indication of the collection performance of Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates for the year ended 31 March 2006 and setting out comparisons with previous financial years, subject to audit.

The Report indicated that the figures showed a continued improvement of in-year collection of Council Tax with the collection rate for 2005/2006 calculated at 96.35%, compared with 96.15% in respect of 2004/2005.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to congratulate all staff concerned at the improvement of the collection performance.

### **33. PREPARATION OF THE 2006/2010 FINANCIAL PLAN AND 2007/2008 GENERAL FUND CAPITAL BUDGET**

With reference to Article 38 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 16 June 2005, there was submitted [Report No 783/06](#) by the Acting Director of Finance advising members of the main stages in the Financial Plan process and seeking approval of the proposed approach to the preparation of the 2006/2010 Financial Plan and 2007/2008 General Fund Capital Budget.

The Report represented the starting point for the preparation of the 2006/2010 Financial Plan and 2007/2008 Capital Budget Process and further reports regarding the preparation of the plan would be submitted as required, as the budget cycle progressed.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to approve the approach to the Financial Plan preparation process as set out in section 6 of the Report.

### **34. PREPARATION OF THE 2007/2008 REVENUE BUDGET**

With reference to Article 39 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 16 June 2005, there was submitted [Report No 784/06](#) by the Acting Director of Finance advising members of the current position in relation to the 2007/2008 revenue budget preparation process, identifying the main stages of the budget cycle and seeking approval of the proposed approach to revenue budget preparation for the 2007/2008 financial year.

The budgetary process, as described in the Report, was largely similar to that adopted in 2006/2007 and was in line with the Council's Financial Regulations. Further reports regarding the Revenue Budget would be submitted as required, as the budget cycle progressed.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to approve the approach to the budget preparation process as set out in Section 4 of the Report.

### **35. HOUSING AND COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT PROSECUTION AND SANCTION POLICY**

There was submitted [Report No 785/06](#) by the Acting Director of Finance seeking approval for a proposed revised Housing and Council Tax Benefit Prosecution and Sanction Policy which had been reviewed following changes in the structure of the Verification Framework and Security Against Fraud and Error funding schemes and changes to working practice within the Department for Work and Pensions.

The Report indicated that approval of the revised policy would assist the Council in the administration of sanctions and facilitate joint working with the Fraud Investigation Service of the Department for Work and Pensions.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to approve the proposed revised Housing and Council Tax Benefit Prosecution and Sanction Policy, as detailed in Appendix I of the Report.

**36. 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 disclosure of information which was exempt in terms of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, paragraph 1.

**37. EQUAL PAY - PROPOSED SETTLEMENT**

With reference to Article 12 of the minute of meeting of the Strategic Policy Committee of 25 October 2005, there was submitted [Report No 787/06](#) by the Chief Executive advising members of recent developments in regard to equal pay claims and detailing a proposed offer of settlement to employees within the Council.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed to approve the proposed offer of settlement to employees of Angus Council, as detailed in the Report.