

North Ayrshire Council
7 April 1998

Irvine, 7 April 1998 - Minutes of the Meeting of North Ayrshire Council held in the Council Chambers, Cunninghame House, Irvine on Tuesday 7 April 1998 at 5.00 p.m.

Present

George Steven, John Donn, Thomas Barr, Patrick Browne, Jack Carson, Ian Clarkson, Stewart Dewar, David Gallagher, Samuel Gooding, Jane Gorman, Margaret Highet, James Jennings, Joseph McKinney, Peter McNamara, David Munn, Margaret Munn, Alan Munro, Irene Oldfather, David O'Neill, Robert Rae, Robert Reilly, Gena Seales and Richard Wilkinson.

In Attendance

The Chief Executive; the Directors of Education, Financial Services, Housing Services and Planning, Roads and Environment, Community and Recreational Services, Commercial Services; the Head of Corporate Business; the Personnel Services Manager; the Architectural Services Manager; the Legal Services Manager; the Head of Planning and Development (Social Work); the Media Relations Officer and the Principal Officer (Policy/Administration) (Chief Executive).

Chair

Mr. Steven in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

Thomas Dickie, John Sillars, Elliot Gray, Elizabeth McLardy, James Clements and Thomas Morris.

1. Minutes Confirmed

The Minutes of the (a) the Meeting of the Council held on 24 February 1998; and (b) the Special Meeting of the Council held on 5 March 1998 were confirmed.

2. Minister for Local Government and Housing

The Convener welcomed to the meeting Mr. Calum MacDonald, the Minister for Local Government and Housing, and invited him to address the Council.

Mr. MacDonald thanked the Council for the invitation to the meeting which is part of a tour which he is making of all Local Authorities within Scotland. The Minister spoke of the aims and objectives of his tour which were to stress to Councils the principles of the Government and particularly the part which his office would play in carrying these out.

The principal targets were to ensure that we have a fair society within a democratic Scotland and that the economy becomes stronger. He stressed the importance of Councils adhering to the Best Value regime and confirmed that the Council's Best Value Implementation Plan, which had been submitted to the Scottish Office, had been approved which would allow the Council to proceed to the next stage of the programme.

Thereafter the Minister invited questions from the Members of the Council. The questions

raised by Members were on the following points:-

- (a) The Minister was asked for further elaboration on his statement that Councils should be enablers and not providers and how the Minister views the prospects for Local Government under a Scottish Parliament;
- (b) The Minister was asked about the necessary information which would be provided to the public on a single European currency;
- (c) The Minister was asked about the 'New Deal' and bringing people into jobs;
- (d) The Minister was asked about the ongoing debt of Council houses which have been sold;
- (e) The Minister was asked about the disposal of Scottish Homes stock; and
- (f) The Minister was asked about Best Value, capping and non-domestic rates.

In summary the Minister replied as follows:-

- (a) That Local Authorities should be aware that the delivery of services need not necessarily be by Authorities but that Authorities should have a large part in enabling those services to be delivered. Authorities should be assisted by Best Value in this.

The Minister stated that he did not wish to see the Scottish Parliament lead to centralisation but Local Authorities will be aware that the Scottish Parliament will be a powerful body and will inevitably change the Local Government environment.

- (b) The public will be widely informed about the implications of the single currency. This is supported in principle by the Government who wish to see it work.
- (c) The Minister stated that a framework was needed and that it would be necessary to balance resources.
- (d) The Minister agreed that it is not satisfactory that debts on Council houses should remain with existing tenants and that this matter would be addressed.
- (e) The Minister stated that he would wish to see Local Authorities working in partnership with appropriate Housing Associations so that tenants transferring are given adequate choice. He considered that good partnerships could be built through this route.
- (f) It is considered that Best Value is a more appropriate system than CCT as it removed the compulsory component. Best Value would ensure that there is continuous improvement and to this end the Accounts Commission will look at services to ensure that they are of good quality.

The Government will look at bringing an end to the existing capping system and will be consulting appropriate bodies on a suitable replacement. On non-domestic rates, the Government would wish to see local flexibility and accountability.

Thereafter the Convener, on behalf of the Council, thanked the Minister for his address and for responding to Members' questions. He took the opportunity of wishing the Minister well in his post.

3. Reports to the Committees

The annexed reports of Committees being the Minutes of their Meetings as undernoted were submitted, moved and seconded in terms of Standing Order No. 9 and were approved as follows:-

3 March 1998	Development Control Sub-Committee	1	-	4
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3 March 1998	Corporate Strategy Committee	5	-	42
10 March 1998	Education Committee	43	-	52
11 March 1998	Social Work Committee	53	-	60
12 March 1998	Housing Services Committee	61	-	88
17 March 1998	Community and Recreational Services Committee	89	-	95
18 March 1998	Infrastructure and Environment Services Committee	96	-	103
19 March 1998	Special Protective Services Committee	104	-	108
19 March 1998	Protective Services Committee	109	-	114
24 March 1998	Development Control Sub-Committee	119	-	123
24 March 1998	Support Services Committee	130	-	144
25 March 1998	*Commercial Services Committee	146	-	151

*** Commercial Services Committee: 25 March 1998**

Wheeled Bins: Pilot Scheme

The Vice-Chair of the Commercial Services Committee provided further up-to-date information in respect of item 6 on page 147 of the report.

Noted.

4. Authorisation of the Execution of Deeds on Behalf of North Ayrshire Council

The Council authorised in terms of Section 194(2) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 the execution of the following Deeds on behalf of the Council:-

FEU DISPOSITIONS by North Ayrshire Council in favour of the undernoted and with regard to the subjects shown:-

Ian and Margaret Jackson	63 Middlepart Crescent, Saltcoats
Richard Bell	44 Crammond Way, Irvine
Ronald and Vivien McPherson	7 Rubie Crescent, Irvine
Mr. and Mrs. J. Hughes	17 Mossend Avenue, Kilbirnie
Pamela Thomson and Gary Thomson	47 Hyslop Road, Stevenston
Mr. and Mrs. J. Stewart	5 Byrehill Avenue, Kilwinning

Mr. and Mrs. R. Kennedy	56 Church Street, Kilwinning
Mr. and Mrs. M. Hill	8 Marble Avenue, Dregghorn
Mr. and Mrs. J. Hunter	14 Muir Drive, Irvine
Grace Robinson	35 Finlay Avenue, Dalry
Marion Paton and Anne Paton	10 Tarbert Avenue, West Kilbride
Roy Millar and Sandra Phillips	2 Whitehope Green, Irvine
Mary Roy and Kenneth Stewart	57 Campbell Avenue, Stevenston
William Watters and Elizabeth Collins	4 Greenwood Road, Dregghorn
Stephen McDowall	18 Tiree Court, Dregghorn
Mr. and Mrs. F. Frew	20 Hawkhill Place, Stevenston
Suzanne Brooke	Auchenben, Auchengate
Elizabeth McGinlay	6 Glencairn Terrace, Stevenston
Mark and Deborah Reid	4 Kenilworth Drive, Saltcoats
James and Mat Glass	31 Katrine Place, Irvine
Mr. and Mrs. J. Goodridge	55 Sinclair Drive, Largs
Cunninghame Housing Association Ltd.	Area of Ground at The Riggs, Stevenston

LEASE between North Ayrshire Council in favour of the undernoted and with regard to the subjects shown:-

Little Cumbrae Estate Ltd.	Storage Shed at Millport Pier, Little Cumbrae
Church of Scotland General Trustees	
Church of Scotland General Trustees	
Laciok Investments Ltd.	45 Townhead, Irvine
Office Bearers and Trustees of Bourtreehill Credit Union	The Community House, 10 Blairdenon Way, Irvine

AGREEMENT between North Ayrshire Council and Samuel McPherson and Mrs. Christine Elizabeth McPherson S19 Agreement at 31 and 33 Katrine Place, Irvine.

DISPOSITION by North Ayrshire Council in favour of the undernoted and with regard to the subjects shown:-

Henry Kennedy McLauchlan, Alexander Mathieson Welsh and John Turnbull	Millport Golf Club, Golf Road, Millport
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MINUTE OF SUB-LEASE with North Ayrshire Council and Ravenseft Properties Ltd. in favour of Ayrshire and Arran Tourist Board, 338 square metres of ground east of New Street, Irvine.

MINUTE OF WAIVER by North Ayrshire Council in favour of Envirotank (Irvine) Ltd., 0.43 hectares or thereby at Murdoch Place, Oldhall West Industrial Estate, Irvine.

DISCHARGE by North Ayrshire Council in favour of the undernoted and with regard to the subjects shown if applicable:-

Alexander Allison	1 Murchland Way, Crocus Grove, Irvine
Albert and Agnes Cullimore	14 Dalry Road, Kilwinning
Elaine Ellen Boyd	2 Wood Crescent, Kilwinning
William James McMaster	106 Fergushill Road, Kilwinning
George Hailey Scobie and Mrs. Theresa Millar Blyth or Scobie	25 Moorpark Road West, Stevenston
Balwinder Singh	
Miss Minnie Harris Earley	Dykesmains Cottage, 2 Dykesmains Road, Saltcoats

5. Best Value Implementation Plan

Submitted report by the Chief Executive detailing the Council's Best Value Implementation Plan.

The Secretary of State has already made a formal announcement that North Ayrshire Council had demonstrated the necessary commitment to and compliance with Best Value and consequently the Council would be granted continued exemption from CCT subject to final agreement on the Best Value Implementation Plan.

There are 2 elements to the plan being (a) a three year service review programme; and (b) and updated compliance plan.

The plan had already been submitted to the Scottish Office for agreement and the Council

noted that the Minister for Local Government and Housing earlier in the meeting had stated that the plan had been approved.

The service review programme will involve approximately 120 reviews over a three year period and will have significant resource implications for the Council.

It is recognised that initially internal facilitators would have little or no service review experience and there will therefore be a need for initial external support. It is estimated that the cost for such support would be £40,000 which should be met from each Directorate's training and development budget.

It is also proposed that a Seminar be held to advise the Trade Unions of the service review programme.

The Council (a) noted that the Scottish Office have approved the Council's Best Value Implementation Plan; (b) agreed to approve the proposals for external assistance with regard to service reviews; and (c) agreed to hold a Seminar for the Trade Unions on the service review programme.

The meeting ended at 6.20 p.m.