

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the **CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Thursday 30 August 2012 at 4.00pm.

Present: Councillors ALEX KING, BILL DUFF, BILL BOWLES, COLIN BROWN, MAIRI EVANS, IAIN GAUL, MARTYN GEDDES, DAVID LUMGAIR, IAN McLAREN, DONALD MORRISON, ROB MURRAY, BOB MYLES, PAUL VALENTINE and SHEENA WELSH.

COUNCILLOR KING, Convener, in the Chair.

1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Brian Boyd and Margaret Thomson with Councillor Bill Bowles substituting for Councillor Boyd.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Duff declared an interest in item 25 as a Director of Montrose Golf Links Ltd. He indicated that he would be taking part in discussion and voting.

3. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The [minute of meeting of this Committee of 21 June 2012](#) was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

4. CORPORATE SERVICES DEPARTMENT 2011/2012 ANNUAL REPORT

With reference to Article 4 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 1 September 2011, there was submitted [Report No 482/12](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising members of the production of the 2011/2012 Annual Performance Report for the Corporate Services Department, a copy of which was appended to the Report.

The Committee agreed to note and approve the contents of the Corporate Services Department Annual Performance Report 2011/2012.

5. ENERGY BUDGET END OF YEAR REPORT 2011/2012

With reference to Article 10 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 1 September 2011, there was submitted and noted [Report No 483/12](#) by the Director of Corporate Services presenting the 2011/2012 end of year status of expenditure on the individual Council heating fuel and electricity budgets for non housing properties, which showed an underspend of £565,490 on energy.

6. ENERGY CONSUMPTION AND CARBON DIOXIDE EMISSIONS END OF YEAR REPORT - 2011/2012

With reference to Article 14 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 1 December 2011, there was submitted and noted [Report No 484/12](#) by the Director of Corporate Services presenting the status of cumulative energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions for the period up to 31 March 2012.

7. CENTRAL ENERGY EFFICIENCY FUND ANNUAL REPORT 2011/2012

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 1 September 2011, there was submitted [Report No 485/12](#) by the Director of Corporate Services and 2011/2012 end of year status of the Central Energy Efficiency Fund.

The Report indicated that as at 31 March 2012, the value of the fund was £109,288 and projects completed in 2011/2012 were forecast to result in a saving of 317,224kg of CO₂.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the Report.

8. CENTRAL ENERGY EFFICIENCY FUND PROJECTS 2012/2013 – PHASE ONE

With reference to Article 8 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 1 September 2011, there was submitted [Report No 486/12](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising members on Phase 1 of the programme of projects to be undertaken utilising the Central Energy Efficiency Fund 2012/2013 which would assist the Council in reducing its CO₂ emissions.

The Report indicated that the Fund was operated on a revolving basis and that projected savings were returned to the Fund to pay back initial investment and thereafter savings were accrued to the Council which enabled the Fund to be used to invest in further energy efficiency measures.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to approve Phase 1 of the programme of Central Energy Efficiency Fund projects, at an estimated cost of £67,983 from the Fund in 2012/2013; and
- (iii) to note the forecast annual savings of £31,974 which would be retained by the Council, with a proportion of the energy bill savings being used to repay the initial investment flowing back into the Fund.

9. CARBON REDUCTION COMMITMENT – CARBON ALLOWANCES PURCHASE FOR 2011/2012

With reference to Article 12 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 28 April 2011, there was submitted [Report No 487/12](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising members of the cost of the first purchase of carbon allowances in compliance with the Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Scheme Order 2010, based upon the carbon dioxide emissions of the Council's carbon dioxide footprint for 2011/2012.

The Report also detailed the direct expenditure incurred through participation in the process with details of the budgetary provisions and actual expenditure contained in the Report.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the Report.

10. IMPLICATIONS OF CONTINUING INCREASE OF ENERGY COST FOR ANGUS COUNCIL

With reference to Article 11 of the minute of meeting of the Strategic Policy Committee of 6 September 2011, there was submitted [Report No 488/12](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising members of the outcome of the review of previous increases and the likely level of future increases in corporate energy costs.

The Report also highlighted the potential for significant cost growth by 2020 and the scope of mitigation which could be undertaken.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to note that the implications of the growth and energy cost would be regularly monitored and discussed by the Carbon Reduction Member/Officer Steering Group;
- (iii) to note that the Director of Corporate Services would ensure that the implications of continued growth in corporate energy costs were given full consideration during the budget setting process for future financial years; and

- (iv) to note that the Head of Property, in progressing an energy consumption reduction strategy to support the delivery of the Council's reduction target, would prepare and submit proposals for the adoption of renewable energy generation and other technologies to this Committee.

11. GENERATION OF RENEWABLE ENERGY - REVIEW

With reference to Article 11 of the minute of meeting of the Strategic Policy Committee of 6 September 2011, there was submitted [Report No 489/12](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising members of the outcome of a review into the use of renewable energy technologies and the applicability for improving the Council's CRC Energy Efficiency Scheme Order 2010 and Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 Performance.

The Report indicated that the cost of renewable generation technologies had reduced as the equipment became more efficient and the growth and demand generated competition and economy of scale. The introduction of renewable energy tariffs had encouraged investment in associated renewable generation technologies through the payment of longer term funding.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to approve the proposed renewable generation policy and associated individual recommendations, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the Report;
- (iii) to note that the Head of Property would continue to monitor the development and evolution of renewable energy generation technologies to enable the Director of Corporate Services to report back to this Committee when a change in policy was considered appropriate.

12. WATER MANAGEMENT BUDGET END OF YEAR REPORT 2011/2012

With reference to Article 14 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 28 April 2011, there was submitted [Report No 490/12](#) by the Director of Corporate Services presenting the 2011/2012 end of year status of the expenditure on the individual Council water budgets for non-housing properties which showed an underspend of £9,911 (1.32%) on the water budget.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the Report.

13. PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 21 June 2012, there was submitted [Report No 491/12](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising members of the outcome of property transactions dealt with under delegated authority and seeking approval for property transactions which had been provisionally agreed.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the property transactions detailed in Appendices 1, 2(1, 2 and 3) and 3 which had been completed under the delegated authority of the Head of Property; and
- (ii) to approve the transactions detailed in Appendices 2(4) and 2(6), held on Brechin Common Good.

14. A92 SURPLUS LAND - TRAVEBANK

There was submitted [Report No 492/12](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising members that an area of ground extending to 470 square metres adjacent to Travebank on the A92 which had been acquired as part of the A92 dualling was now surplus to the requirements of the Council.

The Committee agreed:-

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

- (ii) to approve that the area of ground extending to 470 square metres at Travebank be declared surplus to the requirements of the Council and offered to the previous owner of the land; and
- (iii) to authorise the land to be sold to the owner of the adjacent site on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Head of Property, should the previous owner not wish to re-acquire the land.

15. PROPOSED DISPOSAL – HEARSE HOUSE – LINRATHEN CHURCH YARD

There was submitted [Report No 493/12](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising members that the Hearse House at Linrathen Church Yard was vacant and surplus to the requirements of the Council.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to approve that the Hearse House at Linrathen Church Yard be declared surplus to requirements of the Council and marketed for sale on the open market.

16. PROPOSED DISPOSAL – SITE AT TRAVEBANK GARDENS, MONIFIETH

There was submitted [Report No 494/12](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising members that a site at Travebank Gardens, Monifieth extending to 0.52ha which was currently used as public open space was surplus to the requirements of the Council.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to approve that the site of Travebank Gardens, Monifieth be declared surplus to requirements of the Council and marketed for sale on the open market.

17. PROPOSED DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS LAND, NEWTYLE PRIMARY SCHOOL

There was submitted [Report No 495/12](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising members that a site extending to 0.46ha adjacent to Newtyle Primary School was vacant and had been declared surplus to the requirements of the Education Department.

Having heard from a number of members, the Committee agreed to defer consideration of this matter.

18. COMMON GOOD FUNDS – CHRISTMAS LIGHTING APPROVALS

With reference to Article 29 of the minute of meeting of the Infrastructure Services Committee of 21 August 2012, there was submitted [Joint Report No 496/12](#) by the Director of Neighbourhood Services and the Director of Corporate Services advising members of various Common Good projects which required to be considered.

The Report indicated that the final budget volume included a final budget for the five Common Good funds covering Arbroath, Brechin, Forfar, Kirriemuir and Montrose.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to approve expenditure on Christmas lights from the Forfar and Montrose Common Good funds for displays in these towns amounting to £10,000 and £1,900, respectively;
- (iii) to note that the current Common Good balances had been updated to reflect the contents of the Report; and

- (iv) to note that further consideration would be given to ongoing revenue budget Christmas lighting requirements as part of the 2013/2014 budget setting process.

19. HOUSING CAPITAL AND REVENUE BUDGET PERFORMANCE 2011/2012

With reference to Article 4 of the minute of meeting of the Neighbourhood Services Committee of 16 August 2012, there was submitted [Joint Report No 417/12](#) by the Director of Neighbourhood Services and the Director of Corporate Services setting out the final unaudited outturn of capital, planned maintenance and revenue spends to 31 March 2012, together with the overall capital funding arrangements.

The Report indicated that the actual net spend achieved to 31 March 2012 on the Housing Capital Programme was £10.594 million, which represented a relatively low overall underspend against the monitoring budget of £306,000 (2.8%).

With regard to the capital funding position, the unaudited total overall net HRA Capital Receipts amounted to £807,405 for the period to 31 March 2012 and this was £59,405 over the Capital Receipts Monitoring Budget, mainly due to healthier levels of Council house purchases than originally anticipated.

With regard to the 2011/2012 Planned Maintenance Programme, the level of spend in respect of all elements of the HRA for the period to 31 March 2012 amounted to £2.858 million, which represented an overspend of £81,000 (2.9%) against the Monitoring Budget of £2.777 million.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed:-

- (i) to note the unaudited final outturn expenditure figures presented for the Housing Capital and Planned Maintenance Programmes for the period to 31 March 2012;
- (ii) to note the unaudited final outturn capital receipts position for the period to 31 March 2012;
- (iii) to note the Capital Programme funding arrangements; and
- (iv) to note the Revenue Budget performance statement for the period 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012.

20. 2012/2013 FINAL CAPITAL BUDGET VOLUME – GENERAL FUND AND HOUSING

With reference to Article 16 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 1 September 2011, there was submitted [Joint Report No 497/12](#) by the Director of Corporate Services and the Head of Finance presenting the 2012/2013 final Capital Budget Volume, containing the updated 2011/2015 Financial Plan (which incorporated the 2012/2013 capital monitoring budget) for both the General Fund and Housing Capital programmes.

The Report indicated that the process of drawing together and issuing the 2012/2013 capital monitoring budget for both General Fund departments and Housing had now been completed. The 2012/2013 final capital budget volume would, subject to approval of this Committee, be published on the Council's website and intranet and distributed for use within Departments which would be the base utilised for performance and monitoring purposes.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve the contents of the updated 2011/2015 General Fund Financial Plan, as contained in the 2012/2013 Final Capital Budget volume, a copy of which was appended to the Report;
- (ii) to note the contents of the updated 2011/2015 Housing Financial Plan, as contained in the 2012/2013 Final Capital Budget volume;
- (iii) to note that the 2012/2013 capital budgets for both the General Fund Departments and Housing represented the Council's approved budgets for capital monitoring purposes; and

- (iv) to express thanks and appreciation to all staff involved in achieving such a relatively low underspend.

21. RENEWAL AND REPAIRS FUNDS AS AT 31 JULY 2012

With reference to Article 13 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 8 March 2012, there was submitted and noted [Report No 498/12](#) by the Director of Corporate Services advising members of the actual financial position of the Renewal and Repairs Funds for Property, Information Technology, Roads and Transport, Print and Design Unit and Recreation as at 31 July 2012, which showed an effective uncommitted balance of £657,078.

22. EDUCATION REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2012

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of the Education Committee of 23 August 2012, there was submitted [Joint Report No 474/12](#) by the Director of Education and the Director of Corporate Services advising members of the unaudited net revenue and capital expenditure compared to budget in respect of the Education Department for the financial year to 31 March 2012 and providing comment on the more significant variances arising.

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

23. SUCCESSOR ARRANGEMENTS FOR SOCIAL FUND PAYMENTS FROM 1 APRIL 2013

There was submitted [Joint Report No 499/12](#) by the Director of Corporate Services and the Director of Social Work and Health advising members of arrangements which would require to be put in place by 1 April 2013 for the administration of a new scheme of grants to replace Community Care Grants and Crisis Loans for living expenses which were discretionary payments and currently made by the Department for Work and Pensions under the provisions of the Social Fund.

The Report also set out an options appraisal regarding which service within the Council was best placed to take on responsibility for the administration of the new scheme, provisionally named the "Scottish Community Support Fund" and requesting approval of the preferred option, as detailed in the Report, to allow detailed operational planning to commence.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report;
- (ii) to note the detailed information contained in the Report on the successor arrangements for Social Fund payments; and
- (iii) to approve the preferred option, as detailed in the Report, in that the Revenues and Benefits Service of the Finance Division of the Corporate Services Department should take on responsibility for the local administration of the new Scottish Community Support Fund.

24. WELFARE REFORM – UPDATE ON CHANGES AFFECTING HOUSING AND COUNCIL TAX BENEFITS

With reference to Article 12 of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 24 March 2011, there was submitted [Report No 500/12](#) by the Director of Corporate Services providing an update on major changes to Housing and Council Tax benefits arising from the UK Government's Welfare Reform legislation, together with an assessment of the impact of the latest changes which affected residents of Angus and the Council.

The Report indicated that there were significant implications for the Council and staff were likely to be put under a great deal of pressure to deliver changes in very restrictive timescales in view of the delays in publication of the necessary Regulations, etc.

Having heard from a number of members who expressed concern at the implications of the legislative changes, the Committee agreed:

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to note that further update Reports would be provided to this Committee as further information became available.

25. MONTROSE GOLF LINKS LTD – ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2012

With reference to Article 14 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 20 October 2011, there was submitted [Report No 501/12](#) by the Director of Corporate Services detailing the Annual Accounts for Montrose Golf Links Ltd for the year ended 31 March 2012.

The Report indicated that the Profit and Loss Account and Balance Sheet on Montrose Golf Links Ltd provided a sound financial base from which to continue operations.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report; and
- (ii) to note the 2011/2012 Annual Accounts of Montrose Golf Links Ltd, a copy of which was appended to the Report.

26. 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 the following item so as to avoid the possible disclosure of information which was exempt in terms of Part 1 of Schedule 7(A) to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, paragraph 8.

27. VAT MATTERS

There was submitted [Report No 502/12](#) by the Director of Corporate Services providing details of opportunities for the Council to reclaim VAT paid on various items and outlined the risks/rewards associated with this exercise.

The Report indicated that the Council had an opportunity for income which could be progressed on the basis of minimising financial risk and that the balance of the potential financial benefits was significant in comparison with the limited initial cost outlay.

The Committee agreed to note and approve the recommendations contained in the Report.