

Commercial Services Committee
7 May 1997

Irvine, 7 May 1997 - At a Meeting of the Commercial Services Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

Present

Thomas Dickie, Peter McNamara, Patrick Browne, John Donn, Joseph McKinney, Irene Oldfather, Robert Rae, Gena Seales, George Steven and Samuel Taylor.

In Attendance

The Director of Commercial Services; J Currie (Head of Cleansing/Grounds Maintenance); K Wilson (Head of Catering/Cleaning); R McLaughlin (School Crossing Patrol Monitoring Officer) (Commercial Services); J Hair (Principal Officer) (Financial Services); and J Bannatyne (Administration Officer) (Chief Executive).

Chair

Mr Dickie in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

Alan Munro.

1. Minutes Confirmed

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 26 March 1997, copies of which had previously been circulated, were confirmed.

2. Purchase of Vehicles and Plant 1997/98

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services on procedures to be adopted for the drawing up of tender lists for the purchase of vehicles and plant for 1997/98.

As required an advertisement was placed in the European Journal seeking expressions of interest from firms wishing to supply items of vehicles and plant. A number of responses have now been received and it will be necessary to compile lists of those to be invited to tender.

The Committee agreed to authorise the Director of Commercial Services in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair to draw up a list of those companies which will be invited to tender.

3. Isle of Arran: Refuse Collection Contract

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services on the action proposed in respect of tenders for the Arran Refuse Collection Contract.

Refuse collection and associated work has historically and is currently being carried out on Arran by sub-contractors working for the Council. Thirteen companies/individuals who expressed an interest in this contract were sent tender documents. Existing contractors carrying out the work on behalf of the Cleansing DSO were also included in the tender list and the deadline for the submission of tenders has been set at 2 May 1997.

On the basis of the report the Committee agreed (a) that the Chair or Vice-Chair open the tenders received; (b) that a tender evaluation be carried out by appropriate officers of the Commercial Services Directorate; and (c) that the most economically advantageous tender(s)

received will form part of the Cleansing DSO bid for refuse collection and other cleaning throughout North Ayrshire with a proposed contract start date in July 1997.

4. Irvine: Shewalton: Landfill Site

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services on the monitoring of the Shewalton Landfill Site and its relationship to obtaining a Waste Disposal Licence.

The Cleaning Department's consultants, Envirocentre (a section of Strathclyde University) have completed the first year's monitoring of the Shewalton Landfill Site. Although their report concludes that the site presently meets the general requirements of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, there is a need for the present monitoring to be upgraded to meet statutory licensing criteria and the Scottish Environmental Agency requirements for licence. The Agency has already indicated that they are considering the licensing of the Shewalton site with a view to issuing the licence in October of this year.

The Committee agreed (a) that the monitoring of the Shewalton Landfill Site be upgraded to meet site licence requirements; and (b) that in accordance with these requirements monitoring be continued throughout the life of the site.

5. Keep Scotland Beautiful

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services providing information on a number of issues relating to legislation in respect of litter.

A new statutory instrument which came into effect on 1 January 1997 raised the fixed penalty for litter offences to £25 and new Orders which came into effect on 1 April 1997 provide changes in the size of developments which can be affected by Litter Control Areas and in the categories of premises which can now be covered by Street Litter Control Notices.

Statutory instruments are also in preparation in relation to litter duty and the railways and a Draft Code of Practice on litter and refuse is to be put before Parliament at the earliest opportunity.

The Committee agreed (a) that the Director of Commercial Services submit a further report on the introduction of Street Litter Control Notices to a future meeting; (b) that a copy of the report be passed to the Litter Awareness and Prevention Campaign Officers' Working Group for their interest; and (c) to otherwise to note the proposed legislative changes.

6. Hazardous Waste Directive

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services on a draft proposal to amend the Hazardous Waste Directive to include domestic waste.

The Environmental Affairs Group of the Agriculture, Environment and Fisheries Department is currently seeking the Council's observations on a draft proposal from the European Commission to amend the Hazardous Waste Directive (91/689/EEC) to include household waste.

At present domestic hazardous waste is excluded from the scope of the Hazardous Waste Directive and an amendment is proposed to bring domestic waste within its scope. The amendment will place an obligation on Member States to ensure that hazardous municipal waste is collected in separate fractions either through the creation of separate waste collection systems or delivery points. The wastes covered will be contained in an extended hazardous waste list.

Details were provided in the report on the problems associated with hazardous waste and on the objectives of the draft proposals. A system is currently employed by the Netherlands where producers of products likely to become hazardous waste at the waste stage are required to affix a special logo to their products. The proposal will result in serious cost implications to local authorities if they are required to arrange for the separate collection and disposal of hazardous

domestic waste. The Council at present does not operate such a service.

After discussion, the Committee agreed that the Scottish Office be advised that (a) although no costings are available, the Council is concerned at the additional costs which will be involved in the provision of a separate collection and disposal system for hazardous domestic waste; (b) that while the use of an identifying logo is welcomed, the Council take the view that the producer should also have responsibility for disposal.

7. Cleaning Contract: Customer Satisfaction Report

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services on the standards of cleanliness being achieved in the Building and Cleaning Contract which is subject to Compulsory Competitive Tendering and is currently carried out by the in-house contractor.

In order to establish the standards of cleanliness being achieved in relation to toilets, floor surfaces, dusting and other functions in all premises cleaned under the Building Cleaning Contract, information is provided by the customer base through the submission of regular Customer Satisfaction Reports.

Action is taken by the Commercial Services Directorate to resolve any problem areas which are highlighted in these reports and at present the level of building cleaning achieving the acceptable standard or above is 94%. They not only enable the customer to express their views on the quality of the service provided but also enable the Commercial Services Directorate to take account of the changing views and needs of customers. Staff training initiatives are ongoing in relation to building cleaning functions and Customer Satisfaction Reports are also circulated to all Directorates who receive building cleaning services.

The Committee agreed (a) that the results of the Customer Satisfaction Reports be used as part of the benchmarking process to assist in the evaluation of the service being delivered to the customer base; and (b) that the Principal Marketing Officer make suitable arrangements to publicise the results of the Customer Satisfaction Reports.

8. Training of Building Cleaning Staff

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services on the programme of training for the Buildings Cleaning Supervisors within the Council which is undertaken to the recognised standard of the British Institute of Cleaning Science (BICS).

It is proposed to employ the BICS to train the Directorate's thirty Cleaning Supervisors during May 1997. The training which would be to assessor level and would cover all issues within the Building Cleaning function, would result in the Supervisors receiving a nationally recognised qualification and being registered and qualified to train the building cleaning staff under their control. The ongoing training programme would thereafter allow the building cleaning function to be registered with BICS. Funding for training could be provided from within the Catering and Cleaning Section training budget.

The Committee agreed to approve the training of the Building Cleaning Supervisors to assessor level by the British Institute of Cleaning Science (BICS).

9. Cunningham House: Catering

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services on the transfer of the catering function and staff within Cunningham House.

The Catering Contract within Cunningham House which was operated by the Commercial Catering Group was terminated on 2 May 1997 and is now operated by the Catering and Cleaning Section of the Commercial Services Directorate. Eight employees previously employed by CCG have been transferred to North Ayrshire Council resulting in improved Conditions of Service. The

catering operation within Cunninghame House will be subject to CCT under "Other Catering" which is due to be awarded on 1 May 1998. All other issues concerning the transfer of commodities and equipment etc. have been resolved and the operating cost for this function will be met from within the existing Commercial Services budget.

The Committee agreed (a) to note the transfer of the catering staff; and (b) to refer the report to the Support Services Committee for further consideration.

10. School Crossing Patrols

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services on progress within the School Crossing Patrol function.

Mr McLaughlin, the School Crossing Patrol Monitoring Officer indicated that the School Crossing Patrol function had initially been operated by Strathclyde Police and that following a short three-month period with the Roads Department, was handed over to the Catering and Cleaning Section of the Commercial Services Directorate on 1 April 1996.

The Council currently employs seventy-two full-time crossers and sixteen relief staff to cover absence. During the first year the absence rate has been reduced from 36% to 11.25% and it is hoped that this will be further reduced. Staff counselling, raising the self-esteem for School Crossing Patrollers and the overall profile of the crossing patrol function have contributed to the reduction in staff absence. Reference was made to a member of the School Crossing Patrol staff who had recently received an award for road safety and samples were shown of new uniforms and equipment issued to School Crossing Patrollers to comply with current regulations and which will help to increase child safety. In-house training is provided for School Crossing Patrollers and a relevant handbook is available.

Noted.

11. Urgent Items

The Chair agreed that the following item be dealt with as a matter of urgency.

12. Council Depots: Security

The Director of Commercial Services reported that incidents involving vandalism and break-ins have recently occurred at three of the Council's depots for which the Commercial Services Directorate is responsible.

The Committee agreed that the Director of Commercial Services submit a report to the next meeting on the security arrangements at the depots involved.

The meeting ended at 2.45 p.m.