

Corporate Policy Committee  
23 April 2007

**IRVINE, 23 April 2007** - At a meeting of the Corporate Policy Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

**Present**

David O'Neill, Margaret McDougall, John Reid, Thomas Barr, John Bell, Jacqueline Browne, Drew Duncan, Jean Highgate, Peter McNamara, John Moffat, David Munn, Margaret Munn, Alan Munro, Donald Reid, and Richard Wilkinson.

**In Attendance**

I. Snodgrass, Chief Executive; J. M. Macfarlane, Assistant Chief Executive (Personnel); I. T. Mackay, Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Protective) and R. Forrest, Planning Services Manager (Legal and Protective); D. Nibloe, Chief Accountant (Finance); J. Andrew, Principal Officer (Property Services); J. McKnight, Principal Officer (Community Learning and Development) and G. Hamilton, Festivals and Events Officer (Arts and Cultural Services) (Educational Services); S. Gault, Head of Service, Community Care (Social Services); and A. Wattie, Communications Officer and M. McKeown, Corporate Support Officer (Chief Executive's).

**Chair**

Councillor O'Neill in the Chair.

**Apologies for Absence**

Jane Gorman and Samuel Taylor.

**1. Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 20 March 2007, copies of which had previously been circulated, were confirmed.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

Councillors O'Neill and D. Munn declared an interest in item 12 below and withdrew from the meeting. Councillor J. Reid assumed the Chair for that item of business.

Councillor Bell declared an interest in the application by Kilbirnie Fun Week at item 6 below and took no part in the discussion thereon.

**3. Investment in Older People's Services 2007/08**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Social Services) on an analysis of needs and resources undertaken to assist service planning in Older People's Services.

Social Services are in the process of reviewing current and future service provision for older people in North Ayrshire. The review is being conducted to ensure that the Council is able to meet the challenges posed by an increasingly large elderly population.

To inform this process, an independent Social Work expert was commissioned to undertake an analysis of needs and resources. The analysis highlighted a range of challenges which Social Services, in partnership with the Community Health Partnership (CHP), requires to address. The analysis will be used to inform further discussions with the CHP on the development of better community based supports for older people. It will also form the basis for an investment strategy for Older People's Services in 2007/08.

The Committee, in noting the findings of the independent analysis of Older People's Services, agreed that the Corporate Director (Social Services) (a) use the findings of the analysis as the basis for reconfiguring the service provision to meet the changing needs of North Ayrshire's older population; (b) share the findings with Ayrshire and Arran Health and seek increased partnership working on a shared delivery of services; (c) prepare an Action Plan to bring about the necessary Service changes; and (d) submit a further report in due course on the findings of the review together with the responses of Health and the proposed Action Plan.

#### **4. Trading Accounts**

Submitted report by the Assistant Chief Executive (Finance) on the progress of the review of Trading Operations within the Council.

In May 2006, the Corporate Policy Committee, as a result of uncertainty surrounding the wage rates of employees within these areas, agreed to a moratorium on the Council's Trading Operations for 1 year. It was also agreed that consultants should be engaged to undertake a review of Trading Operations with a view to developing robust service level agreements and identifying how best value principles could be demonstrated.

Given the continuing level of uncertainty surrounding wage rates in each of the former Trading Operations, it was proposed that trading accounts should be suspended for a further year. In the meantime, a specification has been drawn up and consultants will be engaged to undertake the work in relation to service level agreements and best value compliance during 2007/08.

The Committee agreed to (a) suspend Trading Accounts until 31 March 2008; and (b) engage consultants to make recommendations on service level agreements and best value compliance.

## **5. Sundry Debtors Policy**

Submitted report by the Assistant Chief Executive (Finance) on a proposal to introduce a Sundry Debtors Policy for raising, collecting, and recovering sundry income debts.

Council Services charge the general public and businesses for the provision of a range of goods and services. Although the current procedures followed by Services in respect of recovering sundry debts are well established, there is no formal policy in place detailing the Council's systematic approach to the raising of invoices, the collection procedures to be carried out, and the recovery action to be taken in respect of unpaid sundry income debts.

To address this, a Sundry Debtors Policy, a copy of which was appended to the report, has been produced which will formalise and enhance existing working practices and procedures across Services to maximise the Council's income and minimise its level of bad debt. The Policy will provide a consistent and efficient approach across all Services that use the sundry debtors system when raising invoices and recovering debt.

The Committee agreed to approve the introduction of the Sundry Debtors Policy as set out in the Appendix to the report.

## **6. Community Development Grants Scheme and Local Action Fund**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Educational Services) on applications received in respect of the Community Development Grants Scheme and the Local Action Fund.

The Committee agreed to (a) make the following awards across the geographic boundaries of the Council's existing Area Committees:-

### **Garnock Valley, North Coast, Arran and Cumbrae Area**

#### **Community Development Grants Scheme**

West Kilbride Village Gala Group	£ 500
Kilbirnie Fun Week	£1,060
Dalry Action Group	£2,000
Largs Jazz Club	£1,500
St Inan's Festival Committee	£1,000
Largs Brisbane Queen Festival	£1,050
Arran Music Festival Association	£ 250
West Kilbride Scarecrow Festival	£1,500

#### **Local Action Fund**

Youth for Lourdes	£1,335
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### **Irvine, Kilwinning, Dreghorn and Springside Area**

#### **Community Development Grants Scheme**

Dreghorn Gala Committee £1,300

#### **Local Action Fund**

Youth for Lourdes £1,335

### **Three Towns Area**

#### **Community Development Grants Scheme**

Saltcoats Gala Committee £1,500

#### **Local Action Fund**

Youth for Lourdes £1,335

St John's Youth Group £2,000

and (b) remit to the Chief Executive to approve an award of up to £1,500 to Kilwinning Gala Committee on receipt of a satisfactory application and officer report.

## **7. Common Good and Trust Funds**

Submitted reports by the Chief Executive on applications for funding from various Common Good and Trust Funds administered by the Council.

The Committee agreed to make the following awards:-

<b>Common Good/Trust Fund</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Award</b>
Largs Common Good	Largs Jazz Club	£ 3,000
	Largs Brisbane Queen Festival	£ 1,500
	Largs Open Bowling Tournament	£ 200
	Largs Viking Festival	£ 2,000 to account
Margaret Archibald Bequest	Dalry Action Group	£ 3,000
Saltcoats Common Good	Saltcoats Gala Committee	£ 500
Stevenston Common Good	Ardeer Bowling Club	underwrite up to a maximum of £500

Irvine Common Good	Marymass Development Committee	underwrite up to a maximum of £66,206.74
Woodgreen Mortification Trust	Family R	£ 1,300

## **8. Corporate Policy Grants 2007/08: Financial Assistance to Outside Bodies**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on applications for financial assistance received from outside bodies.

The Committee agreed to make the following awards:-

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Award</b>
Strathclyde Police "Big World Event"	£1,300
Scottish Domestic Abuse Helpline	£ 500
Scottish Low Pay Unit	£1,000
Children in Scotland	£1,000
Poverty Alliance	£1,030

## **9. Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan: Draft Modifications**

Submitted report by the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Protective) on the publication by the Scottish Executive of draft modifications to the Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan and seeking approval of a Council response thereon.

The revised Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan was submitted to Scottish Ministers for approval on 14 June 2006. Following consideration of the draft Plan, and of representations thereon, the Scottish Executive published draft modifications to the Plan in March 2007. The Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan and Transportation Committee considered a report on the draft modifications at its meeting on 18 April 2007 and agreed to forward that report to the three Ayrshire Councils for their individual consideration.

The draft modifications focus more on detail and emphasis rather than substance. The principal elements of the Plan remain intact, particularly the recognition of the sustainable growth strategy and the need to maintain sustainable levels of population. With minor changes, the policies on sustainable development and the development framework remain in place, as do the sections on the development of the economy, communities, environment and transport. The proposed modifications also emphasise the priority being given to Irvine Bay Regeneration. The draft modifications raise a number of specific concerns for North Ayrshire in relation to:-

- Strategic Business Locations (ECON 2 Ardeer)
- Wind Farms (ECON 7)
- Housing Opportunities and Housing Shortfalls (Table 3)
- Landscape Protection (ENV 2) and
- Strategic Waste Management Facility (ECON 9)

A proposed response to the draft modifications was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

The Committee agreed (a) to approve the report and the appendix as the basis for a response to the Scottish Executive on the draft modifications to the Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan; and (b) that the Structure Plan Manager (i) submits the comments to the Scottish Executive; (ii) writes formally to the Scottish Executive Chief Planner expressing deep disquiet over the inadequacy of the reasons given for many of the modifications and the lack of opportunity to clarify issues, and the dissatisfaction at the content of the letter received from the Scottish Executive in respect of Scottish Planning Policy 6: Renewable Energy and the Ayrshire Structure Plan Draft Modifications; and (iii) indicates to the Scottish Executive the Council's support for the position taken by the Ayrshire Joint Strategic Waste Management Group as intimated in their letter of 16 April 2007 to the Executive so far as it relates to the Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan.

## **10. Integrated Service Delivery and Governance Modelling Project: Joint Ayrshire Shared Services Media Advertising**

Submitted report by the Assistant Chief Executive (Personnel) on a proposal to award a pan Ayrshire Media Advertising contract covering statutory notices, Councillor surgeries and recruitment advertising.

As part of the efficient government agenda, discussions have been ongoing within the three Ayrshire Councils with regard to issuing a joint media advertising contract covering recruitment, statutory notices, and Councillor surgeries. Following agreement by the Joint Leaders/Chief Executives, a specification for the contract was drawn up and the tender was placed in the European Journal in December 2006.

Seven organisations subsequently returned the pre-qualification questionnaire and were invited to tender. Following a joint selection and short-listing process, details of which were summarised in the report, the tenderer who matched the highest scoring on both cost and quality was Advertising Works. The estimated cost savings for local advertising of statutory notices, Councillor surgeries and recruitment is £70,000 for North Ayrshire and £63,000 for East Ayrshire. South Ayrshire Council are current clients of Advertising Works.

The Committee agreed to approve the award of a pan Ayrshire Media Advertising contract covering recruitment, statutory notices, and Councillor surgeries, to Advertising Works, for a period of 3 years with provision for a review period after each year.

## **11. Housing Term Contract: Electrical Rewiring**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Property Services) on a proposal to award a term contract in respect of rewiring works to Council houses.

In January 2006, the Committee agreed to approve a range of tenders for three-year term contracts to carry out programmes of major repair and improvement to the Council's houses. In the case of the rewiring programme, tenders were accepted, and contracts awarded to John McCaig & Sons Ltd., Ayr, and the D. H. Morris Group, Glengarnock.

D H Morris has gone into receivership and will not therefore carry out any further rewiring works for the Council. Within the original tendering exercise, the next lowest tender was from WWW Electrical Contractors, Glasgow. This company has confirmed it is willing and able to enter into a term contract with the Council for the remaining 2 years of the 3 year term contract period at the same rates as tendered by John McCaig and the D. H. Morris Group.

The Committee agreed to approve the award of a term contract for the rewiring works to Council houses to WWW Electrical Contractors, on the terms indicated in the report.

## **12. Ardrossan: 4-8 Harbour Street and 10 Princes Street - Transfer to North Ayrshire Ventures Limited**

Submitted report by the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Protective) on a proposal to transfer ownership of land and property at 4-8 Harbour Street and 10 Princes Street, Ardrossan, to North Ayrshire Ventures Limited.

North Ayrshire Ventures Trust is a Company Limited by Guarantee with charitable status, set up by the Council to assist in economic development and regeneration in North Ayrshire. The Trust holds a 50% share holding in a joint venture with the EDI Group, which joint venture company is known as North Ayrshire Ventures Limited.

North Ayrshire Ventures Limited has agreed to construct a Health Centre for the NHS at Harbour Street/Princes Street, Ardrossan. The bulk of the site is owned by the Council and comprises the listed building at 8 Harbour Street as well as a vacant site at 4-6 Harbour Street, together with the site of the recently demolished store at 10 Princes Street. It is intended that the existing building at 8 Harbour Street be converted and extended and that North Ayrshire Ventures Limited constructs the development and thereafter leases it to the NHS.

To facilitate the development, North Ayrshire Ventures Limited will provide loan notes to North Ayrshire Ventures Trust equivalent to the market value of the ground to be transferred. The Council will require to transfer the ground to North Ayrshire Ventures Limited at nil value for which the consent of the Scottish Ministers in terms of Section 74(2) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 is required.

While the transfer of the land represents a potential capital receipt to the Council, this will be compensated by (a) the issue of loan notes to North Ayrshire Ventures Trust for the value of the ground transferred (in that the value of the ground is treated as a debt payable by North Ayrshire Ventures Limited to North Ayrshire Ventures Trust); (b) the fact that the development should return a profit to North Ayrshire Ventures Limited which can, in turn, fund future regeneration projects; (c) improvements in health facilities in Ardrossan; and (d) the contribution of the development to the regeneration of the Ardrossan harbour area.

The Committee agreed to approve the transfer of the site at Harbour Street/Princes Street, Ardrossan, to North Ayrshire Ventures Limited at nil value, subject to the consent of the Scottish Ministers in terms of Section 74(2) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, in return for loan notes from North Ayrshire Ventures Limited to North Ayrshire Ventures Trust for the full market value of the ground transferred.

The meeting ended at 3.10 p.m.