

Support Services Committee
17 June 1997

Irvine, 17 June 1997 - At a Meeting of the Support Services Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

Present

David O'Neill, Alan Munro, James Clements, Stewart Dewar, John Donn, Elliot Gray, Margaret Highet, James Jennings, David Munn, George Steven and Richard Wilkinson.

In Attendance

The Head of Corporate Business, D. Addison, Head of Revenue Services (Financial Services), B. Gardner, Head of Education Resources (Education), Architectural Services Manager, Personnel Services Manager, Legal Services Manager, J. Ferguson, Assistant Principal Estates Officer (Legal Services), and B. Hannah, Administration Officer (Chief Executive).

Chair

Mr. O'Neill in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

Patrick Browne.

1. Minutes Confirmed

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Support Services Committee held on 6 May 1997, copies of which had previously been circulated, were confirmed.

2. Collection Statements

Submitted report by the Director of Financial Services on the current collection levels in respect of Community Charge and Council Tax for the period ended 31 May 1997.

A total of £97,000 was collected in respect of Community Charge during May 1997. The outstanding recoverable debt due to North Ayrshire Council in respect of Community Charge is £18,189,000.

£1.5m was collected during May 1997 in respect of Council Tax for 1997/98.

Noted.

3. Write Offs: Sundry Debtors Arrears

Submitted report by the Director of Financial Services seeking approval to write off various sundry debtor accounts relating to the former Cunninghame District Council.

The arrears require to be written off as at 31 March 1997 for accounting purposes. The arrears are categorised as those with debts of less than £100 and those with debts greater than £100.

At reorganisation of local government sundry debtor accounts were transferred to North Ayrshire Council from Strathclyde Regional Council and Cunninghame District Council together with

provisions for non-recovery. Action has been taken in an attempt to recover the outstanding debt following which a review was carried out by the various Directorates in association with the Director of Financial Services. In a number of cases the recovery of the debt appears unlikely.

The arrears which require to be written off as at 31 March 1997 comprise a total of £48,463.45 in respect of debts of less than £100 and £129,802.93 in respect of debts over £100. Provision for write off totalling £350,000 was made by Cunninghame District Council and has been transferred to North Ayrshire Council.

After discussion the Committee agreed (a) to note that arrears totalling £48,463.45 have been authorised for write off by the Director of Financial Services as at 31 March 1997; (b) to approve the write off of £129,802.93 in relation to arrears of over £100 as at 31 March 1997; (c) to note that the Legal Services Manager together with external agencies will pursue the outstanding debts as appropriate; (d) to instruct the Legal Services Manager to submit a report to a future meeting of the Committee detailing the outcome of the pursuance of such debts; and (e) to instruct the Director of Community and Recreational Services to submit a report to a future meeting of the Community and Recreational Services Committee in relation to the operation of the 'Fines Scheme' within the library service.

4. Dementia Day Centre: Irvine

Submitted report by the Architectural Services Manager on a request from Alzheimers Scotland that the Architectural Services Department waive their professional fees in relation to the development of a new Dementia Day Centre at Irvine.

Alzheimers Scotland Action on Dementia provides services to people and their carers within Irvine, Kilwinning and the Dreghorn area. The Day Care provision service is operated from Council premises although the organisation have now secured a £15,000 Mental Illness Specific Grant to secure their own premises. The cost of adapting their premises is £22,000 which is in excess of the available budget. The Social Work Directorate, on behalf of Alzheimers Scotland, have therefore approached Architectural Services and requested that the department waive their professional fees of £2,800 in relation to the conversion, etc. works required to the property.

After discussion the Committee agreed (a) that the Architectural Services Manager waive the professional fees incurred in relation to the conversion, etc. of the Day Centre; and (b) that any similar applications be considered on their merits.

5. Education Directorate

(a) Permanent Posts in Nurseries

Submitted report by the Director of Education seeking approval to establish full time posts associated with nursery education.

During 1996/97 the Council participated in the nursery voucher pilot scheme which provided resources to establish nursery provision for all four year olds in North Ayrshire. As the future funding of the scheme was uncertain the posts created in association with the scheme were established on a temporary basis. Recent government announcements have confirmed that funding will continue for the nursery places established for four year olds and it is therefore proposed to redesignate the posts of 12 full time equivalent nursery teacher posts and 13.5 full time equivalent nursery nurse posts within the Education Directorate as permanent.

The Committee agreed to revise the establishment of the Education Directorate by the creation of 12 full time equivalent permanent nursery teacher's posts and 13.5 full time equivalent permanent nursery nurse posts.

(b) Librarian Post: Education Resource Service

Submitted report by the Director of Education on the proposed establishment of a new

permanent Librarian post within the Education Resource Service based at Greenwood Teachers Centre, Irvine.

During 1996/97 the Council participated in a joint management arrangement with East Ayrshire and South Ayrshire Councils in respect of the operation of the Education Resource Centre based at the Greenwood Teachers Centre, Irvine.

East Ayrshire and South Ayrshire Councils subsequently withdrew from the joint management arrangement and, thereafter provision was made in the Education revenue budget to establish a Librarian's post within the Resource Centre to maintain the level of service required by schools within North Ayrshire.

After discussion the Committee agreed to the establishment of a Librarian's post (Grade AP 1/3) within the Education Resource Centre.

6. Social Work Directorate

(a) Augmented Home Care Project, Beith

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager on a proposal to amend the status of employees associated with the Augmented Home Care Project, Beith from temporary to permanent.

The Home Care Project was established in 1993 to provide care and intensive domiciliary support to frail, elderly people in the community thereby avoiding their admission to long-term hospital or nursing care. On 4 June 1997 the Social Work Committee agreed to the establishment of the project on a permanent basis subject to approval of the staffing implications. The project is staffed by a Care Support Organiser (Grade AP4), a Senior Home Care Support Worker (Grade MW5), 4.5 Care Support Workers (Grade MW5), 0.5 Clerical Assistant/Typist (Grade GS1/2) and Sessional Hours (Home Care Support) (Grade MW5) when necessary. Funding for the project is provided by Ayrshire and Arran Health Board.

After discussion the Committee agreed that the posts associated with the Augmented Home Care Project be made permanent within the establishment of the Social Work Directorate.

(b) Social Work Directorate: Increase in Staffing Establishment

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager on a proposal to increase the staffing establishment of the Social Work Directorate to meet the additional demands and responsibilities resulting from the introduction of the Childrens (Scotland) Act 1995.

On 4 June 1997 the Social Work Committee agreed, in order to address the additional demands on the service, to recommend that the Support Services Committee approve the appointment of 2 Social Workers (Child Care) (Grade QSW), 1 Social Worker attached to the Community Mental Health Team (Grade QSW), 1 Social Worker (Adoption and Fostering) (Grade QSW) and 0.5 Clerical Officer (Grade GS1/2).

After discussion the Committee agreed to increase the Social Work Directorate's staffing establishment in accordance with the proposals as detailed in the report.

7. Commercial Services Directorate: Transfer of Commercial Catering Group Limited Staff

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager seeking approval for the transfer of staff presently employed by the Commercial Catering Group Limited to the Commercial Services Directorate.

On 7 May 1997, the Commercial Services Committee agreed that the Catering and Cleansing Section of the Commercial Services Directorate take over the responsibility for catering services

currently provided by the Commercial Catering Group Limited staff at Cunninghame House, Irvine.

The Commercial Catering Group operation involves 1 Catering Manager, 1 Assistant Manager, 1 Cashier and 5 Catering Assistants and it is proposed that the staff transfer to North Ayrshire Council on terms and conditions in line with those afforded to other staff holding comparable positions.

After discussion the Committee agreed to approve the transfer of 8 catering staff employed by Commercial Catering Group Limited to North Ayrshire Council.

8. Legal Services Department: Estates Surveyors Post

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on the proposed creation of an additional Estates Surveyors post within the Legal Services Department. The proposed post is required due to the substantial property portfolio and consequential estate management duties and responsibilities arising from properties transferred from the former Irvine Development Corporation. Provision exists within the 1997/98 budget to fund the post of an Estates Surveyor with effect from 1 October 1997.

The Committee agreed to increase the Legal Services Department establishment by the creation of a further Estates Surveyors Post at Grade AP5/PO3 to be filled with effect from 1 October 1997.

9. Conditions of Service: Manual, Craft, Etc. Employees

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager on proposed terms and conditions of service in relation to manual, craft, etc. employees.

The Council inherited a wide range of terms and conditions of service from the former Strathclyde Regional Council, Cunninghame District Council and Irvine Development Corporation. Following discussion with the appropriate trade unions rationalised conditions of service have now been agreed in relation to: sickness leave and absence allowance; special leave scheme; maternity pay/maternity allowance and leave provision; a job-share scheme; the terms and conditions of the group life assurance scheme; and the rationalisation of current payroll systems and cycles to CYBORG.

The Committee agreed to approve the terms and condition of service package in relation to manual, craft, etc. employees as detailed in the report.

10. Continued Provision of An Occupational Health Service

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager seeking approval to extend the current occupational health service contract with Associated Health Specialists Limited (AHS) until 31 May 1998.

On 1 June 1996 the Council contracted AHS to provide an occupational health service until 31 May 1997 pending a decision being taken on competitive tendering in relation to the service. A final determination in relation to competitive tendering of the service has yet to be taken and, in the interim, it is considered that the contract with AHS should be extended for a period of 1 year during which time a full review of the service will be carried out including the possible provision of an in-house service.

After discussion the Committee agreed to extend the contract with AHS for provision of an occupational health service until 31 May 1998.

11. National Joint Council: Circulars and National Agreements: Amendments to Conditions of Service

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager advising that agreement has been reached on nationally agreed conditions of service as detailed in Circular SO/214; BCE/72 and SE/147. The agreements relate to a payment of certain expenses.

The Scottish Joint Negotiating Committee for Teaching Staff agreed on 28 May 1997 to a pay increase of 2.5% for teaching staff in school education with effect from 1 April 1997.

The Committee agreed to adopt and implement the conditions of service circulars as detailed in the report.

12. Irvine: House Plots at Perceton 'D'

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on the proposed disposal of three house plots at Perceton 'D', Irvine.

The Committee agreed (a) to reject the offers received in relation to the areas of land; and (b) that the Legal Services Manager be instructed to re-advertise the subjects with offers invited above £35,000 per plot.

13. Irvine: Unit 41, Kyle Road

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on the proposed sale of an area of land extending to approximately 929 sq. metres adjacent to Unit 41, Kyle Road, Irvine.

The Committee agreed to approve the proposed sale of land on terms and conditions provisionally agreed by the Legal Services Manager.

14. Kilwinning: Flat at 32A Dalry Road

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on the proposed disposal of property at 32A Dalry Road.

The Committee agreed to approve the proposed sale of the property on terms and conditions provisionally agreed by the Legal Services Manager.

15. Kilwinning: The Lodge, Hazeldene, Blair Road

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on the proposed disposal of the lodge house, Hazeldene, Blair Road, Kilwinning.

The Committee agreed to approve the disposal of the property on the terms and conditions provisionally agreed by the Legal Services Manager.

16. Kilwinning: The New Penny Public House, Pennyburn Local Centre, Kilwinning

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on the proposed assignation of lease in respect of the New Penny Public House, Pennyburn Local Centre, Kilwinning.

The Committee agreed to approve the assignation of lease on terms and conditions provisionally agreed by the Legal Services Manager.

17. Kilwinning: 149 Main Street

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on a proposed assignation of lease in respect of shop property at 149 Main Street, Kilwinning.

The Committee agreed to approve the assignation of lease on terms and conditions provisionally agreed by the Legal Services Manager.

18. Saltcoats: The Ponds Development Site, Winton Circus

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on a proposed lease of The Ponds Development Site, Winton Circus, Saltcoats.

The Committee agreed (a) that, in consultation with the Chair, Vice-Chair and Mr. McNamara, the Legal Services Manager enter into negotiations with G. & T.H. Dawson regarding lease of the site; and (b) that subject to an appropriate proposal being submitted by G. & T.H. Dawson to authorise the Legal Services Manager in consultation with the Chair, Vice-Chair and local Member to approve the lease of the site.

19. Saltcoats: Ground Floor Flat at 12 Springvale Street

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on proposed disposal of ground floor flat at 12 Springvale Street, Saltcoats.

The Committee agreed to dispose of the property on terms and conditions provisionally agreed by the Legal Services Manager.

20. Saltcoats: Sub-Station Site at Dykesmains Primary School

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on the proposed acquisition of a former sub-station site at Dykesmains Primary School, Saltcoats.

The Committee agreed to approve the purchase of the former sub-station site on terms and conditions provisionally agreed by the Legal Services Manager.

21. Ardrossan: Former Social Work Office at 51 Princes Street

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on the proposed disposal of the former Social Work Office at 51 Princes Street, Ardrossan.

The Committee agreed to approve the disposal of the property on terms and conditions provisionally agreed by the Legal Services Manager.

22. Ardrossan: Former Seton Street Hall

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on the proposed disposal of the former Seton Street Hall, Ardrossan.

The Committee agreed to approve the disposal of the property on terms and conditions provisionally agreed by the Legal Services Manager.

23. Largs: Promenade Car Park: Lease for Viking Festival Fairground

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on a request to lease the promenade car park, Largs for the Viking Festival Fair between 27 August and 7 September 1997.

The Committee agreed that the Legal Services Manager consult with the operator of the fairground regarding alternative locations for the fair and thereafter report to the next meeting of North Ayrshire Council.

24. Arran: Travelling Persons Site at Merkland Bridge, Brodick

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on a proposed extension of the lease of the travelling persons site at Merkland Bridge, Brodick, Isle of Arran from the National Trust for Scotland.

The Committee agreed to approve the extension of lease on terms and conditions provisionally agreed by the Legal Services Manager.

The Meeting ended at 2.55 p.m.