

Corporate Strategy Committee  
23 September 1997

**Irvine, 23 September 1997** - At a Special Meeting of the Corporate Strategy Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

**Present**

James Clements, Patrick Browne, Ian Clarkson, Stewart Dewar, Thomas Dickie, John Donn, David Gallagher, Jane Gorman, James Jennings, Joseph McKinney, Thomas Morris, Robert Rae, Robert Reilly, John Sillars, George Steven and Samuel Taylor.

**In Attendance**

The Directors of Financial and Commercial Services; The Head of Corporate Business; J Montgomery, Principal Officer (Performance Review); M Pepper, Principal Officer (Marketing and Publicity); and J Bannatyne, Administration Officer (Chief Executive).

**Chair**

Mr Clements in the Chair.

**Apologies for Absence**

Jack Carson, Samuel Gooding and David O'Neill.

**1. Best Value Submission**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive giving detailed information on the Council's submission to the Secretary of State to demonstrate its commitment to and compliance with "Best Value".

The Best Value submission document addresses the following three main aspects:-

- (a) confirmation that the Council has completed the CCT tendering processes in accordance with Paragraph 2 of SODD Circular 16/97;
- (b) an assessment of the Council's' ability to operate Best Value incorporating the self-assessment questionnaire in the Accounts Commission's Management Module 1 (where the Council is currently unable to operate Best Value systems and processes, it requires to provide a plan to upgrade systems and processes to enable it to comply with Best Value criteria); and
- (c) a summary of documentary evidence to support any claims that Best Value systems are already in operation.

The Council will require to make a further submission to the Secretary of State during September 1998 to demonstrate its progress against the 1997 Compliance Plan.

The Committee agreed (i) to approve the submission to the Secretary of State for Scotland which incorporates a Compliance Plan for continuous improvement of the Council's services; and (ii) to acknowledge the achievements of the Council to date in demonstrating Best Value.

## **2. School of Music and Recording Technology (SMART)**

Submitted report by the Head of Corporate Business on the decision of Enterprise Ayrshire to support the South Ayrshire/Paisley University/Ayr College bid for the proposed School of Music and Recording Technology.

In January 1997 Enterprise Ayrshire invited the three Ayrshire Councils to submit proposals for a potential site for a School of Music and Recording Technology. Enterprise Ayrshire commissioned a firm of Consultants, McDonald Associates, to carry out a technical assessment of the sites proposed. Two sites, Matthew Wright, Irvine and Dam Park, Ayr were eventually deemed to be suitable and a Steering Group was created to carry out an evaluation. Although various criteria for selection were set out, public sector ownership of the sites was not thought to have been a pre-requisite.

Enterprise Ayrshire have now formally advised the Council, for reasons detailed in the report, that the Steering Group has unanimously agreed to support the Dam Park site, Ayr as the location which is to be taken forward to detailed feasibility testing.

After discussion, having expressed its concern, the Committee agreed (a) to write to Enterprise Ayrshire (i) protesting at their inconsistency in applying the criteria which had been drawn up in relation to the bids for site selection; and (ii) declining to engage in further competitions on Challenge Funding initiated by them; and (b) to write to Scottish Enterprise and the Minister for Education and Industry detailing the Council's concern over this matter.

## **3. Irvine: Trinity Centre**

The Head of Corporate Business gave an update on the current position on the emergency repairs being carried out to the steeple of the Trinity Centre, Irvine.

Further expenditure of £10,000 has recently been authorised by the Chief Executive to allow additional scaffolding to be erected to the 42 metre mark to enable further surveys and repairs to be undertaken. Historic Scotland have now confirmed that the Secretary of State has approved the offer of a grant of up to £113,300 towards the costs of repairs to the Centre which will be made available in the financial year 1997/1998.

After a full discussion, the Committee agreed (a) to homologate the Chief Executive's decision to authorise a further £10,000 of expenditure on emergency repairs to the steeple; (b) to accept the offer of grant of up to £113,300 from Historic Scotland; and (c) to seek clarification from the Scottish Office on the position regarding funding which was set aside by the former Irvine Development Corporation for the future redevelopment of the Trinity Centre, and report.

The meeting ended at 2.20 p.m.