

**ANGUS COUNCIL****ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE 16 JANUARY 1997****SUBJECT: ARBROATH BUSINESS CENTRE REFURBISHMENT PHASE II****REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, TRANSPORT & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Abstract: The Council's application for ERDF funding towards the refurbishment of Arbroath Business Centre has been successful. This report updates the Committee on progress on the refurbishment programme and seeks authority to commit remaining expenditure totalling £24,000 to complete the refurbishment programme.**

**1 RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Committee :

- i Approve expenditure of up to £24,000 on the conclusion of the refurbishment programme at Arbroath Business Centre, as detailed in the report.
- ii Remit to the Directors of Property Services and Planning, Transport and Economic Development in conjunction with the Convener to accept tenders to carry out the works detailed in the report.

**2 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 The Economic Affairs Committee of Angus District Council on 11 January 1996 considered a report by the Director of Planning which outlined a refurbishment programme for Arbroath Business Centre, and indicated that an ERDF application had been lodged towards the cost of refurbishment.
- 2.2 The works outlined in the refurbishment programme included the replacement of the roof over the main workshop area at the Business Centre, rewiring, new windows, internal wall cladding, redecoration of walls and floors, and disabled ramp access to the building.
- 2.3 The Committee agreed that the first phase of the refurbishment should proceed immediately and that phase II should only proceed on the basis of a successful ERDF grant application

### 3 CURRENT PROJECT

- 3.1 The Council was informed in late November that its ERDF application had been successful, and it is therefore proposed that the second phase of the refurbishment works should now proceed. A small working group comprising of officials from the Planning, Transport and Economic Development and Property Services Department have been examining the Business Centre and has compiled a list of necessary works to complete the refurbishment programme. The principal items of expenditure are as follows:
- New Signage
  - New doors at main office and workshop entrances
  - Number lock door entry system on main office entrance
  - Re-felt remaining flat roofs in building
  - Disabled access ramp to office and main workshop corridor
  - Suspended ceiling panels and lined corridor walls in workshop area
  - Replacement of four windows on eastern elevation
  - Replacement of lino throughout office block
  - Redecoration of all vacant industrial units
- 3.2 In order to conclude the contract as soon as possible to secure ERDF funding it is proposed that the Directors of Property Services and Planning, Transport and Economic Development in conjunction with the Economic Development Convener be remitted to accept tenders to carry out as much of the refurbishment work identified as possible within the £24,000 budget.
- 3.3 In order for the Council to claim the ERDF grant it is obliged to complete the refurbishment exercise.
- 3.4 In order to maximise the benefits to the local community of the refurbishment programme, it is proposed that the redecoration of vacant units will be carried out by trainees on courses with Angus Council Training Services.

### 4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Budget provision of £88,000 was made in the Repairs and Renewal Fund for the refurbishment programme, with a further £34,000 for rewiring. There remains a balance of £8,000 in the refurbishment project and £16,000 in the rewiring project, giving a total of £24,000 available to be spent on phase II refurbishment of the Centre.
- 4.2 The ERDF grant which has been approved is worth £52,000, but this is dependent upon other refurbishment works proceeding over and above the reroofing and the electrical works completed to date. Completion of the Phase II works as outlined in this report will be sufficient to ensure payment of the ERDF grant, as this includes all the works outlined in the successful ERDF application.
- 4.3 The ERDF grant will be paid into the Renewals and Repairs Fund.

- 4.4 The continuing poor condition of the centre means that it remains difficult to let, with a total of six workshop units vacant out of a total of twenty-six units. The problem is particularly severe in the lower corridor area which requires substantial refurbishment. Lost rentals on these six vacant units total over £8,000 per annum, and it is likely that a significant uplift in occupation levels can be achieved if the refurbishment works detailed in this report go ahead.

## 5 CONSULTATIONS

- 5.1 The Chief Executive, Directors of Law & Administration, Finance and Property Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

## 6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The first phase of the Arbroath Business Centre refurbishment has now been completed and the condition of the Centre is now greatly improved. However, there is still no doubt that the poor condition of the Centre represents a major factor in the continuing number of vacancies being experienced. There are currently six units vacant in the Centre, representing a significant lost rental to the Council. The conclusion of the refurbishment programme will make it significantly easier to let these units, as well as securing the ERDF grant and improving the quality of the building to the standard normally associated with Angus Council properties.

## 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/DV/RP/LJP

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8 January 1996

