

## ANGUS COUNCIL

PLANNING AND TRANSPORT POLICY COMMITTEE  
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

5 JUNE 1997  
12 JUNE 1997

**SUBJECT: ANGUS COUNCIL PLANNING HANDBOOK**

**REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, TRANSPORT & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Abstract: This report considers the best means of producing a Planning Handbook for free distribution.**

### **1 RECOMMENDATION**

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Committee agree the production of a Planning Handbook for Angus Council and that Burrows be invited to produce the handbook on behalf of the Council, free of charge.

### **2 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 For many years, Angus District Council produced, and regularly updated, a Planning Handbook which was freely distributed to interested organisations and the general public. All editions were produced and printed free of charge by commercial organisations, the costs being met through advertising. The handbooks were always of a high quality containing numerous photographs, drawings and pages in colour.
- 2.2 The District Council handbooks were always well received and due to the extensive public interest and involvement in planning activities (including Building Control) provided an ideal and quality means of dispensing such sought-after information on making a planning application, applying for a building warrant, production of local plans, planning policies and projects etc. The handbook also provided a public relations tool and helped to promote the activities of the department.

### **3 CURRENT POSITION**

- 3.1 Because of the positive experience in producing and having available a quality handbook, the intention to produce a new book for Angus Council was included in the department's Business Plan. However, the process was recommenced some months ago by an unsolicited approach from a potential publisher, which led to officials inviting proposals from two other companies involved in publishing such literature.
- 3.2 Discussions were also held with officials from the Chief Executive's Department due to concerns over the type, quality and numbers of such handbooks that could potentially be produced through the Council's various departments and particularly the impact on potential advertisers.
- 3.3 As a result of those discussions a cost was sought for in-house production which would have eliminated the need to seek advertisers. In many respects this would

have been a preferred option but at a price probably in excess of £7,000 for the same quality and numbers, has had to be rejected.

- 3.4 The publishers were also requested to consider a restriction on advertisers directly related to Planning Department activities, which all readily agreed to, and specify the minimum number of advertising pages in proportion to textual pages.
- 3.5 Until the last query was put to them, there was little to choose between the three, all producing a quality product with the offer of 4,000 free copies. However the response to the advertising to text ratio query was as follows:

McMillan - Scott (Macclesfield)	18:24
Burrows (Surrey)	24:48
Burns & Harris (Dundee)	42:42

- 3.6 There are certainly advantages to the appearance and use of the handbook in minimalising the advertising content and it is felt that less advertising would also reflect better on the Council.

#### 4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There should be no financial implications.

#### 5 CONSULTATION

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

#### 6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The department at present does not possess a single document that provides the public with the wealth of much sought-after information that can be included in a Planning Handbook.
- 6.2 This report offers the Council the opportunity of obtaining such a document of quality and in high numbers and at no cost.

#### 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/JJ/MR

21 May 1997

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