

Cabinet
27 August 2013

IRVINE, 27 August 2013 - At a meeting of the Cabinet of North Ayrshire Council at 2.30 p.m. in Cunninghame House, Irvine.

Present

Willie Gibson, Alan Hill, Marie Burns, John Bruce, Anthea Dickson and Alex McLean.

In Attendance

E. Murray, Chief Executive, L. Friel, Corporate Director, D. Tate, Senior Manager (Housing, Assets and Investments) Stephen Humphries, Senior Manager (Revenues and Benefits) and Thomas Reaney (Procurement Manager) (Finance and Corporate Support); C. Hatton, Corporate Director (Development and Environment); I. Colvin, Corporate Director, A. Adrain, Interim Head of Housing and J. McCaig, Interim Head of Community Care (Social Services and Health); K. Dyson, Communications Officer and M. Anderson, Committee Services Officer (Democratic and Administration Services) (Chief Executive's Service).

Chair

Councillor Gibson in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

Tony Gurney.

1. Declarations of Interest

In terms of Standing Order 16 and Section 5 of the Code of Conduct for Councillors, Councillors Dickson and McLean, having previously provided advice to the complainant, declared an indirect, non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 16 (Social Work Complaints Review Committee: Complaint by Mr C) and took no part in the determination of this item.

2. Minutes

The accuracy of the Minute of the Special Cabinet, held on 13 August 2013, was agreed and the Minutes signed in accordance with paragraph 7(1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

3. Consultation on a Proposed Members' Bus Regulation (Scotland) Bill

Note: This item is subject to the call-in procedure per the Council's Scheme of Administration and will be submitted to a meeting of the Scrutiny & Petitions Committee on 11 September 2013 for consideration.

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Development and Environment) which set (a) out the key elements of the draft Private Member's Bus Regulation (Scotland) Bill; and (b) provided a proposed consultation response from the Council, as contained in Appendix 1 to the report.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the proposed consultation response contained in Appendix 1 to the report, to be submitted on behalf of North Ayrshire Council prior to the consultation deadline of 30 August 2013.

4. Home Energy Efficiency Programme for Scotland (HEEPS) and Energy Company Obligation (ECO) – Second Round Funding Bid

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) which (a) provided information on the second round HEEPS funding application which has been submitted to the Scottish Government; and (b) reported on progress being made in attracting additional ECO contributions to North Ayrshire.

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

- the availability of suitable applications for the next round of funding;
- whether double-glazing was included in the current funding criteria; and
- the extent to which the Council's housing stock includes properties with single-glazing.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note and approve the content of the second round HEEPS bid; (b) delegate authority to the Corporate Director (Development and Environment) to approve the appropriate ECO partner for project 1; and (c) approve SSE as the preferred ECO funder for project 2.

5. Vineburgh Regeneration Project, Irvine (Phase 4)

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Social Services and Health) which sought approval for the sale of land comprising Phase 4 of the Vineburgh Regeneration project, to Cunninghame Housing Association.

The Cabinet agreed (a) subject to Scottish Government approval, that the land forming Phase 4 of the Vineburgh project, is sold to Cunninghame Housing Association for £600,000; (b) that, following the sale of the land, approval is granted for the recompense of extra-ordinary development costs, totalling no more than as detailed in Section 2.4 of the report; and (c) the allocation of the capital receipt in respect of Vineburgh Phase 4, to the Housing Services Council House Building account.

6. Regulation of Social Housing in Scotland

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Social Services and Health) which (a) provided an update on progress in implementing the Scottish Social Housing Charter; and (b) sought approval of the new framework for the involvement of tenants and other service users in the scrutiny of North Ayrshire Council's performance as a landlord.

Members asked questions, and received clarification, on difficulties associated with seeking to engage all parties, including non tenants.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note the progress to ensure compliance with the new Scottish Social Housing Charter and the new framework for the regulation of Social Housing in Scotland; (b) approve the change to the role and remit of the North Ayrshire Tenants and Residents Network; and (c) expand the opportunities for tenants and other service users to be involved in the scrutiny of their landlord's performance by introducing an Inspection Panel.

7. Step Change 2015 (Highlands & Islands)

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Development and Environment) which advised on progress with the Scottish Government's Digital Future: Infrastructure Action Plan and, in particular, the Step Change 2015 (Highlands and Islands) Project, as well as the proposed Next Generation Access roll-out, coverage and timescales.

Members asked questions, and received clarification, on the anticipated timescale for the laying of sub-sea cabling.

Noted.

8. Welfare Reform Progress Report at 30 June 2013

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate) which gave information on welfare reform related matters and the progress made against the welfare reform action plan at the end of June 2013, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

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

- extending grant payments from the Scottish Welfare Fund to include cases assessed as medium priority;
- whether some tenants with rent arrears were able to pay but choosing not to do so and if it was possible to distinguish between them and those in genuine difficulty; and
- the provision by the DWP of 6,000 new personal computers to job centres across the UK to improve access to digital services.

The Cabinet agreed (a) to extend the criteria for grant payments under the Scottish Welfare Fund to include cases assessed as medium priority in addition to those deemed to be high priority; (b) that officers continue to monitor closely expenditure from the Scottish Welfare Fund and report back to the Cabinet should the eligibility criteria require to be revisited; and (c) otherwise, to note the content of the report.

9. Flexible Intervention Service (Mental Health and Learning Disabilities)

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Social Services and Health) which sought approval to undertake a tender exercise to appoint a service provider for a flexible care and support service.

The Cabinet agreed that a tender exercise be undertaken to appoint a service provided for a flexible care and support service to individuals with mental health problems and learning disabilities.

10. Appointment of a 24-hour Care Provider

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Social Services and Health) which advised of the outcome of an urgent tender exercise to provide a 24-hour care provider.

Members asked questions, and received clarification, on the potential for supporting other such clients in tenancies, subject to an assessment of their needs.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note the outcome of the tender exercise to appoint a care provider for a 24-hour support service for four adults with learning disabilities and complex needs and behaviours; and (b) approve the award of the contract to Quarriers for a 2-year period with the option to extend for a further 2 years at a cost per annum of £476,229.

11. Currie Court Care Service, Ardrossan

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Social Services and Health) which advised of the outcome of a tender exercise for the provision of care and support services for individuals living in tenancies within the reconfigured ex-residential unit at Currie Court, Ardrossan.

The Cabinet agreed to award the contract for the appointment of a provider organisation for care and support services at Currie Court to Cornerstone Community Care, for a 2-year period with the option of extending for a further two 12-month periods, at an annual cost not exceeding £820,000.

12. Framework Agreement: Combined Central Heating and Electrical Re-Wiring Works - Tender Outcome

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) which (a) reported on the result of the tender exercise for the Framework Agreement for the provision of Combined Central Heating and Electrical Re-Wiring Work; and (b) presented a recommendation for the award of the Framework Agreement and for the first phase of the works.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) approve the award of the Framework Agreement for the provision of Combined Central Heating and Electrical Re-Wiring work to James Frew Ltd, CCG (Scotland) Ltd and Mitie Property Services; and (b) award the first phase of the works to James Frew Ltd at a price of £380,749.94.

13. Framework Agreement: Surveying Services - Tender Outcome

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) which (a) advised of the results of the tender exercise for the Framework Agreement for the provision of Surveying Services; and (b) present a recommendation for the award of the contract.

The Cabinet agreed to award of the Framework Agreement for the provision of Surveying Services to (i) Lot 1 (Quantity Surveying Services) - Armour Consultants, Doig and Smith, Faithful & Gould and Cyril Sweett and (ii) Lot 2 (Other Surveying Services) - Keegans Ltd, Povall Worthington, Cyril Sweett and GVA Grimley Ltd.

14. Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Cabinet resolved, in terms of Section 50(A)4 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude from the meeting, the press and the public for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 6 and 8 (Agenda Item 15) and Paragraphs 1 and 3 (Agenda Items 16 and 17).

15. Support for Employment, Prestwick Airport

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Development and Environment) on support for employment in respect of Prestwick Airport.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the detailed proposals set out in the report.

16. Social Work Complaints Review Committee: Complaint by Mr C.

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the findings and recommendations arising from the Social Work Complaints Review Committee meeting of 19 July 2013.

The Cabinet agreed (a) to accept the Committee's recommendation to (i) not uphold parts 1, 3 and 4 of the complaint and (ii) partially uphold part 2; (b) that service users should be advised of the terms of the period of notice of the contract with the provider; and (c) that there should be provision built into contracts to allow for the period of notice to be extended.

17. Social Work Complaints Review Committee: Complaint by Mr P

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the findings and recommendations arising from the Social Work Complaints Review Committee meeting of 22 July 2013.

The Cabinet agreed not to uphold any part of the complaint.

The meeting ended at 3.35 p.m.