

ANGUS COUNCIL**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE****27 FEBRUARY 1997****SUBJECT: TOWN CENTRE AREA MANAGEMENT****REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, TRANSPORT & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT****Abstract:**

This Report seeks support for an examination of town centre/area management as a means of promoting the vitality and viability of towns in Angus.

1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1. It is recommended that the Committee

- 1.1.a. Notes the terms of Scottish Enterprise Tayside's offer of financial support for the Montrose Beachfront improvements.
- 1.1.b. Requests the Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Development to consider the concept of town/area management and to report back in due course on how it might be arranged in Angus.
- 1.1.c. Notes the proposals by Scottish Enterprise Tayside to include Brechin and Montrose within the Small Towns Initiative.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1. The Montrose Beachfront improvements are jointly funded by the Council and Scottish Enterprise Tayside. They are part of a wider strategy which aims to promote the vitality and viability of Montrose and to secure major environmental improvements. The completion of the Inner Relief Road and the proposed town centre environmental improvements are the other key components of the overall package of measures.
- 2.2. The Scottish Office has launched its Small Towns Initiative which is to be implemented via the Local Enterprise Companies. Scottish Enterprise Tayside has selected Brechin and Montrose for inclusion within the Small Towns Initiative (a copy of the Press Release is appended). At this stage the full implications are not known but it is understood that there is unlikely to be any significant additional funding available at least during the financial year 1997/98. However, the inclusion of two towns within Angus is to be welcomed and is a reflection of the existing partnership approach to addressing the problems and opportunities facing the Brechin/Montrose area.

3. TOWN CENTRE/AREA MANAGEMENT

- 3.1. Town centre management was introduced mainly in larger urban areas, in the late 1980's. It was conceived as a means of co-ordinating the wide range of public and private sector activities with a view to improving their performance. Consideration has been given to the application of the concept in Angus.
- 3.2. In the context of the Montrose Beachfront improvements, SET included the following condition in its offer of financial assistance :-

'Angus Council formally confirm their commitment to the ongoing development and implementation of Montrose Town Centre development project and confirm their best endeavours to progress Town Centre Management with the objective of the appointment of a Town/Area Manager within six months of Angus Council's acceptance of this offer'.

- 3.3. In order to allow the Beachfront improvements to proceed within the current financial year and because the concept of the Town/Area Manager is considered to have advantages the offer by SET was accepted. There is a need to consider the particular form of town centre management and the role of a town/area manager which would be relevant in Angus and to assess the financial implications. In principle, however, and subject to the availability of resources the concept could usefully complement the proposed environmental improvements at the Beachfront and Town Centre.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. There are no financial implications arising from this Report. The costs of a Town/Area Manager will be the subject of a further Report.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1. The Chief Executive, Director of Law and Administration and the Director of Finance have been consulted in the preparation of this Report.

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/AMF

Alex Anderson
Director of Planning, Transport & Economic Development

NEWS RELEASE NEWS RELEASE NEWS RELEASE

17 February 1997

SMALL TOWNS INITIATIVE TO TARGET BRECHIN AND MONTROSE

Scottish Enterprise Tayside has paired the Angus towns of Brechin and Montrose as a joint nomination for the government's new Small Towns Initiative, details of which were announced by Michael Forsyth at today's meeting [Monday 17 February] of the Scottish Grand Committee.

Working with Angus Council, the local enterprise company is already responsible for an ongoing programme of physical projects and business development activities in the two towns. Now, says Chief Executive Graham McKee, it plans to harness the Small Towns Initiative to continue the momentum which has been gained in recent years.

"Scottish Enterprise Tayside is active in many small towns across Tayside and has built up a solid record of achievement in the techniques which the Small Towns Initiative is advocating for success," said Mr McKee.

"Over the years we have refined a strategic approach which recognises the key roles played by the local authorities and business communities and aims to integrate environmental improvements with other economic development activities.

"The Small Towns Initiative fits very well with our current strategies for Brechin and Montrose, which have been designed to boost the fortunes of the area and to offset the effects of the forthcoming closure of RAF Edzell."

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Scottish Enterprise Tayside's projects in and around Brechin have included upgrading the railway station; improvements affecting Upper High Street, the Cross Keys car park, the Cathedral precinct and St Ninian's Square, and helping to create a new visitor attraction at Brechin Castle. Future plans include a new business centre on the site of the former cannery, shop facade improvements and high quality signage for visitors.

In Montrose, the local enterprise company has contributed to the new multi-million pound Inner Relief Road and the popular Scottish Wildlife Trust visitor centre. Upcoming projects to enhance the seafront, continue with a programme of town centre improvements and improve the West End and Market parks will go forward under the banner of the Small Towns Initiative.

In addition a substantial number of businesses in both areas are currently being assisted to develop their economic potential in a variety of ways, either through Scottish Enterprise Tayside or the Angus Business Shop.

"The Small Towns Initiative will give further impetus to our plans for Brechin and Montrose," said Mr McKee.

"We look forward to sharing best practice with other areas of Scotland through this initiative and will be seeking opportunities for other small towns in Tayside to participate in the future."

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