

Commercial Services Committee  
18 December 1996

**Irvine, 18 December 1996** - At a Meeting of the Commercial Services Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

**Present**

Thomas Dickie, Peter McNamara, James Clements, Joseph McKinney, Irene Olfather, Gena Seales, George Steven and Samuel Taylor.

**In Attendance**

The Director of Commercial Services; N McCallum, Head of Commercial Support; J Kelly, Operations Manager; P Hamilton, Health Promotions Manager; R Beckett, Senior Administration Officer (Personnel) (Commercial Services); J Hair, Principal Officer (Budgeting and Accountancy) (Financial Services); and J Bannatyne, Administration Officer (Chief Executive).

**Chair**

Mr Dickie in the Chair.

**Apologies for Absence**

John Donn and Robert Rae.

**1. Minutes Confirmed**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 November 1996, copies of which had previously been circulated, were confirmed.

**2. Tenders for Vehicles Etc. 1996/97**

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services giving details of the tenders received, the successful tenderers and the continuing progress of the third phase of the Replacement Vehicles Programme 1996/97.

Noted.

**3. Public Conveniences: Loo of the Year Awards 1996**

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services giving details of two awards made to the Council in respect of entries to the Loo of the Year Awards Competition for 1996.

Five public conveniences were submitted by the Council in the 1996 Loo of the Year Awards Competition and the Council received awards in respect of the public conveniences at Rivergate and The Mall, Irvine. The presentation ceremony was held on 10 December 1996 at Prestonpans with the Council being represented by two employees.

The Committee agreed (a) to congratulate the staff involved on their achievements in gaining these awards; and (b) to homologate the decision of the Director of Commercial Services in relation to the attendance of two staff at the presentation ceremony.

#### **4. Nobel House: Canteen Facilities**

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services on discussions with Carlton Catering Group Limited on the future proposals for catering facilities at Nobel House.

The subsidy required by the catering group is £15,000 per annum. They have agreed to refurbish the existing canteen facility at a cost to them of approximately £5,000. The Council's own Works Section have been given the opportunity to tender for this work if necessary. The Director of Commercial Services has asked the Group to submit to the Council in writing, a formal proposal outlining the full terms of the agreement. The Director of Commercial Services has recommended that the Council proceed with this proposal in order to provide adequate catering/canteen facilities to the Commercial Services Directorate in Nobel House.

The Committee agreed (a) to approve the proposal to set up catering/canteen facilities at Nobel House in the terms indicated in the report; and (b) that the provision of £15,000 be included in the Draft 1997/98 Revenue Estimates.

#### **5. Quality Management System Registration**

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services on action proposed to seek registration for all services within the Commercial Services Directorate.

Existing documentation transferred from Strathclyde Regional Council has been partly re-written to be incorporated in the new Quality Management System and it will be possible to retain transferred registrations as single registrations or possibly as part of a single registration.

The Commercial Services Directorate propose to proceed to a programme of implementation of Quality Management System Registration for all services provided by the Directorate, including Corporate Registration. All services subjected to the CCT process will require to obtain Quality Management System Registration in order to compete in the next round of re-tendering. It is anticipated that the timescale for the completion of the programme will be two years. There is no Quality Manager within the Directorate's structure and the responsibility and management of the current registration is carried out by the operational Heads of Departments and the Head of Commercial Support. The assistance of a Quality Management Consultant is required on a part-time basis to provide the Directorate with appropriate guidance on the processes to be undertaken within the proposed programme. The estimated costs of such provision are £15,000 per annum for a period of two years commencing April 1997.

The Committee agreed (a) to approve the Directorate's proposals to continue to seek registration for all its services; and (b) that the provision of £15,000 be included in the Draft Revenue Estimates for 1997/98 and that consideration be given to similar provision in the Revenue Estimates for 1998/99.

#### **6. Alpha Cards: Cashless School Meals System**

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services on the progress made in relation to the introduction and operation of the Cashless School Meals System within North Ayrshire.

The alpha card or cashless school meals system was identified as a pilot scheme to be operated within North Ayrshire and details were given of its social and operational objectives. Three academies, namely Irvine Royal, St Michael's and Ardrossan, were initially identified to operate the system which commenced on 3 October, 22 November and 25 November 1996 at the three schools respectively. The introduction and operation of the system has been met with a positive feedback from teaching staff, pupils and catering staff. It is proposed to invite the Committee to an open day to be held in Irvine Royal Academy in January 1997 to view the scheme in operation. The Council will require to determine in the future whether expansion of the scheme is desirable.

The Committee agreed (a) to welcome the success of the scheme; and (b) that a more

detailed financial and operational report be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee.

## **7. E-Coli 0157 Outbreak**

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services on the action taken by the Catering and Cleaning Section with regard to the recent food poisoning outbreak related to E-Coli 0157.

In view of the recent serious outbreak of food poisoning relating to the E-Coli 0157 within North Lanarkshire, correspondence has been issued to all Catering Managers and Senior Catering Assistants consisting of a ten point plan issued by the Scottish Office concerning cooked meat production guidelines. Details of the ten point plan were given in the report. Confirmation had also been received that none of the Council's suppliers have ever received produce from the firm alleged to have been involved in the outbreak. Although the necessary procedures had already been in place, re-training of all Catering Managers/staff will be initiated in the coming weeks with regard to hazard analysis, critical control points and environmental health guidelines. New staff will also receive appropriate training.

Noted.

## **8. Frost Protection Procedures**

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services on frost protection procedures within educational establishments.

As a result of the damage caused to educational establishments by the severe weather conditions last year a frost protection procedure has been formalised in consultation with the Architectural Services Department and the Education Directorate and details of the procedure were provided in the report

Noted.

## **9. Healthy Eating: 3-2-1- "Keep Your Balance"**

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services on work being carried out to promote a healthy diet to the children of North Ayrshire.

The former Catering Manager at Irvine Royal Academy has been seconded to the Commercial Services Directorate to promote healthy eating within Education, Social Work and office locations. The "Diet Action Plan for Scotland" has made recommendations to the catering industry and has specific objectives which it hopes can be achieved by the year 2005. The 3-2-1- promotion in primary schools reinforces these targets by highlighting that a healthy meal would consist of three parts carbohydrate, two parts fruit and vegetables and only one part protein and also emphasises that fat, sugar and salt should be reduced overall. Pupils and teachers have been given details of the 3-2-1-menu concept and presentations have also been made to teachers, parents and pupils promoting the benefits of healthy eating. On-site training has been completed with catering staff to enable them to encourage and promote healthy eating.

After six months a review of the scheme will be carried out and from this a long-term strategy plan will be produced which relates to healthy eating within North Ayrshire.

The Committee welcomed this initiative within schools and acknowledged the ongoing role which the Council can play in promoting healthy eating throughout the general population.

The Committee agreed (a) that reports on the progress of the 3-2-1- scheme be submitted to each meeting of the Committee over the six-month period of the campaign; (b) that the scheme be reviewed after six months with a view to producing a Strategy Plan to promote healthy eating; and (c) to recommend to the Corporate Strategy Committee that it be remitted to appropriate Officers to investigate and report on the work currently being undertaken to promote a healthy diet generally and

what further efforts might be introduced to ensure promotion to as wide an audience as possible.

#### **10. Irvine Development Corporation: Housing Stock**

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services on the arrangements made by the Building and Works Section to ensure the smooth transfer of housing maintenance.

The Works Section of the Commercial Services Directorate is now responsible for the maintenance repairs of the housing stock which was transferred from Irvine Development Corporation. In order to ensure the smooth transition the Section has agreed rates with the private contractors who were responsible to the Corporation for the maintenance of the housing stock, to carry out work until February 1997. It is the Works Section's intention to phase out the use of contractors by February 1997 other than specialised contractors. During this period any problems which arise will be identified to the Client Department for their consideration which will ensure that any inconvenience to the tenants is limited.

Noted.

#### **11. Absence Management Within the Commercial Services Directorate**

Mr R Beckett, the Senior Administration Officer (Personnel) gave a presentation on Absence Management within the Commercial Services Directorate.

The Committee welcomed the presentation and noted the position.

The meeting ended at 2.45 p.m.