

Support Services Committee  
17 December 1996

**Irvine, 17 December 1996** - At a Meeting of the Support Services Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

**Present**

David O'Neill, Patrick Browne, James Clements, Stewart Dewar, John Donn, Elliot Gray, Margaret Highet, James Jennings, David Munn, and Richard Wilkinson.

**In Attendance**

The Director of Financial Services, the Head of Corporate Business, the Personnel Services Manager, the Legal Services Manager, the Information Technology Services Manager, A. McCreath, Principal Payments and Payroll Officer (Financial Services), L. Crum, Personnel Officer (Personnel Services) and B. Hannah, an Administration Officer (Chief Executive).

**Chair**

Mr. O'Neill in the Chair.

**Apologies for Absence**

Alan Munro and George Steven.

**1. Minutes Confirmed**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Support Services Committee held on 12 November 1996, copies of which had previously been circulated, were confirmed.

**2. Collection Statements**

Submitted report by the Director of Financial Services on the current collection levels in respect of Community Charge and Council Tax.

A total of £109,000 was received during November 1996 in respect of Community Charge arrears from 1989/90 to 1992/93 inclusive. A total of £2,461,000 was received during the same period in respect of Council Tax due in 1996/97 representing a collection rate of 53.34% for the financial year.

Noted.

**3. Harmonisation of Pay Conditions**

Submitted joint report by the Director of Financial Services and Personnel Services Manager on the harmonisation of payroll systems for weekly paid employees.

At present the former Cunninghame District Council employees are paid on the PAYSYS system with former Strathclyde Regional Council employees being paid on the CYBORG system. The CYBORG system has a number of advantages over PAYSYS.

In addition, there are differences in lying-time, standard week ending day and a standard pay day which, coupled with the different pay systems, leads to administrative complications in the operation of the payroll.

After discussion the Committee agreed, subject to satisfactory negotiations taking place with the appropriate Trade Unions, to introduce a standard where all weekly paid employees are paid on the same day with the same week ending date and 2 weeks lying time.

#### **4. Ex-regional Information Technology Systems Support Contract**

(Previous Minute Reference - Support Services Committee - 1 October 1996)

Submitted report by the Information Technology Services Manager on the award of an I.T. applications support and maintenance contract.

On 1 October 1996, the Committee agreed to support the existing system for Payroll and Finance by extending the present maintenance contract, to support the Social Work and Architectural systems in-house and to obtain an external support contract for the Roads system. The existing maintenance contract in respect of Payroll has been extended but it has not been possible to extend the contract for Financial systems. It has therefore been necessary to obtain an external support contract for both the Financial and Roads systems.

The lowest tender in respect of the maintenance of financial management and road systems was submitted by BCT at £43,375 for a one-year contract with an option for a second year. As the contract required to be operational from 1 January 1997 and to ensure appropriate arrangements were in place, the Information Technology Services Manager concluded the terms of final negotiations with BCT.

After discussion the Committee agreed to homologate the actions taken by the Information Technology Services Manager in the award of the maintenance contracts for I.T. systems support and maintenance to BCT.

#### **5. Year 2000 Implications**

Submitted report by the Information Technology Services Manager on possible implications to the Council's computer applications of the date change at the millennium to the Council's computer applications.

Many of the Council's computer applications were designed with a two-year digit code thus storing and displaying a four digit year such as 1996 as 96. The consequence of this is that the year 2000 will appear as 00 and not as 2000. This will impact on all applications which rely on correct dates e.g. the general ledger and Social Work systems. It also has implications for applications which have been written and designed by I.T. users in the Council Directorates as well as software provided by third-party suppliers.

The Council require to undertake a detailed analysis to ascertain the scale and degree of the problem but it is considered that there are two essential methods which can provide a resolution viz:- the replacement of all applications which cannot comply with the date change along with computer hardware as necessary and the modification of existing applications to ensure that they can comply.

After discussion the Committee agreed that the Information Technology Services Manager (a) chair an Officer Working Party to undertake a review of all existing computer applications and identify those which are non-compliant with the date change to the year 2000; (b) consult with all third-party suppliers to establish the position in relation to the Council's software; (c) ensure that all new software purchased by the Council will be capable of being used by the year 2000; and (d) submit a report to a future meeting of the Committee detailing, the costs of ensuring that all Council systems are capable of being used by the year 2000.

## **6. Terms and Conditions of Service Package**

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager on proposed terms and conditions of service.

The Council inherited a wide range of terms and conditions of service from different local authorities. These now require to be rationalised to ensure that there is a consistent approach adopted throughout the Council. The terms and conditions proposed relate to:-overtime working; sickness leave and allowances; general scale yardsticks; statutory maternity pay/maternity allowance leave provision; special leave scheme and a job-sharing scheme.

Discussions have taken place with all Directors, Managers and the appropriate Trade Unions.

The Committee agreed to approve the terms and conditions of service package as detailed in the report.

## **7. Education Directorate: Early Retirement on Grounds of Voluntary Severance**

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager on a proposal that an employee in the Psychological Services Division of the Education Directorate be granted early retirement.

The Council are in a joint agreement with the other Ayrshire authorities for the provision of psychological services within Social Work. East Ayrshire and South Ayrshire Councils have now intimated that they wish to withdraw from this arrangement. North Ayrshire Council employ a Senior Psychologist within the Social Work Directorate who covers East and South Ayrshire Councils as part of the existing agreement but this member of staff cannot now be employed fully.

An employee in a similar post in the Education Directorate has, however, intimated that he would be willing to accept voluntary severance which would enable the Senior Psychologist within the Social Work Directorate to transfer to the Education Directorate and allow the Social Work Directorate to "buy back" psychological services as required. The costs associated with this voluntary severance are £24,312 of which 53% would be recovered from East and South Ayrshire Councils.

After discussion the Committee agreed that the employee within the Education Directorate be offered voluntary severance on terms and conditions to be negotiated by the Personnel Services Manager.

## **8. Education Directorate (Headquarters) Staffing Establishment**

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager detailing the staffing establishment in the Directorate of Education (Headquarters).

The Committee agreed to approve the staffing establishment for the Education Directorate (Headquarters).

## **9. Perceton House: Transfer of Sutcliffe (UK) Catering Limited Staff to the Commercial Services Directorate**

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager seeking approval for the transfer of staff presently employed by Sutcliffe (UK) Catering Limited to the Commercial Services Directorate.

On 1 October 1996 the Commercial Services Committee agreed that the Catering and Cleaning Section of the Commercial Services Directorate take over the responsibility for catering services currently provided by Sutcliffe (UK) Limited at Perceton House.

The Sutcliffe Catering operation involves 1 Catering Manger, 2 Catering Assistants and 1 General Assistant and it is proposed that the staff transfer to North Ayrshire Council on terms and conditions in line with those afforded to other Council staff holding comparable positions. The

proposed transfer will take place on 19 December 1996.

After discussion the Committee agreed to approve the transfer of the 4 catering staff employed by Sutcliffe (UK) Catering Ltd. to North Ayrshire Council.

#### **10. National Joint Circulars**

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager advising that agreement has been reached nationally on certain Conditions of Service issues relating to (a) the 1996 pay settlement for Engineering Craftsmen; (b) rates of pay and Conditions of Service for Building and Civil Engineering Operatives; and (c) remote schools allowance for Teachers.

The Committee agreed to adopt and implement the Conditions of Service Circulars as detailed in the report.

#### **10. Temporary Employees**

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager on the number of temporary workers employed by the Council.

The Council has a total staffing establishment of 6,816 employees, 551 of whom are temporary. Temporary workers are employed to cater for a number of contingencies, such as temporary additional workload, sickness/absence cover and maternity leave. 490 of the Council's temporary workers are employed to cover temporary additional workloads which occur within the Council's Directorates/Departments from time to time.

After discussion the Committee agreed that the Personnel Services Manager submit a further report on temporary employees to a future meeting of the Committee detailing each Directorate's justification for engaging temporary employees to cover, in particular, temporary additional workloads.

#### **12. Commercial Services Directorate: Reinstatement of Conditions of Service to Ex-Southdown Cleaning Staff**

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager seeking the reinstatement of Conditions of Service to cleaning staff within the Commercial Services Directorate.

In 1992 Strathclyde Regional Council won the contract for building cleaning for the North Ayrshire area of Strathclyde previously carried out by Southdown Limited and which was the subject of re-tendering. Strathclyde Regional Council drew up a revised Condition of Service Package to assist them in bidding for the contract. The package included the non-payment of sickness allowance for the first seven days; unpaid leave during public holidays and unpaid maternity leave. This was agreed by the joint Trade Unions prior to the submission of the contract bid.

At the reorganisation of local government the cleaning employees were transferred to North Ayrshire Council and the Director of Commercial Services has investigated methods of reinstating these service conditions. He has concluded (a) that payment for public holidays as from 3 January 1997 may be reinstated on the basis that cleaning staff within non-educational establishments will, where appropriate, have 8 fixed and 4 floating public holidays; (b) Maternity Pay be paid accordance with the Council's policy as from 3rd January 1997; and (c) that sickness allowance be paid for the first seven days of sickness absence as from 1 April 1997.

After discussion the Committee agreed to approve the reinstatement of service conditions to building cleaners on the terms and conditions as detailed in the report.

**13. Planning, Roads and the Environment Directorate: Grading of a Post of Assistant Road Safety Training Officer**

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager seeking approval for the amendment of the salary grade for the post of Assistant Road Safety Training Officer within the Planning, Roads and the Environment Directorate from AP2 to AP3.

The proposed regrading is due to additional duties and responsibilities required to be undertaken.

The Committee agreed to the regrading of the post of Assistant Road Safety Training Officer on AP3.

**14. Recruitment and Selection Policy Procedures (APT&C, Manual Workers and Craft Operatives)**

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager on the proposed Recruitment and Selection Policy procedure for APT&C, Manual Workers and Craft Operatives.

The current recruitment practices are those operated by Strathclyde Regional Council and Cunninghame District Council. The proposals lead to consistency of standards in the Council's recruitment.

The Committee agreed (a) to approve the Recruitment and Selection Policy procedures as detailed in the report; (b) that the Personnel Services Manager monitor and review the Policy in 6 months; and (c) to note that a Recruitment and Selection Policy procedure for Teaching Staffs will be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

**15. Planning, Roads and the Environment Directorate: Re-allocation of Duties Within the Environment Section**

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager on a re-allocation of duties within the Environment Section of the Planning, Roads and the Environment Directorate.

The re-allocation proposals were approved by the Infrastructure and Environment Committee on 11 December 1996 and have no staffing implications.

Noted.

**16. Investors in People: Pilot Project**

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager on a proposed "Investors in People" Pilot project in the Personnel Services Department and the Commercial Services Directorate.

The Personnel Services Department is currently pursuing the Investors in People standard which is a national quality standard for investment in the training and development of all persons to achieve business goals. The Personnel Department is at present advising the Commercial Services Directorate on the implementation of the Investors in People project and it is considered that the Personnel Services Department's involvement in the IIP programme should be organised as a pilot project complementary to the Council's corporate training and development strategy.

Noted.

#### **17. Social Work Directorate: Staffing Changes**

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager on proposed amendments to the Social Work Directorate's staffing.

On 4 December 1996 the Social Work Committee agreed due to the termination of a joint user agreement between South Ayrshire, North Ayrshire and Inverclyde Councils, to redesignate and change the duties associated with the Travelling People's Liaison Officer.

The Social Work Directorate were successful in the application to the Scottish Office for 100% funding for a Pilot Diversion from Prosecution Scheme. The staffing requirements for the Pilot Diversion from Prosecution Scheme are 1.5 Social Work Posts (QSW Grade) and 0.5 Clerical Assistant Posts (GS1/2 Grade).

After discussion the Committee agreed (a) to the post of Travelling People's Liaison Officer to the Travelling People/Thorough Care Officer; and (b) to revise the establishment of the Social Work Directorate to take account of the requirement for 1.5 Social Worker posts (QSW Grade) and 0.5 Clerical Assistant Posts (GS1/2 Grade) in respect of the pilot Diversion from Prosecution Scheme.

#### **18. Social Work Directorate: Joint Daycare Services for Vulnerable Elderly People/Development of Community Services**

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager on decisions taken by the Social Work Committee on 4 December 1996 in relation to (a) joint daycare services for vulnerable elderly people; and (b) the development of community services.

After discussion the Committee agreed that the Personnel Services Manager investigate the staffing implications related to the services and report to the next meeting of the Support Services Committee.

#### **19. Largs: Development Site at Court Street/Gallowgate Lane**

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on the proposed sale of an area of land at Court Street/Gallowgate Lane, Largs to Cunninghame Housing Association.

The Committee agreed to approve the proposed sale of land on the terms and conditions provisionally agreed by the Legal Services Manager.

#### **20. Millport: Land Adjacent to 2 Cumbrae Drive**

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on the proposed sale of an area of land extending to 65 sq. m. at 2 Cumbrae Drive, Millport.

The Committee agreed to approve the proposed sale of land on the terms and conditions provisionally agreed by the Legal Services Manager.

#### **21. Millport Golf Club: Sale of Assets**

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on an application to purchase property at 10 Golf Road, Millport.

The Committee agreed to approve the sale of property on terms and conditions provisionally agreed by the Legal Services Manager.

**22. Dreghorn: Greenwood Academy: Surplus Accommodation**

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on the proposed disposal of janitorial accommodation at Greenwood Academy, Dreghorn.

The Committee agreed (a) to approve the disposal of the janitorial accommodation at Greenwood Academy, Dreghorn on terms and conditions to be negotiated by the Legal Services Manager; and (b) to advertise surplus accommodation previously declared surplus to requirements at Auchenhavrie and Kilwinning Academies.

**23. Irvine: Lease of Shop Property at 84 Montgomerie Street, Irvine**

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on an application for the lease of shop property at 84 Montgomerie Street, Irvine.

The Committee agreed to approve the grant of a lease on terms and conditions provisionally agreed by the Legal Services Manager.

**24. Kilwinning**

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on an application for the renewal of lease at 17 Almswall Road, Kilwinning.

The Committee agreed to approve the renewal of lease on the terms and conditions provisionally agreed by the Legal Services Manager.

**25. 6 Central Avenue: Ardrossan; 74 Nelson Street: Largs ; and Land at Campbell Avenue: Ardrossan**

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on applications for (a) the lease of shop property at 6 Central Avenue, Ardrossan; (b) the sale of a flat at 74 Nelson Street, Largs; and (c) the sale of a site at Campbell Avenue, Ardrossan.

The prospective tenants/occupiers in all cases had indicated that there was urgency in obtaining the premises and, therefore, the Legal Services Manager in consultation with the Chair proceeded with the transactions subject to the conclusion of any necessary agreements.

The Committee agreed to homologate the action taken by the Chair in authorising the Legal Services Manager to proceed with these transactions.

**26. Greenock: Monkton Trunk Road A78 Ardrossan/Saltcoats/Stevenston Road Action Plan**

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on the disposal of ground surplus to requirements to the Scottish Office for the purposes of carrying out improvements to the A78 Trunk Road through Ardrossan, Saltcoats, Stevenston.

The Committee agreed to dispose of the land on terms and conditions provisionally agreed by the Legal Services Manager.

**27. Stevenston: Housing Action Area for Demolition at 51/67 New Street**

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on an application for the purchase of a tenant's interest at 51 New Street, Stevenston.

The Committee agreed to approve the purchase of property at 51 New Street, Stevenston on



terms and conditions provisionally agreed by the Legal Services Manager.

**28. Stevenston: Site at High Road: Ayrshire and Arran Community Healthcare Trust**

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on the disposal of an area of ground at High Road, Stevenston to Ayrshire and Arran Community Healthcare Trust.

The Committee agreed to approve the proposed sale of land on the terms and conditions provisionally agreed by the Legal Services Manager.

**29. Largs: Radio Station: Largs Academy/Flatt Road**

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on a rent review in respect of the occupation of space for a radio mast situated on the roof of Largs Academy.

The Committee agreed to approve the terms and conditions provisionally agreed by the Legal Services Manager.

**30. Arran Small Works Programme 1996/97: Merkland Point Seal Watching Licence**

Submitted report by the Director of Planning, Roads and the Environment seeking approval for a 10 year licence with Arran Estates for the construction and maintenance of a seal watching point at Merkland Road near Brodick.

The Committee agreed (a) to approve the 10 year licence; and (b) that the Director of Planning, Roads and the Environment conclude appropriate terms with Arran Estates.

The Meeting ended at 3.25 p.m.