

Commercial Services Committee
9 September 1998

Irvine, 9 September 1998 - At a Meeting of the Commercial Services Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

Present

Peter McNamara, John Donn, Joseph McKinney, Alan Munro, Irene Oldfather, David O'Neill, Robert Rae, Gena Seales, George Steven and Samuel Taylor.

In Attendance

John Currie, Head of Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance, Kenneth Wilson, Head of Catering and Cleaning (Community Services), the Director of Housing, W. Nicol, Senior Accountant (Financial Services) and M. McKeown, Administration Officer (Chief Executive).

Chair

Peter McNamara in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

Thomas Dickie and Patrick Browne.

1. Minutes Confirmed

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 17 June 1998, copies of which had previously circulated been circulated, were confirmed.

2. Tenders for Vehicles, Etc. 1998/99

Submitted report by the Director of Community Services on progress to date on the replacement vehicles programme for 1998/99.

Noted.

3. The Environmental Protection (Waste Recycling Payments) (Amendments) Regulations 1998

Submitted report by the Director of Community Services on revised recycling payments.

Under the terms of the Environmental Protection (Waste Recycling Payments) (Amendments) Regulations 1998 the new waste recycling credits are £26.26 where the authority incurs any transport costs in disposing of waste, and £17.87 in other cases.

Noted.

4. Wheeled Bins: Update

Submitted report by the Director of Community Services on the progress to date regarding the introduction of wheeled bins throughout North Ayrshire.

Wheeled bin collections have now commenced in the Garnock Valley area, the Largs and North Coast area, excluding Cumbrae, and in the Three Towns area of Ardrossan, Saltcoats and Stevenston.

Where the scheme has been in operation for the longest period of time - the Garnock Valley - the new system has settled down and is being well received by the public. The scheme in Largs is however taking a little longer to settle down as a result of the high number of "pull-outs" being granted where there is no one in the house capable of bringing the bin to the point of collection. This has resulted in refuse collection crews being unable to complete their beats within 3 out of 5 working days. It is as yet too early to comment on its operation in the Three Towns area.

The Committee was advised that the bin provided to households is a 240 litre bin capable of holding three sacks and is in the majority of instances capable of holding two weeks refuse. To achieve the full economic benefits anticipated by the Council it was therefore proposed that where a "pull-out" is provided, that this should be done on a fortnightly basis except where a case for a weekly collection is demonstrated.

Councillor McKinney advised that the street layout in the Castlepark area was encouraging householders to leave their bins at street ends, encouraging 'fly-tipping' at these locations.

After discussion the Committee agreed (a) that fortnightly "pull-outs" should be introduced in the Garnock Valley Area on a trial basis; (b) that a report on the outcome of this trial should be brought to a future meeting of the Committee; and (c) that problems associated with on street collections in the Castlepark area should be investigated.

5. Footbridges in North Ayrshire

Submitted report by the Director of Community Services on footbridges and structures requiring inspection.

Under a previous agreement between the former Strathclyde Regional Council and Cunninghame District Council certain bridges in the ownership of the District Council were routinely inspected by the Region's Structures Section, with any major defects being reported to the District Council. Not all bridges and structures which are now in the ownership of Community Services are included in the current survey and it was suggested that a list should be completed and discussed with the Directorate of Planning, Roads and Environment with a view to agreeing a way forward.

The Committee agreed to continue consideration of this item pending a report on the outcome discussions between the Community Services and Planning, Roads and Environment Directorates.

6. Breakthrough Breast Cancer - "Cover Britain in Crocuses" Campaign

Submitted report by the Director of Community Services on an invitation to the Council from the Breakthrough Breast Cancer Awareness Campaign to participate in the "Cover Britain in Crocuses" Campaign.

The Committee agreed to make a financial contribution of £20.00 towards the Campaign.

7. Cleansing Garage at Main Road, Beith

Submitted report by the Director of Community Services on proposals regarding the garage at Mains Road, Beith.

Members were advised that as a consequence of establishing a central garaging facility at Paddockholm in Kilbirnie, the single vehicle garage at Mains Road, Beith is no longer required.

The Committee agreed to (a) declare the property surplus to requirements; and (b) remit its future use to the Support Services Committee.

8. Accounts Commission, Reconfiguring Services Study Document

Submitted report by the Director of Community Services on the inclusion of the Council's "Alpha Card" system in the Accounts Commission's Reconfiguration Service Document.

The Council's Catering and Cleaning Section has been invited by the Accounts Commission to participate in a study/report, to be published in 1999, which will look at the arrangements that Councils are making to find different ways of delivering their services. "Reconfiguration" is the term used by the Commission to describe the process of "doing things differently" by looking for improved ways of allocating resources. The Committee was advised that the Council has been approached by the Commission to include the 'Alpha Card' as an example of an original and innovative way to deliver a service via a service provider.

Noted.

9. Cleaning Contract - Customer Satisfaction Reports

Submitted Cleaning Contract Customer Satisfaction Reports for 28/1/98 - 24/2/98 and 25/2/98 - 24/3/98.

Noted.

10. Scottish ADLO

The Chair advised Members that Councillor Thomas Dickie has now been appointed as Scottish Chair of the Association of Direct Labour Organisations until May 1999.

Noted.

11. Exclusion of the Public

The Committee resolved in terms of Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude from the Meeting the press and the public for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

12. Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance Depot Relocation, Irvine

Submitted report by the Director of Community Services on proposals for a new Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance Depot.

In order to accommodate the various units of Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance

within the Irvine area on an economical basis a number of locations have been looked at over the past 18 months which were found to be either too expensive or unable to accommodate the Section's requirements.

The Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance Section's operations are presently located at Unit 74, East Road, Irvine on a temporary let. The unit accommodates the Cleansing vehicles, the Grounds Maintenance vehicles and plant, with the remaining Grounds Maintenance workforce located at Haysholm Nursery and MacAdam Place, Irvine.

The Section requires to establish a more permanent use of a depot within the Irvine area and the units at 28/32 Mackintosh Place, Irvine have become available on the open market and are presently being looked at by a number of prospective users. The Estates Department has been given notice by the Community Services Directorate to indicate to the sellers that the Council is interested in pursuing a lease for the use of the units as a depot. This option will free the facilities at Haysholm and Unit 74, East Road, Irvine to the appropriate directorates of the Council to be considered for their future use or development.

The Committee agreed, subject to confirmation by the Estates Section that the proposed lease by the Council of the units at 28/32 Mackintosh Place, Irvine will not result in the potential loss of any job creation opportunities for Irvine, to instruct the Director of Community Services, in association with the Estates Section, to proceed with negotiations to secure a 15 year lease of the facility at a cost affordable within existing budgets, and to report to the Support Services Committee on the terms of any lease in due course.

13. Bogside Landraise Site

Submitted report by the Director of Community Services on progress towards the approval of the planning application for the development of Bogside for landraise and sand extraction.

The application for planning permission in respect of the proposed landraise site at Bogside was submitted on 7 May 1998. Since that date the proposals have been advertised and the Council has been carrying out wide consultations with relevant bodies to ensure that all interested parties have an opportunity to comment on the proposals. Details of the outcome of these consultations were highlighted for members' information.

In determining any planning application the Secretary of State for Scotland requires to assess whether the proposals are in accordance with the development plan, in this case the Strathclyde Structure Plan 1995, the Ardrossan, Saltcoats and Stevenston Local Plan and the Irvine and Kilwinning Local Plan. The Council's consultants, RPS Cairns have been working closely with the Planning, Roads and Environment Directorate, and are satisfied that the proposals are in accordance with both the existing and emerging Structure and Local Plans.

The Committee (a) noted the actions taken to address the concerns of objectors and those other bodies that have submitted representations to the planning application; and (b) agreed that the finalised proposals should be submitted to The Scottish Office with the recommendation of the Commercial Services Committee that the development proposals be approved.

14. Building Cleansing: Benchmarking Exercise

Submitted report by the Director of Community Services on the outcome of the benchmarking exercise concerning the building cleaning function within North Ayrshire.

Noted.

The meeting ended at 2.40 p.m.