

ANGUS COUNCIL

PLANNING AND TRANSPORT POLICY COMMITTEE

28 February 1996

SUBJECT: ANGUS AND DUNDEE STRUCTURE PLAN - JOINT ARRANGEMENTS

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, TRANSPORT & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
AND DIRECTOR OF LAW AND ADMINISTRATION

Abstract: This Report comments on administrative issues and discusses organisational arrangements, including mechanisms for joint working at Elected Member and Officer levels, for maintaining an efficient and effective approach to strategic land use planning and Structure Plan preparation in the combined Angus and Dundee Structure Plan area.

1 RECOMMENDATION

- i It is recommended that the Committee agree that Angus Council support, in principle, (subject to agreement on the terminology to be used for the relevant mechanisms) the establishment of :
 - a a Joint Structure Plan Advisory Committee, comprising of elected members drawn from Angus Council and Dundee City Council, for the purpose of advising on the preparation of the new Structure Plan for the Angus and Dundee Structure Plan area;
 - b a Structure Plan Liaison Group, comprising of elected members drawn from Angus Council, Dundee City Council, and Perth and Kinross Council for the purpose of advising on the co-ordination of Structure Planning activities between the respective Structure Plan areas for Angus and Dundee and for Perth and Kinross.
- ii It is also recommended that, in order to progress the arrangements recommended in (i) above, the Committee advise Dundee City Council and Perth and Kinross Council as appropriate of Angus Council's position on these matters and :
 - a invite the views of Dundee City Council on joint working arrangements for the Angus and Dundee Structure Plan;
 - b invite the views of Dundee City Council and of Perth and Kinross Council on liaison arrangements between the two Structure Plan areas;
 - c request the Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Development and Director of Law and Administration to bring forward for further consideration a Report on more detailed organisational arrangements for joint working, taking account of the responses of the other two Councils to (a) and (b) above, and to continue to discuss relevant issues and working arrangements with Officers of these Councils.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The Committee, at its meeting on 11 October 1995, considered Report No AC96/95 on Structure Plan areas and agreed :

- i to note the Government's decision to combine Angus and Dundee Councils into a single Structure Plan area; and
- ii to request the Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Development and Director of Law and Administration to bring forward a Report on administrative options and arrangements including joint working at elected member and officer levels in the combined Angus and Dundee Structure Plan area including a proposal that Angus Council be the lead authority.

2.2 In bringing forward initial proposals for organisational arrangements, this Report draws on first hand experience of Structure Planning both in Tayside and in other parts of Scotland and takes account of :

- relevant sections of the Local Government etc (Scotland) Act 1994, including Section 33 and Schedule 4 on Structure Plans;
- Scottish Office Development Department Circular No 25/1995, published on 6 December 1995, introducing The Designation of Structure Plan Areas (Scotland) Order 1995 which comes into force on 1 April 1996;
- proposals for the Review of the Town and Country Planning System in Scotland, published by the Scottish Office Development Department on 28 December 1995, which signal the Government's early intention to take a radical look at Structure Plans with the aim of sharpening their focus on strategic issues subject to change (Report No AC3/96 refers);
- preliminary officer level discussions with Dundee City Council on various technical, organisational and administrative issues relevant to possible working arrangements for the joint Angus and Dundee Structure Plan;
- various terms which could potentially be used to describe the mechanisms for joint working arrangements among elected members from the respective Councils. For the purpose of this report the terms "Joint Structure Plan Advisory Committee" and "Structure Plan Liaison Group" have been used but it is recognised that other terms might appropriately be used.

3 LINKS BETWEEN NEW STRUCTURE PLAN AREAS

3.1 As a consequence of Local Government reorganisation, the Secretary of State has confirmed new Structure Plan areas for the whole of Scotland, including two new Structure Plan areas for Angus and Dundee and for Perth and Kinross.

3.2 The boundaries of these two new Structure Plan areas do not coincide with journey to work areas, housing market areas, shopping catchment areas or water supply and sewerage areas.

3.3 In order to continue to provide for effective Structure Planning in these areas, it is considered that it will be necessary to -

- encourage arrangements for liaison and ideally co-ordination of Structure Planning between the combined Angus and Dundee area and Perth and Kinross;
- ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for joint working at Elected Member and Officer levels in the combined Angus and Dundee Structure Plan area;
- ensure that arrangements are made for liaison on major planning applications which raise cross boundary issues.

3.4 With two Structure Plan areas and three Councils there will be a need for coordination and liaison between the respective Councils to address cross boundary issues. These are likely to include policies and proposals for meeting housing demand, in respect of major retail developments, urban renewal and transportation. Coordination would be greatly simplified if there was agreement on common base dates for forecasts and plan reviews. Accordingly, it is considered that agreement on the timescale for the review and replacement of the Tayside Structure Plan should be sought as soon as is practical. In order to formalise liaison between the Councils it is considered that a Structure Plan Liaison Group should be established consisting of representatives of all three Councils. This would allow the Councils to participate fully in an informed debate of issues which would affect their areas, without prejudicing their powers to promote the policies of their choice. The broad remit of the Liaison Group would be to -

- advise on co-ordination of Structure Plan preparation in the two Structure Plan areas with regard to the harmonisation of timescales for review and the consideration of cross boundary issues during Plan preparation and monitoring.

4 ANGUS AND DUNDEE JOINT STRUCTURE PLAN

4.1 In addition to the liaison which will be necessary to facilitate coordination between the two Structure Plan areas, it will be essential to put in place arrangements for joint working in the combined Angus and Dundee area. The joint arrangements must provide a mechanism for elected members of both the constituent Councils to debate and take decisions on the joint Structure Plan. Most importantly, there should also be arrangements for joint working by Officers.

4.2 A Joint Advisory Committee would be a voluntary arrangement between the two Councils. The possibility that there may be issues on which the constituent authorities may disagree has been recognised and statutory provision has been made for addressing such circumstances. Where councils did not agree on particular aspects of Structure Plans it would be open to the Councils to submit alternative proposals to the Secretary of State who would make the final decision on the Plan as part of the approval process. While this facility could, if used excessively, result in considerable confusion and lengthen the approval process, it would also facilitate agreement on the establishment of a Joint Advisory Committee and its composition. Given the mechanism whereby alternative proposals can be included in a finalised Structure Plan a Joint Advisory Committee composed of Elected Members from Angus and Dundee would be a workable arrangement. Such a Joint Advisory Committee would not hold executive powers but would advise each

of the authorities on relevant matters to assist the Councils in discharging their Structure Plan functions. In Angus the Planning and Transport Policy Committee retains responsibility for Structure Plan matters.

- 4.3 It is suggested that the broad remit of the Joint Advisory Committee would be -
- to ensure that the approved Structure Plan for Tayside is monitored insofar as it relates to the Angus and Dundee Structure Plan Area, and that it is regularly reviewed at not more than 5 yearly intervals.
- 4.4 In discharging this remit, it is suggested that the role of a Joint Advisory Committee of elected members from each Council would most appropriately encompass :
- a forum for liaison and information dissemination on relevant strategic planning issues including joint monitoring activities on the current Structure Plan;
 - advising on, and acting as a sounding board for, the preparation of the new Structure Plan focusing on key issues including inputs from each of the Councils;
 - the mechanism for reporting back to the parent Committees/Councils on issues requiring corporate executive decisions.
- 4.5 Preliminary officer level discussions with Dundee City Council have highlighted several areas which, subject to consideration by elected members of the respective authorities, provide an appropriate basis for continuing discussions and the preparation of more detailed proposals. This includes :
- The merit of a period of stability following approval of the Tayside Structure Plan 1993 (anticipated early in 1996). While a full review of the Plan should be in place by 2001 the timing of replacement does not require immediate priority to be accorded to the production of a new Structure Plan. It is also recognised that the ongoing process of strategic planning must be maintained and that the priority which Perth and Kinross Council may accord to the replacement of the Tayside Structure Plan is a material consideration which should be the subject of joint discussion.
 - The need to fully capitalise on opportunities for encouraging and facilitating a positive approach between the two Councils building on areas of agreement wherever possible is recognised. This will also assist in identifying and progressing those areas of policy where different views may emerge.
 - The form of Joint Advisory Committee and general working arrangements which might best address the suggested remit and role could comprise a small number of elected members drawn equally from each Council (perhaps 3 or 4 members from each Council) meeting approximately quarterly and hosted and chaired on an alternate basis.
 - The option of a lead authority is considered to be impractical, in practice, particularly as neither Angus nor Dundee wish the other partner Council to act as lead authority.

- The first meeting of a Joint Advisory Committee might appropriately be scheduled during Summer 1996 to help cement early working relations and as a precursor to the initial formal stages of Structure Plan preparation during 1997.
- The allocation and deployment of appropriate staff resources to progress the Structure Plan preparation process and service the Joint Advisory Committee is vital making full use of relevant skills available in each of the Councils. Early discussions should continue on officer working arrangements.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no immediate financial implications resulting from this Report.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Chief Executive has been consulted in the preparation of this Report.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 In order to provide and maintain an up-to-date strategic planning service and Structure Plan framework within the new parameters arising from Local Government reorganisation, it is important that informed decisions are taken on organisational arrangements. This is particularly the case because joint working will be necessary in respect of the Angus and Dundee Structure Plan and close liaison will also be needed with Perth and Kinross Council.

- 7.2 This Report suggests that the most appropriate means for developing the necessary organisational arrangements is via :

- a Joint Structure Plan Advisory Committee for the Angus and Dundee Structure Plan area;
- a Structure Plan Liaison Group to assist co-ordination of Structure Planning activities between the two Structure Plan areas for Angus and Dundee and for Perth and Kinross.

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 the above Report.

AA/CGR/DB

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