

The Executive of North Ayrshire Council
27 March 2012

IRVINE, 27 March 2012 - At a Meeting of the Executive of North Ayrshire Council at 10.00 a.m.

Present

David O'Neill, John Reid, John Bell, Alex Gallagher and Peter McNamara.

In Attendance

Elma Murray, Chief Executive; L. Friel, Corporate Director and A. Bodie, Head of Infrastructure and Design (Finance and Infrastructure); I. Colvin, Corporate Director, L. Raeside, Head of Finance and Performance and O. Clayton, Head of Community Care and Housing (Social Services and Health); R. Forrest, Planning Services Manager (Corporate Services); and J.M. Macfarlane, Head of Human Resources, J. Montgomery, General Manager (Policy and Service Reform), C. O'Kane, Change Programme Manager, M. Reid, Team Manager (Health and Safety), K. Dyson, Communications Officer and M. Anderson, Committee Services Officer (Chief Executive's Service).

Chair

Councillor O'Neill in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

Tom Barr.

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations by Elected Members in terms of Standing Order 16.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the previous meeting of the Executive held on 13 March 2012 were signed in accordance with paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, subject to an amendment to Item 4, to clarify that the £1.544m underspend mentioned was in addition to the figure of £5.374m cited in terms of savings within the Period 10 General Services projected outturn for 2011/12.

3. Performance Management Strategy 2012/15

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the refreshed Performance Management Strategy 2012/15 and Action Plan 2012/13.

A proposed refreshed Performance Management Strategy 2012/15 was set out at Appendix 1 to the report. As part of the refresh exercise, the core principles have been examined and, to reinforce the desired performance culture within the Council, the following principles have been added in the updated Strategy:-

- We are risk aware, not risk averse.
- Innovation and creativity are expected.
- Success is acknowledged, shared and celebrated.
- Getting it wrong is regarded as an opportunity for improvement.
- Constructive challenge (up, down and across the council) is encouraged.
- Benchmarking is systematically undertaken to identify and implement improvement.

The Strategy to achieve the Council's vision is twofold. The Council needs to continue to implement, review and revise the suite of strategies, policies and processes that it already has and focus robustly on self assessment, as the heart of the approach to performance management and improvement. This will mean implementing the revised self assessment strategy and action plan approved by the Executive on 30 August 2011.

The Action Plan 2012/13 at Appendix B to the Strategy document provides more detail of what the Council needs to do to achieve the desired outcomes. The Action Plan will be reported six monthly to the Executive and Scrutiny Committee.

Members asked questions, and received clarification, on the following:-

- the role of Members in terms of contributing to a performance culture within the Council;
- measures to ensure that the desired behaviours and attitudes are cascaded to all levels of staff within the Council; and
- the need to ensure that the Council improves the way in which it responds to cross-service issues raised by customers.

The Executive agreed to (a) approve the refreshed Performance Management Strategy 2012/15 and Action Plan 2012/13; and (b) refer the report to the Scrutiny Committee for its consideration.

4. Council Plan Developments and Action Plan 2012/13

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on developments and on the proposed Council Plan Action Plan 2012/13.

The report proposed that the vision statement is incorporated into a revised Council Plan for 2012/17 and that the following four core objectives in the original Plan remain unchanged:-

- Regenerating our communities and increasing employment.
- Protecting vulnerable people.
- Improving educational attainment.
- Operating more efficiently and effectively.

In order that the new Administration's aspirations can be incorporated into the plan, a draft Council Plan will be submitted for consultation to the Council in June 2012 and should be finalised by September 2012. The Single Outcome Agreement is also being updated, with a new version to be produced for 2013/17 based around the CPPs three shared priorities. The Council Plan describes how the Council will deliver on the SOA and the Plan will be aligned to the SOA as far as is possible.

The Council Plan Action Plan 2012/13, set out at Appendix 1 to the report, is structured around the four core objectives and has been updated in consultation with services to include key indicators and actions from service plans in 2012/13. The plan will be monitored through Covalent and reported to Elected Members on a six monthly basis.

The Executive agreed to (a) approve (i) the proposals for the Council Plan 2012/17, as outlined in the report and (ii) the Action Plan for 2012/13 at set out at Appendix 1 to the report; and (b) receive 6-monthly reports on the Action Plan's progress.

5. Projects Funded from Landfill Communities Fund (LCF) 2011/12

Submitted report by the Solicitor to the Council seeking approval of an additional project to be funded from the remaining monies available through the Landfill Communities Fund (LCF) 2011/12.

At its meeting on 2 August 2011, the Executive agreed to fund 10 projects for a sum of £121,648 with a further report to be prepared to consider the remainder of this year's LCF allocation and to review the criteria used to weight projects to provide more specifically for sustainability.

The sum of £26,163, together with a "re-distribution" of £6,000 from a previously undelivered project by Drybridge Woodland Group, remains available for distribution from the LCF in 2011/12.

A review of the assessment criteria used to evaluate LCF projects has been carried out. It is considered that all existing criteria are still relevant and appropriate in terms of Entrust objectives. However, the report proposed that the Environmental criterion should be augmented to address aspects of "sustainability" and that "sustainability" should be considered as a priority.

Appendices 1 and 2 to the report provided an evaluation of an application by Kilwinning Sports Club for the provision of a new clubhouse and a full-size all-weather synthetic pitch. It was proposed that the Club Kilwinning Sports Club be awarded the sum of £26,163 in connection with the project and that Drybridge Woodland Group be instructed to re-distribute £4,000 to this project, with the re-distribution of the group's remaining £2,000 in funding to be advised next year.

The Executive agreed (a) to approve (i) the additional project for Kilwinning Sports Club set out in the report, to be funded from the remaining monies available from the Council's Landfill Communities Fund (LCF) in 2011/12; (ii) the re-allocation of £4,000 of LCF monies awarded previously to Drybridge Woodland Group in 2004/05 to Kilwinning Sports Club, providing £30,163 from the LCF in total; and (iii) the inclusion of an additional priority criterion for "sustainability" to be used in the weighting of future project bids; and (b) that Drybridge Woodlands Group be advised on how the remaining £2,000 of their award is to be re-allocated next financial year.

6. Care and Contract Management Framework

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Social Services and Health) on implementation of the Contract Management Framework for social care services.

The Contract Management Framework sets out who will manage contracts and service performance, the range of information required and analysed, how the process works, and what the outcomes are. The escalation process within the framework for care deficiencies was set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

A key source of information in the process is the contract monitoring return, completed by the provider on a quarterly basis. This includes necessary information required by contract terms and self-assessment on 15 key performance indicators set out at Section 2.8 of the report. It is anticipated that during the course of working with providers and service users, some of the indicators in the performance management framework will be refined in line with the review process outlined in the contract monitoring framework.

Provider forums have also been established, and the contract monitoring team will regularly attend service user and carer forums to obtain feedback on the overall performance of services. As well as face to face meetings, information on service user views will be gathered from other sources, such as Social Services care managers, the Council's Listening and Learning Scheme and Care Inspectorate reports.

Where care deficiencies are such that it is judged safer to temporarily cease admissions to services in the interests of present service users, a moratorium can be applied. This allows a service time to reflect and consider the improvements necessary to address the issues which have given cause for concern. Details of the moratorium process were contained in the appendix to the report.

Members asked questions, and received clarification, on the following:-

- the validation process in respect of the monitoring of key performance indicators;
- measures to ensure that the Council is made aware of complaints by users about external providers;
- the costs associated with monitoring the performance of external providers, compared with the likely cost to the Council of providing services in-house;
- the extent to which the Council could provide services in-house;
- the levels of remuneration paid by external providers, compared with levels paid by the Council, given its Living Wage commitment;
- the importance of performance monitoring, regardless of whether services are provided in-house or by external providers; and
- measures to ensure officers have early feedback on issues arising from Care Inspectorate inspections of external providers.

The Executive agreed to support the Contract Management Framework and the plan for implementation.

7. Entrepreneurial Spark Business Hatchery Programme

Submitted report by the Chief Executive seeking a £50,000 contribution per year for three years towards an Ayrshire business start up and accelerator programme as part of the Economic Development Strategy to increase the business start up and survival rate.

The Hatchery, run by Entrepreneurial Spark (a social enterprise backed by Sir Tom Hunter), is a business accelerator programme which provides free business start up space and facilities, mentoring support, networking and opportunities for collaborative and cooperative working.

Based on the success of the Hatchery programme in Glasgow, there are proposals to develop such a facility within accommodation at vacant business space (approximately 4,000 sq. ft) belonging to The Hunter Foundation at Dundonald in South Ayrshire. Fit-out will provide high quality business accommodation and the space will create an excellent mix of on-site advisory support coupled with state-of-the-art modern facilities. It is anticipated that a vibrant community of fast-growing businesses will develop, enjoying a first class environment in which to work and extensive public areas in which to network with other entrepreneurs. Fit-out costs are estimated at £200,000 and will be met by the Hunter Foundation, together with ongoing costs associated with the space management.

Support will extend beyond the availability of free facilities to include the close guidance required to turn a germ of an idea into a fully functioning, profitable business which creates wealth and jobs for the Ayrshire economy. Guidance is likely to involve strategy development, business modelling, communications, networking, market sensing, leadership, accessing finance, product development and business growth.

Places allocated within the space will be through an informal application and interview process. It is anticipated that between 20 and 30 spaces will be made available in the first intake, accommodating up to 50 people. It is expected that all three Ayrshire councils will support this project equally and this will equate to between 7 and 10 aspiring entrepreneurs from each area being accommodated.

It is intended that operations costs will be met by the contributions of each Ayrshire council to the project and will include costs associated with mentors and advisors. Full details of project targets and budgets will be set out in a Service Level Agreement (SLA).

Members asked questions, and received clarification, on the following:-

- the mechanism for identifying prospective participants and any eligibility criteria in terms of age;
- the transport difficulties associated with the location of the proposed Hatchery; and
- any overlap with the work of the Arran Business Gateway, which is provided via the Highlands and Islands Partnership.

The Executive agreed to support the Entrepreneurial Spark Business Hatchery Programme by providing a grant of £50,000 per year for a 3-year programme, subject to an annual performance review, to be met from existing budgets within Economic Development Services.

8. Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure Addendum - Prioritising Job Applicants for Selection

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on an addendum to the Recruitment and Selection Policy, which aims to prioritise job applications in order to support the Council's Economic and Regeneration Strategy objectives, and to recoup the significant investment made in teacher training.

The Council's Recruitment and Selection Policy, which sets out the framework for recruiting job applicants into the Council's workforce, requires to be updated to reflect support for the Council's Economic and Regeneration Strategy 2010-20, by prioritising applications for job opportunities within the Council to people who are actively seeking work and who have no other means of financial support and those seeking career development opportunities.

The joint investment by the Scottish Government and Scottish Councils, including North Ayrshire, to establish and sustain a pool of newly qualified teachers in support of workforce succession planning is not currently reflected in the Council's Recruitment and Selection Policy. Prioritisation of vacant posts to newly qualified teachers and those in employment actively seeking career development, will provide the return in investment in their training, development and registration as well as contributing to the worklessness objective of the Council's Economic and Regeneration Strategy.

A proposed addendum to the Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure was attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

The Executive agreed to fully endorse and support the introduction of the addendum to the Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

9. Change Programme

9.1 Change Programme: Progress as at 29 February 2012

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on an update in relation to the Change Programme.

The Change Programme seeks to effect Council-wide transformational change to address unavoidable demographic and financial pressures. This mirrors the national public service reform programme established by the Scottish Government.

The report provided an update on progress as at 29 February 2012 in respect of the following key areas:-

- National policy developments, including proposed participation as a Pathfinder in the Local Scrutiny and Engagement Implementation Network, as part of the Police and Fire & Rescue Services reform;
- The Social Services and Health change programme, which is the subject of a separate report to the Executive;
- The Education and Skills work streams in respect of the Effective Use of the Education and Skills Estate, Cluster Working and Budget Devolution, the Review of Early Years Provision and the Review of Senior Phase and Post 16 Education;
- Altering Service Demand learning events;
- Transport, including the potential benefits of having a centralised transport hub;
- The six themed Asset Management Plans and action plans, and the Corporate Landlord approach;
- The two Supporting Services work streams, namely Efficiency reviews and Benchmarking; and
- The development of a revised Customer Services Strategy.

Members asked questions, and received clarification, on the following:-

- the importance of knowledge transfer as part of the change programme and how this is measured;
- the need for a review of Customer Services to provide a better service to users; and
- the Council's ability to maintain the pace of change via the temporary deployment of programme and project managers.

Noted.

9.2 Social Services Change Programme: Resourcing Requirements 2012/2013

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Social Services and Health) on (a) progress made in the change programme in Social Services; and (b) funding allocated by the Corporate Management Team from the Council Change and Reform Programme and from the Service Redesign and Investment Fund for staffing and ICT costs to maintain the pace of change and ensure the successful delivery of the programme and associated budgetary efficiencies.

The Social Services change programme has been designed to realise substantial revenue savings over the years 2011-2012 to 2013-2014, as detailed by programme stream in the table at Section 2.1 of the report. In addition to the cashable savings outlined, financial modelling work undertaken has calculated that an additional £8.5 million of future cost avoidance could be achieved from the change programme.

Significant progress has been made across all elements of the Social Services change programme. The report provided an update in respect of the following:-

- The Personalisation work stream, including the development of a resource allocation system (RAS);
- The reablement approach being adopted as part of the Reshaping Care work stream;
- The first review and redesign of reception services being undertaken as part of the Service Access work stream;
- Project and programme management and support arrangements;
- ICT support and proposals to link CareFirst to the financial systems to streamline processes and improve financial and budgetary control;
- The creation of two posts to lead on specific initiatives within the transforming care project, reablement and assistive technology;
- Savings realised as a result of short term interventions; and
- ICT systems requirements associated with the programme.

Full details of the staff requirements and costs associated with the Social Services Change Programme for 2012/13 programme were set out at Appendix 1 to the report. The cost associated with the development of CareFirst, was contained in Appendix 2.

Noted.

10. Shared Services and Strategic Alliance - Joint Working in Ayrshire

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on progress in taking forward Shared Services joint working on a pan-Ayrshire basis.

The structure of the current shared services framework is an Ayrshire Shared Services Executive comprising the Leaders and Chief Executives of the Council and the Chair and Chief Executive of the Councils and the chair and Chief Executive of NHS Ayrshire and Arran.

The report outlined the progress made by the Ayrshire Shared Services Board over the past 6 months in relation to the following:-

- The draft Business and Implementation Plan for a Pan Ayrshire Regulatory Service;
- The option appraisal of two viable options for a shared service delivery model for all of the Roads and Transportation services within Ayrshire;
- The planned establishment of a Pan Ayrshire Health and Safety Group involving the three Ayrshire Councils and NHS Ayrshire and Arran Health Board to examine areas of joint working and collaboration which would benefit two or more of the member organisations;
- The setting up of a joint working work which will seek opportunities for collaboration in respect of ICT development and procurement;
- Scope for sharing CCTV arrangements and Customer Services;
- The Establishment of a single Ayrshire and Arran Tourism Team, with South Ayrshire Council acting as the Lead Authority; and
- The outline governance proposals for Shared Services involving the three Ayrshire Councils.

Progress by the Ayrshire Strategic Alliance was also presented in respect of the following key areas:-

- The establishment of a project steering group to develop proposals for a Joint Equipment Service;
- An Out of Hours Services for the 3 Ayrshire Councils, to be co-located at Crosshouse Hospital;
- The planned development by the RNIB of an overall strategy to identify priorities for joint sensory impairment services;

- The Children with Disabilities Service (IRF Pilot);
- The establishment of an Ayrshire Joint Commissioning Team has been established; and
- Other Strategic Partnership Initiatives, including the Ayrshire Joint Waste Management Project.

Noted.

11. Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007 - Service Developments

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Social Services and Health) on proposals to augment the Adoption and Permanency Planning process, which will inform the Adoption Service Plan to be presented to the next meeting of the Executive.

The Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007 was implemented in September 2009, with the final guidance in relation to Adoption Support subsequently published in August 2012. The act significantly affects the ways in which local authorities plan for, provide placements for and support accommodated and adopted children, their carers and adopters. The range of people for whom an adoption service must be provided by local authorities has been widened to include birth siblings, birth grandparents, former guardians, the children's adopters and any others affected by adoption or a proposed adoption. Those allowed to adopt have also been expanded and now includes married couples, couples who are civil partners, couples living together as if married or as civil partners in an enduring family relationship and single people. In addition, the Act introduces a new provision of an Adoption Support Plan and the local authority now has responsibility to establish Adoption Support Plans for the wider range of people entitled to such a plan.

Prior to January 2012, the West of Scotland Baby Adoption Consortium, run by Glasgow City Council, facilitated the placement of children 0-2 years throughout the former Strathclyde area. However, Glasgow City Council decided to terminate this service and all such adoptions have now reverted to North Ayrshire Council Family Placement Service.

Following a submission from Social Services and Health, the Council approved the necessary funding to allow the service to meet its additional obligations. Section 3.3 of the report set out specific proposals for the funding, including augmenting team manager posts within the Family Placement Service, appointing additional social worker posts and administrative/clerical support and paying fees to other local authorities and the independent sector agencies.

Members asked questions, and received clarification, on the following:-

- the recruitment and advertising process used to attract and inform prospective adopters;
- the age range of children coming forward for adoption; and
- the benefits to the child of speeding up the adoption process.

Noted.

12. Procurement of Bail Supervision and Arrest Referral Service

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Social Services and Health) seeking approval to engage in a tendering exercise to procure a Bail Supervision and Arrest Referral Service.

Currently, there is a Bail Supervision Service, delivered by SACRO, operating across Ayrshire and monitored by a group of Criminal Justice Social Work Managers representing the three Ayrshire authorities. The Arrest Referral Service is presently only provided across Dumfries and Galloway to individuals accused as well as convicted of "low level" offending where their offending behaviour has been linked to their use of drugs and alcohol.

A group of managers representing Criminal Justice Social Work across East, North and South Ayrshire Councils and Dumfries and Galloway, and the Planning and Compliance Officer from South West Scotland Community Justice Authority, together with support from a representative of the Contract and Commissioning team in North Ayrshire Council, has been established to consider the new service specification for both of these services.

The report proposed that the group develop a service specification, proceed to tender and subsequently procure a new Bail Supervision and Arrest Referral Service which will be delivered across the Community Justice Authority area until 31 March 2013. It is anticipated that this contract would have the ability to be extended for a further two years should the Scottish Government continue to provide funding for Bail Supervision and Arrest Referral.

The Executive agreed to approve the request to engage in a procurement exercise to allow Criminal Justice Social Work to develop a bail Supervision and Arrest Referral Service which is able to deliver to service users in North Ayrshire and the Sheriff and District Courts at locations across South West Scotland.

13. Tender for the Continued Provision of an Occupational Health Service to North Ayrshire Council, South Ayrshire Council and East Ayrshire Council

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the tender process for the procurement of the Occupational Health Service in collaboration with South and East Ayrshire.

Under the terms of the current Occupational Health contract, the three Ayrshire Councils are provided with an Occupational Health Service, which includes Occupational Health Nursing Advisers, Occupational Health Physician clinics, statutory health surveillance, health screening, management referrals and assessments, pre-employment screening, immunisation, health based risk assessments and health clinics.

The current Occupational Health contract was procured in collaboration with South and East Ayrshire Councils and commenced on 14 May 2007 for a period of three years. The contract was subsequently extended and is due to expire on 12 May 2012.

In collaboration with South and East Ayrshire Councils, the Council commenced the necessary procurement process on 1 November 2011. Ten organisations submitted Pre Qualifying Questionnaires and, following the completion of financial checks, 4 suppliers were placed on the tender list with a tender return date of 27 February 2012. Three tenders were received and a tender evaluation carried out on the basis of 40% cost and 60% quality. Serco scored the highest against the evaluation criteria.

Tenderers were also asked to provide quotes for the optional services of administration, physiotherapy and employee counselling. Following a cost evaluation, the report recommended that the Council take up the option of administration or employee counselling, but does accept the option for physiotherapy from 1 April 2013.

The projected cost of the core contract will be £151, 430 per year with a projected three year total cost of £454, 290. The projected cost of the physiotherapy option is estimated at £9,000 per annum based on a figure of 450 appointments. Costs will be met from existing individual Council Service budgets based on the usage of Occupational Health Services.

The Executive agreed (a) that Serco be awarded the contract to provide the Occupational Health Service to the three Ayrshire Councils commencing on 13 May 2012 for a period of three years plus an option to extend for a further one year, as detailed in the report; (b) to take up the Serco option for physiotherapy starting from 1 April 2013 for the duration of the Occupational Health contract; and (c) not to take up the Serco options for administration and employee counselling services.

14. Procurement Exercise: Building Services Workflow Schedule

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Infrastructure) on the negotiated procedure to procure a Workflow Scheduling System within the Voids business area of Building Services.

Building Services is currently implementing the 'revitalise and rebrand' change programme to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and commercial nature of the service. A key area identified to achieve these efficiencies is to improve systems and processes by investing in technology.

In 2010, the Response Business Unit implemented Xmbrace Opti Time on Demand module in conjunction with 1st Touch mobile, allowing them to become fully mobile. The Opti Time on Demand solution was originally developed for responsive repairs. However, Xmbrace has now designed and developed a Project Planner module for Void/Planned works, focusing on tasks that require a sequence of works to be followed, issuing tasks electronically, allowing employees to perform their duties without the need to return to a central location.

The report proposed that the system be extended into the Voids Business Unit, to allow the Void works to be carried out electronically and in a 'real time' basis. The implementation of the proposed Project Planner module would require the recruitment of a temporary administrative post.

A budget of £90,000 for the implementation of the Project Planner module including any associated works required has been allocated and annual maintenance costs are estimated at £18,000. An additional temporary Administrative Assistant (Planner) post has been included within the budget for 2012/13. A 10% efficiency on workforce and transport equating to approximately £139,000 is projected through the implementation of Project Planner, meaning that payback should be complete within a year of implementation.

The Executive agreed (a) that the Head of Environment and Related Services, in consultation with the Council's Corporate Procurement Unit, negotiate terms with Xmbrace to procure the Project Planner module and the purchase of the ongoing support and maintenance from Xmbrace; and (b) to approve the creation of an additional temporary Administration Assistant (Planner) post.

15. Environmental Improvements, Montgomerie Street, Ardrossan

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Infrastructure) on acceptance of the tender for Environmental Improvement works at Montgomerie Street, Ardrossan.

Montgomerie Street, Ardrossan is a high density development built in the 1970s and consisting of 130 family maisonnette accommodation with large open court yards and common areas.

Through the Estate Based Project Scheme there has been an ongoing programme of work to carry out environmental improvements within housing estates ranging from small scale work to major refurbishments. The proposed improvements to the Montgomerie Street development would contribute to the regeneration of Ardrossan Town Centre.

Various schemes were prepared and, following consultation with the residents' group and local Elected Members, a final proposal was selected. The works to be undertaken were shown at Appendix 2 to the report. The improvements involve the upgrading of existing hard and soft landscaped areas, bin stores and the general approaches to the rear of the buildings. In addition, the courtyards and the access road will have improved lighting.

Tenderers were invited to complete Pre-Qualification Questionnaires, which were assessed for quality, financial stability, health and safety requirements, project specific technical experience, and method of approaching works. The tender list was selected from the highest scoring PQQs and comprised 8 contractors. Tenders were assessed on the basis of "lowest price only". The results of the tendering exercise were set out at Appendix 1 to the report.

Members asked questions, and received clarification, on the following:-

- how community benefit might be better secured in such projects;
- other issues associated with this housing development, in terms of the management of communal spaces, including misuse of the door entry system and the operation of bin storage areas.

Members noted that the Corporate Director (Finance and Infrastructure) was undertaking a piece of work in relation to the issue of securing community benefit from local projects and that the Head of Community Care and Housing would look into an initiative to address complaints from residents about the management of communal areas of the development.

The Executive agreed to approve the acceptance of the tender submitted by Stewart Landscapes (Contracts) Ltd., Glasgow for the sum of £669,687.15.

16. Bridgegate House Redevelopment

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Infrastructure) seeking approval to award the contract for the main contractor to carry out the construction work associated with the redevelopment of Bridgegate House, Irvine.

The opportunity to redevelop Bridgegate House was identified by the 'Our Working Environment Work Stream' of the Change Programme to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of office accommodation in the Irvine area. It was proposed that Bridgegate House become the main public face of the Council, relocating front facing functions to a Customer Services Centre which would serve as a "one-stop-shop". In addition, Irvine Bay Development Company had identified Bridgegate House as a key site within the town centre suitable for external enhancement to support the regeneration of the town centre and to compliment their public realm improvement project. A design team was duly appointed to progress both the internal and external refurbishment of the building on behalf of the Council and in partnership with Irvine Bay.

There is a budget of £9.3m in the capital programme to undertake the Bridgegate House refurbishment project and the scope of works includes the following elements:-

- Complete replacement of the building facade including shop front replacement;
- Renewal of all building services (heating, power, lighting, lift, alarms, access controls etc.);
- Asbestos removals throughout the building;
- Upgrade of the ICT and telephony network;
- Internal refurbishment of all office areas to create a flexible, open plan working environment;
- Replacement of the existing toilet facilities including creating more accessible WCs and showers; and
- Extension of the ground floor adjacent to the former Stationery Box shop unit to form the new customer centre.

Six tenders were received in respect of the construction work and analysed in terms of both cost and quality (60%/40%). The results were set out at Appendices 1(a) and 1(b) to the report. The proposed construction programme would see work commencing in May 2012 and proceeding in two phases in order to allow the partial use of the building throughout the works. The first phase is programmed to be complete by February 2013 with an expected overall contract completion date of August 2013.

The Executive agreed (a) to note progress to date relating to the Bridgegate House re-development project and (b) that the contract be awarded to Graham Construction for the value of £6,265,290.98.

17. External Fabric Remedial Works to Lambie and O'Connor Courts, Saltcoats

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Infrastructure) on the 'private owner' consultation and the costs associated with the external fabric remedial works to Lambie and O'Connor Courts, Saltcoats.

As reported to the Executive previously, a competitive tendering exercise confirmed the indicative cost for the over-cladding and window replacement works at Lambie and O'Connor Courts, Saltcoats, as £830,000. Under the terms of the private owners' missives, they are required to meet their share of the overall cost of this work, the cost to each of them would be on the basis of a 1/94th share. This equates to a maximum of £9,380 (including VAT). This information has been formally communicated to the private owners via one to one interviews and issue of a Minute of Agreement to each.

27 of the 34 private owners have returned signed Minutes of Agreement for their contributions. Their maximum contribution of £9,380 will be the maximum chargeable to the private owners and this is likely to be reduced further dependent on the grant funding from the public utility companies through one of the carbon reduction schemes currently operating. The final grant funding available cannot be calculated at this time as it will be based on individual circumstances of the private owners, but the Council is taking the lead in seeking grants on behalf of all residents. Section 2.4 of the report set out the funding which is expected to be available to assist the "private owners" with the cost of the over-cladding works. As a result, it is expected that the tenants will be required to contribute either £5,533 or £3,273 depending on their circumstances and funding criteria.

Appendix 1 to the report set out the results of the competitive tender procedure undertaken in connection with these works. The lowest tender received was from CCG (Scotland) Ltd., to the corrected tender value of £787,837.55. As this contact value excludes contingencies and fees, the total project cost should remain as £830,000 for budgeting purposes.

The Executive agreed to (a) note the agreements from private owners; and (b) approves the award of the contract to CCG (Scotland) Ltd., in the sum of £787,837.55.

18. Redstone Avenue, Kilwinning (Council House Building Project) - Appointment of Grouting Contractor

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Social Services and Health) on progress to date in terms of appointing a grouting contractor for the above project, and seeking approval for same.

At its meeting on 24 May 2011, the Executive of North Ayrshire Council approved the submission of a subsidy bid to the Scottish Government which detailed a development project for approximately 44 units at Redstone Avenue, Kilwinning. The bid indicated that due to issues of under-mining at the site, it would be necessary to appoint a contractor to carry out grouting works to secure the site, before construction could commence. Funding was subsequently awarded by the Scottish Government, conditional upon the project commencing on-site by the end of May 2012.

Grouting work comprises of drilling bore holes and pumping a cement based mixture into the cavity left by historic mining. It is anticipated the exercise will take approximately 3 months. As part of a risk mitigation exercise, Housing Services have appointed the Civil Engineering company JWH Ross to oversee the grouting exercise and to assist in the tendering exercise.

The tendering process has been carried out in partnership with the Council's Corporate Procurement Unit. It was a two stage process which included the issuing of Pre Qualification Questionnaires, the return of which allowed the Council to eliminate organisations which did not have the requisite experience or technical competencies. The second stage was a value for money competition, with the contract being awarded to the organisation who submitted the lowest tender and who could meet the delivery timescales.

Five tenders were issued. Two organisations returned acceptable tenders, as detailed in Section 2.7 of the report.

The Executive agreed to approve the award of the grouting contract, at a value of £455,955 to Soil Engineering, in order to prepare the site at Redstone Avenue, Kilwinning for the construction of approximately 44 new-build council houses.

19. Economic Development, Business Development Approvals Committee - Minutes of Meeting held on 9 March 2012

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the Minutes of the Meeting of the Economic Development Business Development Approvals Committee held on 9 March 2012.

Noted.

The meeting ended at 11.50 a.m.