

Corporate Strategy Committee
15 April 1997

Irvine, 15 April 1997 - At a 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, Samuel Gooding, Jane Gorman, James Jennings, Joseph McKinney, Robert Rae, Robert Reilly, John Sillars, George Steven and Samuel Taylor.

In Attendance

The Chief Executive; The Directors of Financial Services, Education, and Community and Recreational Services; The Head of Corporate Business; The Legal Services Manager; The Information Technology Services Manager; M Peffer, Principal Officer (Marketing and Publicity); A Osborne, Corporate Policy Officer; and J Bannatyne, Administration Officer (Chief Executive).

Chair

Mr Clements in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

Jack Carson and David O'Neill.

1. Minutes Confirmed

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 4 March 1997, copies of which had previously been circulated, were confirmed.

2. General Building Maintenance Contracts: Housing and Excluding Housing

(a) Tender Evaluation

Submitted report by the Architectural Services Manager on the proposed establishment of tender evaluation as part of the CCT process and the adoption of a Tender Evaluation Model for General Building Repair and Maintenance Contracts (Housing and Non-Housing).

Local authorities are required as part of the CCT tendering process to invite tenders for contracts for functional work, of which General Building Repairs and Maintenance form part.

The Government requires that a proper and open evaluation of all bids be undertaken giving due weight to such matters as quality and price.

The report proposed that in evaluating a tender a scoring system representing a weighting of 80% to financial considerations and 20% to non-financial be used. Each tender received will be evaluated by a panel of officers and thereafter a report submitted to the Committee.

The Committee agreed (a) to approve and adopt the Tender Evaluation Model documents in respect of Housing and Excluding Housing in the terms indicated in the report as part of the Council's former tender evaluation process; and (b) otherwise to note the requirements for the formal evaluation of all tenders received for future General Building Repair and Maintenance

contracts.

(b) Selection of Contractors

Submitted report by the Architectural Services Manager giving details of approved contractors who would be eligible to be invited to submit tenders for the General Building Maintenance Contracts for North Ayrshire Council.

The Council, as part of the CCT process, is required to select a number of contractors who, having expressed a desire to tender for the Council's General Building Maintenance work are considered capable of undertaking the work involved. The Council are required to select a minimum of three contractors in addition to its own Direct Service Team. Seven companies have expressed a wish to be permitted to tender for the work covered by the General Building Maintenance Contracts in respect of Housing and Non-Housing and a further two companies expressed an interest in the Non-Housing contract only.

The Committee agreed that the Council invite tenders for the General Building Maintenance contracts in respect of Housing and Non-Housing from the following contractors:-

- (i) Morris and Spottiswood;
- (ii) Mowlem Building Maintenance;
- (iii) Chatterton (Building Services) Ltd;
- (iv) Robison and Davidson Ltd; and
- (v) North Ayrshire Council Commercial Services Directorate.

3. Replacement of Council Tax, Benefits and Rents Systems

Submitted report by the Information Technology Services Manager on the evaluation of bids to provide replacement systems for Unified Benefits, Council Tax and Housing Rents. After full and detailed consideration by the relevant Directorates it was proposed that CFM: First Software be awarded the contract for the supply, delivery, installation and implementation of hardware, software and associated support services.

The Committee agreed these proposals and authorised the Information Technology Services Manager to commence negotiations to achieve full implementation by March 1998 within the approved budget.

4. Further Education College Development in North Ayrshire

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the progress of developments in relation to the provision of further education in North Ayrshire.

On 10 April 1997 Ayr and Kilmarnock Colleges made a presentation to the Council's Working Group to provide more information on their business plans.

As a result of these presentations the Working Group will now require to assess the relative benefits of all three proposals for the Three Towns and for North Ayrshire as a whole. Given the timescale for the submission of applications for European Funding a special meeting of the Corporate Strategy Committee will be required to allow the final decision as to what FE provision is to be provided in North Ayrshire.

The Committee agreed (a) that a further report on this matter be submitted to a Special Meeting of the Corporate Strategy Committee on 7 May 1997; and (b) otherwise to note the position.

5. Arran Bus Services

(Previous Minute Reference: Corporate Strategy Committee 4 March 1997.)

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the current progress on action being taken in pursuit of future bus service provision on Arran.

As part of its ongoing investigations into the possibility of introducing local authority run bus services on Arran, the Special Sub-Committee has met representatives of the Traffic Commissioners to advise them of the Council's proposals and to seek their views and visited Dumfries and Galloway Council to view their services and to discuss their local authority run services.

An application for a Public Service Vehicle operators licence has been prepared and is being submitted to the Traffic Commissioners.

The report gave details of the implications for the Council should it decide to pursue and ultimately provide a local authority run bus service on Arran. A full financial plan is being put together to determine the comparative benefits of purchasing/leasing vehicles and assessments require to be made as to whether the Council should pursue the provision of a school service only or the provision of a combined schools and local service. Consultations are continuing with the Traffic Commissioners and Strathclyde Passenger Transport.

The Committee agreed to remit with powers to the Special Sub-Committee to pursue all necessary action in relation to securing future bus service provision on Arran, including as necessary (a) the preparation and submission of an appropriate tender on behalf of the Council; (b) the lease/purchase of vehicles; and (c) arrangements to secure garage premises and drivers.

6. Service Strategy for Community and Recreational Services

Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on the proposed framework for a Community and Recreational Services Strategy.

When the draft Strategy is complete, each service area within the Directorate will produce individual development plans which will be in line with the Strategy aims, objectives and key issues and will clearly set out action plans and targets. Details of the proposed Strategy document format and framework were provided, including the aims and objectives of the Strategy and a proposed timetable for the production of a draft Consultation Strategy document.

The Committee agreed (a) to approve the framework for the Community and Recreational Services Strategy as detailed in the report; and (b) to remit to the Community and Recreational Services Committee to consider the report.

7. North Ayrshire Law Centre: Urban Programme Funded Project

(Previous Minute Reference: Corporate Strategy Committee 4 March 1997.)

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the progress of the North Ayrshire Law Centre Project to date, its financial position and future proposals for its management.

The Law Centre has now moved into new premises at Unit 14, Ardrossan Business Centre, Glasgow Street, Ardrossan and all necessary resources and equipment are in place. The Law Centre opened to the public on 14 April 1997.

The Law Centre Management Committee has now expanded its membership to include representatives of other relevant voluntary organisations and a representative of the local Legal Faculty.

The Committee agreed (a) that the Council's continued support for this project be conditional on further changes in the composition of the Management Committee to allow for the appointment of (i) three Elected Members of the Council to be appointed by the Three Towns Area Committee and the Three Towns Area Community Development Officer from Community and Recreational Services; and (ii) to allow further invitations to be extended to the Three Towns

Disability Forum and Cunninghame Women's Aid; (b) that arrangements for the supervision of the project be amended to provide joint supervision from (i) the Social Work Directorate, through its Area Services Manager (Three Towns); and (ii) the Chief Executive's Directorate through a representative of the Legal Services Department; and (c) that a further progress report be submitted to the next Committee and quarterly reports be submitted thereafter.

8. *Cunninghame Women's Aid*

Submitted joint report by the Directors of Housing Services and Social Work on a joint assessment on the work of Cunninghame Women's Aid including a recommendation for the future funding of the organisation.

Prior to 1994/95 Cunninghame Women's Aid was funded equally by the former Cunninghame District Council Housing Department and the former Strathclyde Regional Council Social Work Department. In 1995/96 £30,300 was contributed over and above the agreed budget level by the Housing Department for service development purposes. The Social Work Department was unwilling to meet 50% of the additional grant and did not support the development proposal. Similarly in 1996/97 the Housing Services Directorate of North Ayrshire Council funded a total of £185,500 which represented an additional £30,425 to the £155,075 allocated by the Social Work Directorate. On this occasion the Social Work Directorate did not contribute 50% of the additional grant which was once again for development purposes. The total grant for 1996/97 was £340,575 and the actual expenditure amounted to £341,606.

The Committee agreed (a) to authorise the immediate payment of a grant to Cunninghame Women's Aid amounting to £170,288 to cover the initial six months of the current financial year (April - September) to be funded equally by the Housing and Social Work Directorates; (b) that the Directors of Housing Services and Social Work jointly undertake a full review of the services of Cunninghame Women's Aid and report to the September meeting of the Committee; and (c) that payment of any further grant to Cunninghame Women's Aid will be dependent on the outcome of the review.

9. *Scottish Maritime Museum: Council of Trustees*

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on amendments to the nominating structure for the Scottish Maritime Museum Trust and on the implications of these amendments for North Ayrshire Council.

With the reorganisation of local government and the wind-up of Irvine Development Corporation the Trustees of the Scottish Maritime Museum agreed to revise the nominating structure for the Council of Trustees. The existing nominating structure has 33 places and the Trustees propose to increase the number of places to 36. Details were given on the 33 places within the existing nominating structure and on the 36 places on the proposed increased structure. The nominations of one place each from East and South Ayrshire Councils together with two from COSLA are to replace the nominees from Strathclyde Regional Council and Irvine Development Corporation.

The Committee agreed (a) to remit to the Community and Recreational Services Committee to nominate three members to represent North Ayrshire Council on the Scottish Maritime Museum Trust; and (b) to seek to ensure that the Directors of Financial Services and Community and Recreational Services be appointed to the Trust.

10. *Education Out of Doors*

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on amendments required to the current Health and Safety Circulars to comply with the requirements of the Activity Centres (Young Persons Safety) Act 1995. The overall aim of the Act is to improve safety and ensure that all reasonable steps have been taken by providers to limit the risk to participants.

The Council currently operates a number of different policies and procedures. A standard

set of policies and procedures with a single authority licence requires to be established and could be issued by the Health and Safety Division in the form of a controlled document. A comprehensive review of all policies and procedures in respect of Education Out of Doors is necessary to ensure compliance with current legislative requirements.

The Committee agreed (a) to approve the amendments to The Revised Standard Circular No 53, The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 in relation to hillwalking, as detailed in the report; (b) that the revised document form a new North Ayrshire Council Excursion Policy which will eventually contain the complete review of Circulars 31, 33 and 48(b) Rev. and all departmental amendments; (c) that officers of the Council be advised to adhere to procedures contained in the revised document until a comprehensive review has been undertaken by the Council; and (d) that the Personnel Services Manager assess the additional resource implications of implementing the requirements of the Act and report to a future meeting.

11. *Garnock Valley Youth Issues Team*

Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on a proposal to establish a Garnock Valley Youth Issues Team in which a member of the Council is invited to participate.

The Youth Issues Team is to be formed in the Garnock Valley as part of the Community and Recreational Service Directorates response to the needs of young people.

The report highlighted that the recently established drop-in centres in the Garnock Valley have to date also had a significant impact in addressing Youth Issues.

It is proposed that the Team comprises two Police Officers, two Youth Workers, one Housing Officer, one Health Promotion or other Health Specialist, a representative of the voluntary sector, the Guidance Department of the local secondary school; a representative of the Social Work Directorate, an elected member of the Council and a group of six/eight young people.

The Committee agreed (a) to welcome the formation of the Garnock Valley Youth Issues Team; and (b) that Councillor Robert Reilly be appointed to join the team.

12. *'Women Working Together' Conference*

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the outcome of the Council's "Women Working Together" Conference.

On 7 March 1997 the first North Ayrshire Women's Conference was held in Vikingar on the theme of "Women Working Together: Building Networks and Sharing Skills". The conference was aimed at women of all ages and backgrounds including women from voluntary organisations and community groups and over 170 delegates attended and participated in the various workshops available. The issues identified ranged from those concerning personal safety and education to health and childcare. To enable these issues to be further considered it is proposed that each Directorate of the Council be invited to nominate an employee to participate on a Women's Network for Employees.

The Committee (a) agreed that a Women's Network for female employees be established to identify and address significant issues for women in North Ayrshire; and (b) noted the success of the conference.

13. *Highlands and Islands European Partnership*

Submitted report by the Head of Corporate Business on an offer to the Council to participate in the Highlands and Islands European Partnership.

The Convention of the Highlands and Islands has developed as part of its activities, links to Europe via the Highlands and Islands European Partnership which is funded predominantly by the

Highlands and Islands Councils with the exception of Moray and North Ayrshire Councils. The Highlands and Islands European Partnership have offered North Ayrshire Council the opportunity to participate in the European Partnership. A contribution has been requested towards the running costs of the Partnership.

The Committee agreed (a) to accept the offer to participate in the Highlands and Islands European Partnership; and (b) to advise the Partnership that the level of fee which the Council would be prepared to pay is £1,500.

14. North Ayrshire Review Group: Young People in Trouble

Submitted a joint report by the Directors of Social Work and Education on the establishment of a Review Group to consider North Ayrshire Council's corporate approach to Young People in Trouble.

In 1986 the Education and Social Work Committees of Strathclyde Regional Council established a Joint Officers Working Group to examine the Authority's strategies for responding to the needs of young people in trouble. The Group published a report in 1988 which has played a significant role in shaping policy over the past nine years.

It is proposed that a Joint Review Group be established comprising representatives from the Education and Social Work Directorates and the Reporter's Office to examine such issues as school support for difficult children, the operation of Joint Assessment Teams, the education of children being looked after by the Social Work Directorate, and the assessing and funding of specialist day and residential provision for troubled young people.

The Committee agreed (a) to approve the establishment of a North Ayrshire Council Review Group of Young People in Trouble; and (b) that the Director of Social Work submit a report on the outcome of the Review Group's deliberations to a future meeting.

15. Area Committees

(a) North Coast and Arran Area Committee

Submitted the annexed report (Appendix CS1) of the North Coast and Arran Area Committee, being the Minutes of its Meeting held on 27 March 1997.

The Committee agreed to note the report.

(b) Garnock Valley Area Committee

Submitted the annexed report (Appendix CS2) of the Garnock Valley Area Committee, being the Minutes of its Meeting held on 1 April 1997.

The Committee agreed to note the report.

(c) Kilwinning, Dreghorn and Springside Area Committee

Submitted the annexed report (Appendix CS3) of the Kilwinning, Dreghorn and Springside Area Committee, being the Minutes of its Meeting held on 2 April 1997.

The Committee agreed to note the report.

(d) Irvine Area Committee

Submitted the annexed report (Appendix CS4) of the Irvine Area Committee, being the Minutes of its Meeting held on 2 April 1997.

Arising from the Minutes, the undernoted matters were brought to the attention of the

Committee:-

(i) Agenda Item 2(b) (iii): Monitoring Reports: Planning, Roads and Environment: Investigation of Noise Complaints

The Committee agreed that Strathclyde Police and the Director of Planning, Roads and Environment liaise in relation to noise nuisance complaints throughout North Ayrshire, where appropriate;

(ii) Agenda Item 3: Community Development Grants Budget for Area Committees 1997

The Committee agreed that clarification be sought on the possible provision of additional funding from the North Ayrshire Regeneration Partnership to the Community Grants budget and a further report be submitted to the next meeting;

(iii) Agenda Item 6: Roads Management and Maintenance Revenue Budget Programme

The Committee agreed that the Head of Roads supply members of the Council with details of medium to long-term utility work being carried out in their wards as appropriate;

The Committee further agreed otherwise to note the report.

(e) Three Towns Area Committee

Submitted the annexed report (Appendix CS5) of the Three Towns Area Committee, being the Minutes of its Meeting held on 3 April 1997.

The Committee agreed to note the report.

16. Request for Financial Assistance

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on requests received for financial assistance:-

(i) The Scottish Council for Civil Liberties

The Committee agreed to award The Scottish Council for Civil Liberties £2,781;

(ii) The Scottish Low Pay Unit

The Committee agreed to award The Scottish Low Pay Unit £3,629;

(iii) Friends of the Earth Scotland

The Committee agreed to award Friends of the Earth Scotland £770;

(iv) Safe Energy Unit

The Committee agreed to award the Safe Energy Unit £100;

(v) West of Scotland Community Relations Council

The Committee agreed to award the West Of Scotland Community Relations Council £1,600;

(vi) Children in Scotland

The Committee agreed to award Children in Scotland £1,665;

(vii) The Poverty Alliance

The Committee agreed to award The Poverty Alliance £4,000;

(viii) Scottish Refugee Council

The Committee agreed to award the Scottish Refugee Council £2,700; and

(ix) HOPE (Helping Offenders Prisoners Families)

The Committee agreed to refuse the application.

17. Urgent Items

The Chair agreed to deal with the following item as a matter of urgency.

18. Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland

(Previous Minute Reference: Corporate Strategy Committee 4 March 1997.)

The Committee was advised that the provisional proposals for a 31 ward structure had been prepared and were available for inspection. The Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland has advised the Council that its proposals must be submitted as a matter of urgency.

The Committee agreed (a) that members submit their final comments on the proposals to the Chief Executive by Noon on 21 April 1997; and (b) that the Chief Executive thereafter immediately forward the finalised proposals for the 31 wards to the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland.

The meeting ended at 2.40 p.m.