

The Executive of North Ayrshire Council
14 February 2012

IRVINE, 14 February 2012 - At a Meeting of the Executive of North Ayrshire Council at 10.00 a.m.

Present

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

Also Present

Matthew Brown and Ian Clarkson.

In Attendance

E. Murray, Chief, Executive; A. Bodie, Head of Infrastructure and Design and Y. Baulk, Head of Finance (Finance and Infrastructure); A. Sutton, Head of Service (Community and Culture) and J. McKnight, Manager (Community Development)(Education and Skills); and A. Anderson, Economic Development Manager, J. Montgomery, General Manager (Policy and Service Reform), K. Dyson, Communications Officer and M. Anderson, Committee Services Officer (Chief Executive's Service).

Also In Attendance

D. Fitzpatrick, C. Frew and A. Frew, Fullarton Community Association.

Chair

Councillor O'Neill in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

John Bell.

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 31 January 2012 and the Special Meeting of the Executive held on 1 February 2012 were signed in accordance with paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

3. Armed Forces Community Covenant

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on a request for the Council to sign a Community Covenant with the Armed Forces and the civilian community.

The Council has been invited by The Royal Regiment of Scotland to sign a Community Covenant, set out at Appendix 1 to the report. The aim of Community Covenants is to encourage local communities to support the Service Community in their area and nurture understanding and awareness among the public of issues affecting the Armed Forces Community. Community Covenants are supported by a £30 million grants scheme to support the types of projects described at Section 1.5 of the report. Bids can only be submitted from areas which have already established a Community Covenant.

A target completion date of 12 March 2012 has been set for a joint launch of North, South and East Ayrshire Councils' Community Covenants in April 2012. The 3 Ayrshire Councils have been invited to attend a meeting, hosted by the Armed Forces, on 16 February 2012 to discuss the arrangements for the launch.

The Council already lends support to and has a good relationship with the Armed Forces. Examples of the types of support provided were set out at Section 2 of the report.

The Executive agreed (a) that the Provost sign the Armed Forces Community Covenant set out at Appendix 1 to the report, on behalf of the Council; (b) to give approval to seek signatories from the Voluntary Sector and NHS Board; and (c) to a joint launch of the Community Covenant with South and East Ayrshire Councils in April 2012.

4. Fullarton Community Association

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Infrastructure) on the land requested by Fullarton Community Association and on the negotiations of the transfer of land to the Association.

At its meeting on 2 November 2010, the Executive agreed that the Council's Estates Section enter into negotiations with the Fullarton Community Association to determine whether an appropriate arrangement could be achieved for the transfer of the land shown at Appendix 1 to the report. This followed a request from the Association to purchase the land.

The land in question is held in the Housing Account and currently leased at a rent of £400 per annum to Fullarton Community Association for the operation of its community centre. The current lease expired in November 2011 and continues on a year-to-year basis by way of Tacit Relocation.

Negotiations between the Council's Estates Section and Fullarton Community Association have discussed the 4 options set out at Section 3.1. The report recommended Option 3, namely disposal of the land to the Association at the current existing use value of £8,500, subject to approval from Scottish Ministers in accordance with the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 and an appropriate "clawback" provision.

D. Fitzpatrick of Fullarton Community Association addressed the meeting on the background to the Association, its track record in delivering benefit to a local community which suffers significant social deprivation, and its aspirations in terms of securing external funding for future development. Mrs Fitzpatrick requested that the Executive give consideration to approving Option 4 within the report, namely disposal of the land to the Association for £1.00.

Councillors Brown and Clarkson addressed the meeting on their support for the Community Association's request.

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

- the Association's Service Level Agreement with the Council, which represents its main source of income;
- whether the Association had sufficient funds to meet the cost of £8,500 associated with Option 4, as recommended in the report;
- the various funding opportunities which might be accessible in the event of the Association owning both its premises and the land on which those premises sit;
- how the Association intends to meet the cost of preparing its proposed business plan;
- the potential for funding support from NHS Ayrshire and Arran for provision of a community health facility;
- the likelihood of the Association being in a position to operate in the future independent of support from the Council; and
- the need to consider the issue of consistency when considering the Association's request in the light of possible similar requests from other community associations.

The Executive agreed to approve the transfer of the land shown at Appendix 1 to the report to Fullarton Community Association at a cost of £1.00, subject to (i) approval from Scottish Ministers under the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, (ii) the "clawback" provision set out at Section 3.3 of the report and (iii) the production of a business plan prepared with support from appropriate Officers from the Council's Education and Skills Service.

5. Demolition Order : Heather Cottage, Whiting Bay, Isle of Arran

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Infrastructure) on the condition of the detached house at Heather Cottage, Whiting Bay, Isle of Arran.

The Ayrshire Valuation Joint Board Assessors office requested that the Council inspect the condition of Heather Cottage, Whiting Bay, Isle of Arran. On inspection the property was found to be in very poor condition with dry/wet rot, penetrating dampness throughout the property and no damp proof course. The property was found to be below the Tolerable Standard as defined by Section 86 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987.

The property in question is currently privately owned but unoccupied. As the property is detached, the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 does not allow the Council to serve a Closing Order as would normally be the case. Given its condition, the report proposed the serving of a Demolition Order on the property in terms of Section 115 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987.

The Executive agreed to the serving of a Demolition Order on Heather Cottage, Whiting Bay, Isle of Arran, in terms of Section 115 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987.

6. Seniors & Veteran European Karate Championship 2012

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the Seniors and Veteran European Karate Championship taking place at the Magnum Leisure Centre, Irvine from 1-3 June 2012.

A European Karate Championship will be hosted in the UK for the first time in 2012. It is expected that the event will attract approximately 1,000 new visitors into the area from Europe and Russia. The event will be held in the Magnum Leisure Centre and will engage with local schools and children's karate clubs to learn about the countries competing in the event and about karate as a sport. Local accommodation providers have already received bookings and packages have been developed by various accommodation providers in the area.

The report proposed that the Council offer a warm welcome be extended to the European Karate Championship, with a civic reception for competitors, judges and event personnel and a funding contribution of £12,500 to the event from the Council's Tourism budget.

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

- the background to the decision to hold the event in Irvine;
- the need for a consistency of approach towards offering support for national and international events;
- the level of return, in terms of financial benefit to the local area, achieved as a result of the support provided to such events; and
- the need for a communication mechanism allowing Officers to be alerted to groups' aspirations with regard to hosting events and groups themselves to be made aware of the availability of support.

The Executive agreed (a) to welcome and support the event and its competitors to Irvine; (b) to approve a contribution of £12,500; and (c) that the Chief Executive submit a further report to a future meeting on proposals to ensure a consistent approach to supporting such events.

7. Single Ayrshire & Arran Tourism Team and Tourism Leadership Group

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on proposals for a Single Ayrshire and Arran Tourism Team.

In Autumn 2011, the 3 Ayrshire Councils considered and adopted the Ayrshire and Arran Tourism Strategy set out at Appendix 1 to the report and asked Chief Executives to bring back proposals for a Single Ayrshire and Arran Tourism Team.

The proposed split of responsibilities at the Ayrshire and Arran and local level was set out at Section 3.2 of the report. The Ayrshire and Arran Tourism Team would comprise a Manager, 3 Development Officers and an Administration Officer, supplemented by additional posts funded via different sources, such as the private sector or EU funding. The report proposed an annual development budget of £100k to support marketing, product and event development. Funding for major initiatives would be subject to individual project proposals and approvals from the three Councils.

South Ayrshire Council would act as Lead Authority for the single tourism team, employing the staff and taking responsibility for line management of the Manager. The Tourism Team would be based in Ayr, although “hot desk” facilities would be available for them in each of the other two authorities.

Elected Member overview of the work of the single tourism team is anticipated to be via a Joint Committee, which would provide the mechanism for Elected Members from all three authorities to monitor and scrutinise performance of tourism and other shared services. In the meantime, the report proposed that an Executive Director within South Ayrshire Council be responsible for reporting on the operation and performance of the single team to the Chief Executives of the three Ayrshire Local Authorities. Any decisions or reports regarding the work of the Tourism Team will require to be determined by each Council until a Joint Committee is in place.

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

- including **sportScotland** in the list of organisations mentioned at Section 3.5 of the report;
- the need to keep under review each Council's pro rata share in terms of the cost of supporting the Pan-Ayrshire team and the benefits arising from its contribution; and
- the relationship between the proposed Ayrshire and Arran Tourism Team, the Leadership Group and the Joint Committee.

The Executive agreed to (a) approve the proposal to set up a single Ayrshire and Arran Tourism Team as set out in the report; (b) approve total funding contribution from North Ayrshire Council of £181.9k per annum for five years, to be reviewed after 3 years, comprising a transfer from existing budgets to the Ayrshire and Arran Tourism Team; (c) approve South Ayrshire Council acting as Lead Authority for the single Ayrshire and Arran Tourism Team; (d) approve interim governance arrangements whereby the Ayrshire and Arran Tourism Team report via South Ayrshire Council to the three Council Chief Executives pending establishment of joint governance arrangements for current and future shared services; and (e) note that reports on progress towards achieving the objectives set out in the Ayrshire and Arran Tourism Strategy will be considered by the Executive or equivalent in summer 2013 and annually thereafter.

8. North Ayrshire Local Tourism Action Plan 2012 - 2017

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the preparation of a draft North Ayrshire Local Tourism Action Plan 2012-17.

Whilst the Pan-Ayrshire Tourism Strategy will be responsible for promoting Ayrshire as a destination and investigating Ayrshire-wide tourism products, the strategy will require to be underpinned by what North Ayrshire delivers at the local level. To this end, a Local Tourism Action Plan, set out at Appendix 1 to the report, has been prepared. Its local aims, objectives and targets were outlined at Section 3 of the report.

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

- whether responsibility for attracting national and European events to the area would lie with the Ayrshire Tourism Team or with the Council's in-house team; and
- the importance, given the size of Ayrshire, of retaining a local focus on tourism.

The Executive agreed to the adoption of the action plan for the development of tourism in North Ayrshire as set out at Appendix 1 to the report.

9. Economic Development, Business Development Approvals Committee - Minutes of Meeting held on 11 January 2012

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on Minutes of the Meeting of the Economic Development, Business Development Approvals Committee held on 11 January 2012.

Noted.

10. Housing Revenue Account Business Plan Implementation Group: Minutes of Meeting held on 12 January 2012

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Social Services and Health) on the Minutes of the Meeting of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan Implementation Group held on 12 January 2012.

Noted.

The meeting ended at 11.05 a.m.