

Commercial Services Committee  
21 August 1996

**Irvine, 21 August 1996** - At a Meeting of the Commercial Services Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

**Present**

Thomas Dickie, Peter McNamara, James Clements, Joseph McKinney, Alan Munro, Irene Oldfather, David O'Neill, Robert Rae, Gena Seales, George Steven, and Samuel Taylor.

**In Attendance**

The Director of Commercial Services, The Head of Cleansing/Grounds Maintenance (John Currie), The Head of Catering/Cleaning (Kenneth Wilson), The Principal Officer (Accounting and Budgeting) (John Hair), The Operations Manager (Catering) (Joyce Kelly), an Administration Officer (Jim Bannatyne) and an Assistant Administration Officer (Carol Graham).

**Chair**

Mr Dickie in the Chair

**Apologies for Absence**

John Donn

**1. Minutes Confirmed**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 1 May 1996, copies of which had previously been circulated, were confirmed.

**2. School Crossing Patrols**

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services Committee on the present procedures adopted in respect of the School Crossing Patrol Service with particular regard to the provision of absence cover. The report detailed the current staffing structure and reporting procedure and confirmed that the associated administrative functions are currently carried out by an Area Officer from the Catering and Cleaning Section. This workload is time consuming and affects other duties. The service could therefore be improved by the creation of a new post of School Crossing Patrol Monitor with responsibility for the organisation of absence cover, timesheets, uniform allocation and training. The Support Services Committee on 20 August 1996 have agreed, subject to finances being available within the Commercial Services Directorate, that such a post should be established on a clerical grade, within that Directorate.

The Committee fully supported the decision to establish this new post of School Crossing Patrol Monitor when funding becomes available.

### **3. Alpha Card System**

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services on the progress of the pilot scheme for the proposed introduction of the Alpha Card System at Irvine Royal Academy on 26 August 1996.

The new system has been tested successfully and training has been provided for Catering Managers and staff, teaching staff and students. Arrangements have also been made with the Council's Marketing Section to publicise this new initiative given the interest which it has generated.

The Committee agreed to instruct the Director of Commercial Services to make arrangements for the Committee to inspect the new system in the next month.

### **4. Quality Systems**

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services on the existing quality systems within his Directorate and on the action which requires to be taken to extend these systems.

Although the current catering contract is not British Standards Institute registered, it is the subject of strict quality/monitoring procedure. It is however proposed to seek BSI registration and since the present certification requires to be audited, appropriate arrangements have been put in place. The issue of quality and quality registration will form a major part in the tender and tender evaluation process in the next round of Compulsory Competitive Tendering and it is essential that all activities within the Commercial Services Directorate be covered by such quality systems. To this end, a survey is currently being carried out with the assistance of Enterprise Ayrshire to assess a possible programme for this and the likely associated costs.

The Committee agreed that the Director of Commercial Services submit a report to a future meeting on quality systems throughout the activities of his Directorate.

### **5. Automatic Public Conveniences**

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services on the proposed replacement of automatic public conveniences at specific locations to provide improved facilities for disabled persons.

There are currently fourteen automatic public conveniences on lease from J C Decaux within North Ayrshire. These facilities are available on a twenty-four hour basis and although adapted for certain disabled persons, they are unsuitable for wheelchair users. The Council's community consultation exercise has however highlighted requests for improved public conveniences for the disabled particularly in Stevenston and Kilwinning. The Stevenston facility would however require to be relocated to accommodate wheelchair provision. The Director of Commercial Services undertook to consult the local Member and local disabled groups on this.

It is proposed initially to replace the existing automatic public conveniences at Kilwinning and Stevenston with new Universal Superloos. J C Decaux. have indicated that they are prepared to meet the estimated cost of groundworks and installation in each case (£8,850 per unit) subject to satisfactory negotiations on existing rental agreements. Sufficient provision exists within the current budget for the proposals at Kilwinning and Stevenston but additional provision will require to be made in next year's budget for any new or further replacement facilities.

After a full discussion the Committee agreed (a) to approve the replacement facilities in Kilwinning and Stevenston in this financial year; (b) that consultation be carried out with disabled groups throughout North Ayrshire to ascertain further requirements; and (c) that a further report be submitted on the outcome of these discussions with costs.

## **6. Waste Disposal Site Licences**

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services on the changes which will apply to waste disposal site licensing as from 1 October 1996.

North Ayrshire Council currently operates their own waste disposal sites comprising five landfill sites and four purpose built civic amenity sites and under the new arrangements applications for waste disposal licences for these sites will require to be approved by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA). Additionally SEPA will only approve licences on sites that are manned as stipulated by Waste Management Paper No 4 which provides authorities with formal guidance on waste management licensing. This will affect the civic amenity sites specifically since they are largely unattended with only the sites at Bartonholm and Dreghorn having skip attendants present for part of the day. Provision has however been made in the budget from 1 October 1996 for the requisite manning level.

An earlier report to Committee had also highlighted details of the new Landfill Tax which is to be introduced for all waste. This too will apply from 1 October 1996.

The Committee acknowledged the implications of these changes and recognised that if the post of Senior Disposal Officer which had been advertised on two separate occasions, remained unfilled this would create considerable difficulties in the near future in meeting the requirements imposed by these changes.

In conclusion the Committee agreed (a) to authorise the submission of the necessary applications to SEPA for waste management licences for all North Ayrshire Council sites; and (b) to instruct the Director of Commercial Services to report further on the opening hours and manning of civic amenity sites.

## **7. Proposed Landfill Site: Acquisition of Access Land**

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services on the proposed acquisition of an area of land from Irvine Development Corporation at Todhill, Kilwinning.

The present landfill site at Nethermains, Irvine has a very limited capacity and

negotiations have been taking place for a new site. Irvine Development Corporation own an area of ground (approximately 12 acres) which would provide the most suitable access to the new site and the provisional cost is £13,150. Provision has been made in the 1996/97 Capital Budget.

The Committee agreed to purchase this ground from Irvine Development Corporation on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Principal Estates Officer.

## **8. Replacement of Vehicles and Plant**

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services on action being taken to replace vehicles and plant.

Provision has been made in the 1996/97 Capital Budget for a substantial Capital/Leasing replacement programme for specific vehicles and plant within the Commercial Services Directorate and a great deal of interest has been shown in the proposed programme by potential tenderers following advertisement in the European Journal. Invitations to tender will be issued in the near future.

The Committee agreed to authorise the Director of Commercial Services in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair (a) to draw up a list of tenderers; (b) to issue tenders for the replacement of vehicles and plant; (c) to accept the lowest tenders received in accordance with the Standing Orders Relating to Contracts; and (d) to report the action taken.

## **9. Producer Responsibility for Packaging Waste - Draft Regulations and Consultation Document**

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services on a request from COSLA and the Department of the Environment for comments on the Draft Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations.

These regulations place a "producer responsibility" obligation on certain businesses to recover and recycle specific tonnages of packaging waste with only those producing more than 50 tonnes of packaging materials and/or packaging per year being affected. Those affected will have the choice of carrying out the recovery and recycling on their own or of joining a registered compliance scheme and in either event they will require to register with the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency.

Specific recovery and recycling targets have also been set for 1998-2000 and for 2001 on, but there is some concern as to how these can be achieved in the absence of any provision for joint working arrangements between local authorities and the business sector.

The Committee agreed to authorise the Director of Commercial Services to respond to the Scottish Office and COSLA on the draft regulations, in the terms indicated in the report.

## **10. Apprentices**

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services on the intake of new apprentices and the completion of existing apprenticeships as from 1 April 1996.

Of the twenty apprentices employed mainly in the Building Works Section three have completed their apprenticeship this year and two have gained prize awards. Offers of apprenticeships have resulted in over seven hundred applications being submitted and following exhaustive tests and interviews a further thirteen apprentices have now been employed.

The Committee agreed to recognise the apprentices' achievements.

## **11. Association of Direct Labour Organisations: Member/Officer Representation on Scottish ADLO Working Groups**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on vacancies for North Ayrshire Council representation at member and officer level on various Scottish ADLO Working Groups.

There are three Divisions within Scottish ADLO. North Ayrshire Council has as yet no representation on the Highways Division but is represented by Councillor Thomas Dickie and Alex Smart (Head of Works, Roads and Transport) on the Building and Works Division. The Direct Service Division is sub-divided into four Working Groups:-

- (a) Cleansing (No representation at present);
- (b) Grounds Maintenance (No representation at present)
- (c) Vehicle Maintenance and Transport (Represented by Councillor Thomas Dickie); and
- (d) Catering and Cleansing (Represented by Kenneth Wilson, Head of Catering and Cleaning)

The Committee agreed (a) in principle, that North Ayrshire Council be represented on the ADLO Working Groups at member/officer level; and (b) to remit to the Chair and Vice-Chair in consultation with the Director of Commercial Services to consider appropriate representation and report.

## **12. Conferences/Seminars Etc.**

Submitted invitation to attend the ADLO Direct Service Division Conference in Aviemore from 9 to 11 October 1996.

The Committee agreed to authorise the Chair, Vice-Chair and Director of

Commercial Services (or their nominees) to attend.

### **13. Cleansing Service Survey**

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services on a survey carried out to gauge customer reaction to the services provided by the Cleaning section of the Commercial Services Directorate.

The survey was published in the Councils' own publication entitled 'Look North' which has a circulation of 60,000 and the response rate was 0.34% of the sample population. The survey sought views on the methods of refuse containment, collection and recycling and gauged the level of customer satisfaction in this regard. The overall response figure was encouraging and highlighted a general view that the cleansing service is of an extremely high standard.

Notwithstanding the results of the survey, concern was expressed over the continuing litter problems within North Ayrshire which require to be addressed by the Council.

After discussion, the Committee agreed (a) that steps be taken to ensure that the services available in the Cleansing Section are fully publicised, (b) that, subject to the availability of funding, the garden refuse collection service be extended to the end of October 1996; (c) that the demand for a kerbside recycling service be taken into account in any future recycling projects; (d) to initiate a council wide campaign on Litter Awareness and prevention; (e) that the Director of Commercial Services submit a further report detailing suggestions for a litter Awareness and Prevention Campaign; (f) to refer the matter to the next meeting of the Corporate Strategy Committee to consider the participation of all other relevant Directorates of the Council in the Campaign; and (g) that a review on the progress of the Campaign be undertaken in six months time.

### **14. Catering Section**

The Operations Manager (Catering) gave a presentation on the Catering Section within the Commercial Services Directorate detailing the work of the section and outlining future plans.

The Committee welcomed the presentation and agreed to note the position meantime.

The meeting ended at 3.25 p.m.