

Corporate Strategy Committee
27 February 1996

Irvine, 27 February 1996 - At a Meeting of the Corporate Strategy Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

Present

James Clements, Patrick Browne, Stewart Dewar, John Donn, David Gallagher, Samuel Gooding, Jane Gorman, James Jennings, Thomas Morris, David O'Neill, Robert Rae, Robert Reilly, John Sillars and George Steven.

In Attendance

The Chief Executive, the Director of Financial Services, the Head of Corporate Business, the IT Services Manager, the Principal Officer (Marketing and Publicity), the Principal Officer (Policy/Administration) and an Administration Officer (Mr. Bannatyne).

Chair

Mr. Clements in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

Ian Clarkson and Samuel Taylor.

1. Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 22 January 1996, copies of which had previously been circulated, were confirmed.

2. Revenue Budget 1996/97

Submitted report by the Director of Financial Services on the Revenue Budget for 1996/97. Copies of the report had previously been circulated.

The Chief Executive confirmed that special Meetings of the Service Committees had been held on 26 February 1996 to agree final revisions of their Estimates and outlined the terms of the report by the Director of Financial Services. In response to a request from Mr. Gooding he undertook to provide him with additional information on expenditure in relation to assistance to industry.

Having considered the report and taking into account the decisions arising from the Special Meetings of the Service Committees held on 26 February 1996, the Committee agreed to approve the detailed Revenue Estimates for each service including the package of saving measures required to meet Central Government's capping criteria.

3. COSLA Constitution

Submitted report on the proposed revised COSLA Constitution discussed at the Meeting of Leaders and Chief Executives of Unitary Authorities held on 23 February 1996. Copies of the report had previously been circulated.

A Meeting of the Shadow Convention is to be held on 27 March 1996 to formally adopt the Constitution and it is envisaged that appointments of new office bearers, conveners and spokespersons could be undertaken at the Meeting of the Convention to be held on 28 June 1996

or possibly earlier if considered appropriate.

The Committee agreed (a) to welcome the review of COSLA's Constitution; and (b) that NAC be represented at the forthcoming COSLA Meeting.

4. Three Towns Initiative Company Ltd

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the Three Towns Initiative Company Ltd remitted by the Infrastructure and Environment Services Committee for further consideration. Copies of the report had previously been circulated.

The Committee agreed to note the decision of the Infrastructure and Environment Services Committee (a) that North Ayrshire Council continue to support the Three Towns Initiative in the terms indicated in the report; and (b) that the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Infrastructure and Environment Services Committee have been nominated to serve on the Three Towns Initiative Management Board.

5. Economic Development Strategy for North Ayrshire

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the Economic Development Strategy for North Ayrshire remitted by the Infrastructure and Environment Services Committee for further consideration. Copies of the report had previously been circulated.

The Committee agreed (a) to note the terms of the Economic Development Strategy Document adopted by North Ayrshire Council; (b) to note meantime, the request that priority be given to the allocation of financial resources to permit full implementation of the Strategy; and (c) to welcome the proposal to hold a seminar on the Economic Development Strategy to which all members of North Ayrshire Council will be invited.

6. Archives

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on proposals for the future management and maintenance of local authority records (archives) in Ayrshire remitted by the Community and Recreational Services Committee for further consideration. Copies of the report had previously been circulated.

The Committee agreed (a) to approve a one-third share of the cost of an experienced Archivist at AP5/PO1 and an Assistant Archivist at AP3/4; (b) that the Director of Community and Recreational Services submit a further report on the additional capital and revenue costs (including income generated) to a future Meeting; and (c) that the Director of Community and Recreational Services advise the Keeper of the Records in Scotland of the Council's proposals for an archival service.

7. Brodick Country Park

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the current management arrangement between CDC and the National Trust for Scotland regarding Brodick Country Park remitted by the Community and Recreational Services Committee for further consideration. Copies of the report had previously been circulated.

The Committee agreed (a) that North Ayrshire Council enter into a Joint Management Agreement with the National Trust for Scotland in respect of the management of Brodick Country Park with North Ayrshire Council providing 51% of the operating costs of the Park held at the 1995/96 level (i.e. £63,700 for 1996/97); (b) that North Ayrshire Council be represented on the Joint Management Committee by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Community and Recreational Services Committee and Mr. Sillars; and (c) to note meantime, the request for financial assistance for the replacement of the adventure playground.

8. Appointment of Monitoring Officer: Local Government and Housing Act 1989

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on a requirement in terms of Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 for the appointment of a Monitoring Officer for North Ayrshire Council. Copies of the report had previously been circulated.

The Monitoring Officer will have a responsibility to ensure that all members and officers act with propriety and within the scope of any legislation or regulations governing the operation of local authorities. The Act provides that a Council's Chief Finance Officer may not be designated as Monitoring Officer but that otherwise any senior officer may be so designated.

The Committee agreed to appoint Brian MacDonald, Head of Corporate Business as the Monitoring Officer for NAC until the next full Council Election, in compliance with the terms of Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

9. Scheme of Delegation to Committees

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the proposed Scheme of Delegation to Committees giving details of the terms of reference and delegated authorities in relation to each Committee and Sub-Committee of North Ayrshire Council. Copies of the report were circulated at the Meeting.

The Committee agreed (a) in principle, to approve the Scheme of Delegation to Committees on the terms indicated in the report; and (b) to refer the report to all Service Committees for information.

10. Positive Partnership: A Statement of Principles of Co-operation between the Voluntary Sector and the New Councils

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on a Statement of Principles of Co-operation between the Voluntary Sector and the New Councils agreed jointly between COSLA and the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations. Copies of the report had previously been circulated.

The Committee agreed to adopt and implement the principles contained within the Statement entitled "Positive Partnership".

11. Devolution of Power to Councils: Scottish Office Consultation Paper

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the implications of a Scottish Office Consultation Paper entitled "Devolution of Power to Councils" including details of proposed appropriate response on behalf of North Ayrshire Council. Copies of the report had previously been circulated.

The Consultation Paper has proposed many minor points with regard to the relaxation of controls in local government but the main proposals for significant devolution of power to Councils as suggested by COSLA have not been addressed apart from a very few exceptions.

The Committee agreed (a) that North Ayrshire Council's response to the Scottish Office Consultation Paper be forwarded to the Secretary of State for Scotland on the terms indicated in the report; and (b) to forward a copy of North Ayrshire Council's response to COSLA.

12. Bridgegate House

Submitted report by Head of Corporate Business on the reception arrangements for Housing and Social Work Departments at Bridgegate House, Irvine. Copies of the report had previously been circulated.

The Committee agreed to remit to the Head of Corporate Business, in conjunction with the appropriate Directors, to examine ways of improving the Council's corporate reception facilities and access at Bridgegate House after 1 April 1996.

13. North Ayrshire Council Launch

(Previous Minute Reference: Corporate Strategy Committee 22/1/96)

Submitted report by the Head of Corporate Business on progress to date in relation to the launch of North Ayrshire Council and seeking approval for additional expenditure. Copies of the report had previously been circulated.

The Committee agreed (a) that an appropriate launch event be held in Cunninghame House on 1 April 1996; (b) to have small launches in local areas with those whose birthday is also 1 April; (c) to the implementation of IT links with Arran on 1 April 1996; (d) to the creation of a North Ayrshire livery on new vehicles; (e) to authorise the respraying of approximately 28 vehicles (1 or 2 years old) at a cost of £15,400 to be funded from the available balances in the 1995/96 Budget; (f) that Directors expedite and advance the purchase of protective clothing in North Ayrshire's corporate colours for all staff for whom protective clothing is appropriate early in financial year 1996/97; and (g) to nominate Mr. Clements, Mr. Browne and Mr. Steven to assist with the Officer Working Group to deal with the day to day matters in relation to the launch of North Ayrshire Council prior to 1 April 1996.

14. Officer/Member Working Groups

(a) Outcome and Recommendations

Submitted report by the Head of Corporate Business on the outcome and recommendations of the Officer/Member Working Groups in relation to (i) consultation/communication; (ii) decentralisation; (iii) members' role and support; and (iv) organisational culture and staff empowerment. Copies of the report had previously been circulated.

The Committee agreed to remit to the Head of Corporate Business the implementation of the recommendations of the four Officer/Member Groups on the terms indicated in the report.

(b) Area Committees

Submitted report by the Head of Corporate Business on the deliberations and recommendations of the Member/Officer Working Group on Area Committees.

The Committee agreed (i) to approve the draft remit for Area Committees in the terms indicated in the report; (ii) that each Area Committee approve a draft core agenda of priority items for the year 1996/97 which will allow frontline services to submit local reports on service delivery; (iii) that the Area Committees at their first Meeting during the week beginning 25 March 1996 address the issues contained in the draft Committee Remit and discuss the implementation of community consultations within their own areas; and (iv) to remit to a future Working Group consideration of (A) the most appropriate methods to allow Housing Services and Planning, Roads and the Environment matters to be reported to the Area Committees, (B) the paper on developing links with community organisations submitted by the Head of Cultural and Community Services circulated with the report and (C) the marketing of Area Committees within the decentralisation strategy through the use of the Marketing and Publicity Service of the Council.

15. Strathclyde European Partnership: Proposal to form a Company Ltd by Guarantee

Submitted report by the Head of Corporate Business on the proposed formation of a Company Limited by Guarantee by Strathclyde European Partnership to take over the function of the Programme Executive. Copies of the report had previously been circulated.

The Monitoring Committee which considers the Strathclyde European Partnership has recently been considering the legal status of the programme following Local Government

Reorganisation on 1 April 1996. It is proposed that a Company Limited by Guarantee be formed by the Unitary Councils in the current Strathclyde area, Scottish Enterprise and the five Local Enterprise Companies in Strathclyde and the Strathclyde Further Education Partnership (the consortium of the 20 further education colleges in the Region).

The Committee agreed (a) to support the proposal to establish a Company Limited by Guarantee on the terms indicated in the report to take over the functions of the Programme Executive; (b) that Strathclyde Regional Council set up the Company on behalf of the 12 new Unitary Authorities prior to 1 April 1996; (c) to the transfer of the staff and assets from the Programme Executive to the new Company; and (d) to seek the nomination of an elected member of North Ayrshire Council to the Board of the new Company after 1 April 1996.

16. European Matters

Submitted report by the Head of Corporate Business seeking authority for the establishment of a short life officer/member group to examine how North Ayrshire Council intends to proceed with European matters.

The Committee agreed (a) that a short life officer/member group be appointed comprising Mr. Clements, Mr. Browne, Mr. Gooding, Mr. O'Neill and Mr. Steven to examine European matters with a view to assisting North Ayrshire Council make appropriate decisions on how to deal with such matters; and (b) that the officer/member group report to an early Meeting of the Corporate Strategy Committee.

17. West of Scotland European Consortium

Submitted report by the Head of Corporate Business on North Ayrshire Council's participation in the West of Scotland European Consortium. Copies of the report had previously been circulated.

The Committee agreed (a) that North Ayrshire Council participate in the West of Scotland European Consortium on the terms indicated in the report; and (b) to authorise, subject to the costs being met from the Strathclyde Regional Council Disaggregated Budget, payment of the subscription amounting to £7,735.46.

18. Corporate Comments Suggestions and Complaints Procedure

Submitted report by the Head of Corporate Business on proposals for the establishment of a Corporate Comments, Suggestions and Complaints Procedure. Copies of the report had previously been circulated.

The Committee agreed (a) to approve the Corporate Comments, Suggestions and Complaints Procedure on the terms indicated in the report; (b) that an agreed format be established for monitoring complaints, comments and suggestions which are dealt with at local level; (c) that information gathered on this basis is circulated both to Service Committees and to Area Committees; and (d) that the Principal Officer (Performance Review) in conjunction with the Head of Corporate Business, monitor all comments, suggestions and complaints on behalf of the Council.

19. Installation of Telephone Systems to Support the Accommodation Strategy

Submitted report by the Information Technology Services Manager on the installation of telephone systems to support the accommodation strategy for North Ayrshire Council. Copies of the report had previously been circulated.

In view of the requirement for telephone systems to be in place by 1 April 1996 proposals were sought from four suppliers to meet the telephone needs identified by North Ayrshire Council. The only supplier who could implement the new systems within the required timescale was

Ericsson who also submitted the lowest estimated costs. British Telecom will provide all telephone lines and network services. The Chief Executive confirmed that the expenditure incurred will not detract from capital allocations in the future which might offer higher priorities.

Noted.

20. War Pensions Committee

(Previous Minute Reference: Corporate Strategy Committee 22/1/96)

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on a request by the War Pensions Agency that North Ayrshire Council nominate one representative to serve on the South West of Scotland War Pensions Committee which covers East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire, South Ayrshire, Dumfries and Galloway, Inverclyde, South Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire. Copies of the report had previously been circulated.

The Committee agreed to nominate Mr. Carson as North Ayrshire Council's representative.

21. Annual Women's Conference

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on a proposal to hold an Annual North Ayrshire Women's Conference and seeking approval for the establishment of a Budget to support such an event. Copies of the report had previously been circulated.

The Committee agreed (a) that North Ayrshire Council hold an Annual North Ayrshire Women's Conference; and (b) that the sum of £5,000 for which provision has been made in the 1996/97 Budget for Women's Issues be allocated to this year's Conference.

22. Urgent Items

The Chair agreed that the following item be considered as a matter of urgency.

23. Argyll and the Islands Enterprise: Liaison Committee

Submitted report by the Director of Planning, Roads and the Environment seeking nominations for North Ayrshire Council representatives to the Argyll and the Islands Enterprise Liaison Committee. Copies of the report had previously been circulated.

The Committee agreed (a) to meet Argyll and the Islands Enterprise at Member to Board level on a quarterly basis to review matters of mutual interest and progress on joint activities; (b) to nominate Mr. Gooding, Mr. Munn, Mr. Morris, Mr. Rae and Mr. Sillars to represent the Council on the North Ayrshire Council/Argyll and the Islands Enterprise Liaison Committee; and (c) that the Council representatives attend the next Meeting of the CDC/AIE Liaison Committee scheduled for 7 March 1996 to which North Ayrshire Council has been invited.

The Meeting ended at 2.40 p.m.