

ANGUS COUNCIL

**POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE
PERSONNEL & PROPERTY SERVICES COMMITTEE**

POST OF ANGUS AHEAD OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DEPARTMENT

Report by Chief Executive

SUMMARY

This report seeks approval for the Budget Strategy Group's recommendation for the establishment of a permanent Angus Ahead post to replace the fixed term Marketing Officer post funded through the Angus Ahead Initiative.

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committees approve the establishment of a permanent post of Angus Ahead Officer in the Economic Development Unit of the Chief Executive's Department (SCP 31-34) to replace the fixed term corporate marketing officer post which was funded through the Angus Ahead Initiative and which has been vacant since February 2001.

2. BACKGROUND

- Members will recall that in June, October and December 1998 the Policy and Resources Committee gave detailed consideration to an Angus Ahead Initiative.

In December 1998, the Committee considered Report No 1297/98 which outlined the proposal for the delivery of the Angus Ahead Initiative, including associated staff issues, and provided a draft programme of activities.

- It was recognised that if Angus Ahead was to be successfully adopted by the council, departments needed to embrace a more cohesive and focused approach to their own marketing efforts. The elements of Angus Ahead not contained within Economic Development's usual marketing activities related to this wider corporate role. To deliver this corporate element and develop the community focus of the initiative it was proposed that a new corporate marketing post be established. The postholder would also act as the co-ordinator for the overall campaign, fulfilling organisational duties (eg databases, promotional materials, etc) and acting as the post of contact for the campaign.

The corporate marketing post was agreed on a fixed term basis and subsequently filled. Unfortunately the postholder was later attracted to a permanent post elsewhere.

3. WHAT IS “ANGUS AHEAD”?

- Angus Ahead is the area promotional campaign for Angus the aim of which is ***to raise awareness of the character, strengths and opportunities of Angus at a local, national and international level*** and has identified the following as its long term strategic objectives:
 - **to encourage a civic pride of Angus amongst the local communities;**
 - **to increase investment in Angus;**
 - **to maximise the tourism and heritage potential in Angus;**
 - **to promote the distinct culture and natural beauty of Angus;**

The campaign therefore has a broad range of target audiences which can best be categorised as:

1. existing businesses
2. potential inward investors
3. tourists and visitors
4. **local communities and individual champions** (eg specific achievers, young people, community groups)
5. **media** (local, national, trade and general)

Points 1 – 3 are seen as being appropriately handled by the Economic Development Unit in partnership with eg Scottish Enterprise Tayside and Angus and Dundee Tourist Board. The Economic Development staffing arrangements for points 1 – 3 are already complete. **This report is specifically about how points 4 & 5 are addressed.**

- What has been undertaken is a promotional campaign to influence people’s awareness of and perceptions of Angus and as such is similar in intent to “Glasgow’s Miles Better” campaign or Dundee’s “City of Discovery”.

The previous Angus Ahead postholder developed and co-ordinated a range of campaign activities including:

- The annual Angus Achievers Award Scheme
- The twice yearly Angus Achievers newspaper supplement
- The Angus Ambassadors Scheme
- Ambassadors newsletter
- The small grants scheme
- The Angus Ahead web site
- Media opportunities

A focused and sustained effort is required and a dedicated post is needed to fulfill each of the above duties.

- The campaign is about developing and defining promotional opportunities and the point of locating the post within the Chief Executive’ Department is that it is a corporate post and the postholder is expected not only to initiate the kinds of activities listed above, but also to act as a catalyst to engage the input of the various Departments of the Council. The postholder will be located in the Economic Development Unit. He/she will report to the Economic Development Manager, but will require to liaise with the Public Relations Manager.

- Experience has shown that a fixed term post in this field makes recruitment very difficult – or, as has already happened, somebody takes the post for a short time, learns from the experience and is attracted to a permanent post elsewhere.

During the budget exercise, the Budget Strategy Group debated this dilemma and came to the conclusion that the most appropriate course of action in the circumstances was to agree a permanent appointment on the basis that funds were already available within the Angus Ahead budget until 31 March 2004, and that thereafter either the Council would require to make additional funding available or seek to re-prioritise the Chief Executive's budget to accommodate the costs.

4. CURRENT POSITION

The previous post has been held vacant while the cross-cutting review of marketing/promotional services is underway.

Initial findings of the team set up to conduct a cross-cutting review of marketing/promotional services recommend that a permanent post be established to allow the outstanding remit and responsibilities to be fulfilled and support progress towards a more corporate approach to marketing and promotion. Additionally the fixed term nature of the previous post had made recruitment difficult.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost of establishing the permanent post (SCP 31-34) from August 2002 will be £19,300 in 2002/03 and £29,000 in a full financial year at current prices. Funding is available for the existing marketing officer post (SCP 31-34) and associated costs within the Angus Ahead budget, until 31 March 2004. The funding arrangements for this post from 2004/05 will require to be considered as part of that year's budget setting process, at which time the Council will require either to make additional funding available or seek to re-prioritise the Chief Executive's budget to accommodate the costs.

6. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

There are no human rights implications arising from the recommendations contained in this report.

7. CONSULTATION

The Director of Law and Administration, the Director of Finance and the Personnel Manager have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

A B Watson
Chief Executive
April 2002

Note: No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information), were relied on to any material extent in preparing this Report.