

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the **STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Tuesday 9 December 2008 at 4.00 pm.

Present: Councillors BOB MYLES, COLIN BROWN, ALISON ANDREWS, FRANK ELLIS, IAIN GAUL, ALEX KING, DAVID MAY, GLENNIS MIDDLETON, JIM MILLAR, PETER MURPHY, PAUL VALENTINE, RALPH PALMER, MARK SALMOND, SHEENA WELSH and JOHN WHYTE.

Councillor MYLES, Convener, in the Chair.

1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Ian Mackintosh, Rob Murray and Helen Oswald with Councillors Colin Brown, Paul Valentine and Ralph Palmer substituting respectively.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3. MINUTES

(a) Previous Meeting

The [minute of meeting of this Committee of 28 October 2008](#) 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 27 October 2008](#), a copy of which is appended hereto, was submitted and noted (**APPENDIX I**).

(c) Angus Community Planning Partnership

The minute of meeting of the [Angus Community Planning Partnership of 24 September 2008](#) was submitted and noted.

(d) Monitoring Group

The [minute of meeting of the Monitoring Group of 20 November 2008](#) was submitted and noted.

4. 2009/2010 REVENUE BUDGET

With reference to Article 19 of the minute of meeting of the Corporate Services Committee of 12 June 2008, there was submitted [Report No 1218/08](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising the Committee of the latest position with regard to the preparation of the Chief Executive's Department 2009/2010 revenue budget and associated issues.

Appended to the Report was a summary of the departmental provisional base budget for 2009/2010 as submitted to, and subsequently reviewed by, the Head of Finance.

The Committee agreed:-

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

5. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DEPARTMENT SERVICE PLAN 2008/2009: PROGRESS REPORT

With reference to Article 11 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 11 December 2007, there was submitted [Report No 1219/08](#) by the Chief Executive advising members of progress made in implementing the actions set out in the Department's 2008/2009 Service Plan.

The Report indicated that scrutiny by elected members of progress made in delivering service plan actions was a vital component of effective performance management arrangements. Accordingly, the Monitoring Group, at its meeting on 28 May 2008, had agreed that mid-term performance reports on progress against actions in departments' service plans should be submitted to the November/December Committee cycle.

Attached to the Report was a mid-term report for the Chief Executive's Department setting out the performance status as at four weeks prior to the date of the Committee which had been produced from Excelsis, the Council's performance management system.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to note the progress being made in delivering the actions in the Chief Executive's Department Service Plan 2008/2009.

6. CORPORATE PLAN ACTION PLAN 2008/2009: PROGRESS REPORT

With reference to Article 4 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 8 March 2008, there was submitted [Report No 1220/08](#) by the Chief Executive advising members of progress being made in implementing the actions set out in the Council's Corporate Plan Management Action Plan for 2008/2009.

The Report indicated that the Corporate Plan comprised corporate objectives and priorities which remained constant for the tenure of the Plan, supplemented by a management action plan listing actions and developments designed to support achievement of the objectives and priorities. The Action Plan was updated annually incorporating actions from individual Departmental Service Plans.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to note the progress being made in delivering the actions in the Corporate Plan's Management Action Plan for 2008/2009.

7. FINANCIAL SUPPORT PROVIDED TO ANGUS COMMUNITY COUNCILS

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 11 December 2007, there was submitted [Report No 1221/08](#) by the Chief Executive informing members of the total financial support provided to Angus Community Councils for the period 1 October 2007 to 30 September 2008, which had amounted to £43,159.64.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the Report.

8. COMMUNITY PLANNING IN ANGUS

With reference to Article 12 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 9 September 2008, there was submitted [Report No 1222/08](#) by the Chief Executive providing members with an update of community planning activities in Angus for the period August to October 2008.

The Report detailed the activities which the Angus Community Planning Partnership had been engaged in along with the activities of the thematic partnership groups and an update of local community planning activities, incorporating a report by the Head of Finance on the community planning budgets managed by Angus Council.

Having heard from Councillors Ellis and Palmer in relation to a number of points and having also heard from the Chief Executive, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the Report.

9. BANKED LEAVE SCHEME

With reference to Article 19 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 11 September 2007, there was submitted [Report No 1223/08](#) by the Chief Executive proposing a Banked Leave Scheme for adoption by Angus Council.

The Report indicated that, as an integral part of the conditions of service package introduced in 1 April 2008, the Council was committed to introducing a Banked Leave Scheme prior to the start of the 2009 leave year. Such a scheme would give employees the opportunity to "save up" an amount of annual leave over a period of time to use at a later date for a specific purpose. Attached to the Report were details of the terms of the Banked Leave Scheme, incorporating suggested eligibility criteria, conditions and the application process.

The Committee agreed to approve the terms of the Banked Leave Scheme, as detailed in the Appendix to the Report.

10. ESTABLISHMENT CHANGES

With reference to Article 5 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 28 October 2008, there was submitted and noted [Report No 1224/08](#) by the Chief Executive summarising changes to the Corporate Services, Education, Infrastructure Services and Social Work & Health establishments during the period 22 September to 7 November 2008.

11. QUARTERLY JOINT STAFFING WATCH

With reference to Article 18 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 9 September 2008, there was submitted and noted [Report No 1225/08](#) by the Chief Executive advising members of the Council's Quarterly Joint Staffing Watch return to the Scottish Government for the period to September 2008.

12. SICKNESS ABSENCE 2007/2008

With reference to Article 9 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 28 October 2008, there was submitted [Report No 1226/08](#) by the Chief Executive giving details of sickness absence within Angus Council during the 2007/2008 financial year.

The Report indicated that overall, the Council's absence rate had increased by 0.10% over the year. However, the previous year's rate of increase had been significantly reduced within three of the Council's six departments, who had achieved a reduction in their sickness absence rates. Analysis of the reasons for sickness absence in the Council in 2007/2008 showed that the major causes, accounting for 59% of all absences, were stress related, stomach, back and lower limb disorders and respiratory, circulation and heart conditions.

The Committee agreed to note the terms of the Report.

13. SICKNESS ABSENCE - QUARTERLY REPORT

With reference to Article 20 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 9 September 2008, there was submitted and noted [Report No 1227/08](#) by the Chief Executive advising members of the level of sickness absence within Angus Council for the period 1 July – 30 September 2008.

14. FAIRER SCOTLAND FUND: IMPROVING LIVES, REGENERATING COMMUNITIES

With reference to Article 11 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 28 October 2008, there was submitted [Report No 1228/08](#) by the Chief Executive in connection with the Fairer Scotland Fund introduced by the Scottish Government for 2008/2009 and setting out proposals for the allocation of underspend/slippage in the current financial year.

The Report indicated that approval of these projects, as detailed in paragraph 3 of the Report, would not compromise the Fairer Scotland Allocation during 2010/2011 and would allow for a

full spend in financial year 2008/2009 within the allocation of £244,000 for projects previously funded through the Community Regeneration Fund from the overall Fairer Scotland Budget of £735,000.

The Committee agreed that the forecast underspend of approximately £35,000 from the 2008/2009 allocation of Fairer Scotland Funding be distributed as follows:-

- Arbroath Academy – Skills for Life – PE Suite - £10,000
- Community Learning and Development Department – Youth Achievement Awards Programme - £1,680
- Arbroath Academy – Out of School Clubs - £1,230
- People First Clifftown – Community Printer - £5,000
- CAFÉ Project – Children and Young Peoples Activity Programme - £10,000
- Bruce Road Community Flat – Computers for Communities- £6,000.

15. ACCREDITATION TO THE CARBON TRUST STANDARD

With reference to Article 3 of the minute of meeting of the Resources and Central Services Committee of 19 October 2006, there was submitted [Report No 1229/08](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising members on the implications of Angus Council seeking accreditation to the Carbon Trust Standard.

The Report indicated that the Carbon Trust Accreditation Scheme required organisations to achieve regular energy conservation and greenhouse gas emission reductions across a broader range of its activities than in the current scheme. Accreditation to the Carbon Trust Standard was an integrated part of the new Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) Scheme and achieving the Standard would demonstrate a genuine commitment to carbon reduction and confirm Angus Council's green credentials.

Further reports would be brought forward as the CRC Scheme developed which would encompass any anticipated additional costs associated with seeking accreditation to the Carbon Trust Standard.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report including the potential need for significant financial investment in carbon emission reduction; and
- (ii) to instruct the Director of Corporate Services to establish appropriate management arrangements and proceed to seek accreditation of Angus Council to The Carbon Trust Standard in financial year 2009/2010.

16. SCOTTISH PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN- PERFORMANCE 2007/2008

There was submitted [Report No 1230/08](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising members of complaints received by the Scottish Services Ombudsman against Angus Council in 2007/2008.

The Report indicated that of the 27 complaints received only four had gone to formal investigation. Of these four, two were not upheld, one was partially upheld and one was fully upheld. The written decision of the Ombudsman had been posted on the Council's website and a brief resume of the four cases was attached as Appendix A to the Report. Where the Ombudsman had made recommendations, the Council had fully accepted them and had either implemented them or would do so when appropriate.

The Committee agreed to note the terms of the Report.

17. STANDARDS COMMISSION FOR SCOTLAND – COMPLAINTS AGAINST ANGUS COUNCILLORS

There was submitted [Report No 1231/08](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising members of complaints received by the Standards Commission for Scotland against Angus Councillors in 2007/2008.

The Report indicated that during the period 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008, Angus Councillors had been referred to the Standards Commission for investigation on six separate occasions but no formal Commission Hearings in respect of complaints against Angus Councillors had been heard.

The Committee agreed to note the terms of the Report.