

Support Services Committee
11 February 1997

Irvine, 11 February 1997 - At a Meeting of the Support Services Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

Present

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

In Attendance

The Chief Executive, the Director of Financial Services, the Head of Corporate Business, the Personnel Services Manager, the Legal Services Manager, the Information Technology Services Manager, A. Main, Personnel Officer (Personnel Services) and B. Hannah, Administration Officer (Chief Executive).

Chair

Mr. O'Neill in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

James Clements.

1. Minutes Confirmed

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Support Services Committee held on 17 December 1996, 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 January 1997.

The Director of Financial Services reported on levels of outstanding debt issued to the Sheriff Officers for recovery.

Noted.

3. Corporate Information Technology Procurement Guidelines

Submitted report by the Information Technology Services Manager on the proposed introduction of a Corporate Information Technology Procurement Policy.

The introduction of a Procurement Policy would ensure consistency in the provision of all software and equipment purchased by the Council and resolve many of the current problems being experienced. It would:-

- a) ensure consistency with all purchases being made through the IT Services Helpdesk;
- b) ensure rationalisation in that the Council will, in general, purchase 1st tier equipment on the basis of value for money;
- c) allow the IT Services Department to deal with end of year financial spends; and
- d) allow the development of an agreement with the Authorities Buying Consortium in relation to the purchase of future computer equipment.

The Committee agreed to the introduction of the Corporate Information Technology

Procurement Policy as detailed in the report.

4. Social Work Directorate

(a) Court Based Social Work Services: Sheriff Court, Kilmarnock

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager on proposed amendments to Social Work Directorate staffing in relation to Court bases services at Kilmarnock Sheriff Court.

On 29 January 1997 the Social Work Committee agreed to provide a Court based social work service at the Sheriff Court, Kilmarnock subject to the approval of the staffing implications by the Support Services Committee.

The provision of such a service would require the appointment of a Social Worker (grade QSW) and a Clerical Assistant (grade GS1/2) with the costs associated being met from within the Scottish Office funding for Criminal Justice Services.

The Committee agreed to the revised establishment structure for Criminal Justice Services, Social Work Directorate by the appointment of (a) a Social Worker (grade QSW); and (b) a Clerical Assistant (grade GS1/2), both to be based at Kilmarnock Sheriff Court.

(b) Supervised Attendance Order Scheme

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager on the staffing implications in relation to the Social Work Directorate's Supervised Attendance Order Scheme.

On 29 January 1997 the Social Work Committee agreed, subject to the approval of the Support Services Committee in respect of the staffing implications, to operate a Supervised Attendance Order Scheme in partnership with APEX Scotland, a voluntary employment and training agency for offenders, ex-offenders and young people at risk. The full costs of the Supervised Attendance Order Scheme can be met by the Scottish Office Criminal Justice Services funding arrangements and in terms of staffing would require the appointment of a Supervised Attendance Officer (grade QSW) and a Clerical Assistant (grade GS1/2, 17.5 hours per week).

The Committee agreed to the revised establishment structure for the Criminal Justice Services, Social Work Directorate by the appointment of (a) a Supervised Attendance Officer (grade QSW); and (b) a Clerical Assistant (grade GS1/2, 17.5 hours per week), to operate the Supervised Attendance Order Scheme.

(c) Development of Community Services

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager on the staffing implications associated with the Social Work Directorate's Augmented Home Care Service Scheme within the Irvine area.

The Social Work Committee on 4 December 1996, agreed to the introduction of such a service subject to the approval of the Support Services Committee in relation to staffing implications.

The staffing implications involve the creation of a number of posts to work within the Home Care Support Service. The funding for the service is being made available by Ayrshire and Arran Health Board.

The Committee agreed to revise the establishment of the Social Work Directorate's Home Care Support Services to create the posts of (a) a Home Care Support Organiser on Grade APIV; (b) a Senior Home Care Support Worker on Grade MW5+; (c) 10 Home Care Support Workers on Grade MW5 together with additional sessional hours; and (d) a part-time Clerical Assistant on Grade GS1/2.

(d) Joint Day Care Services for Vulnerable Elderly

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager on the staffing implications in relation to

the Social Work Directorate's Joint Day Care Services for the Vulnerable Elderly.

The staffing costs associated with the project will be met by Ayrshire and Arran Health Board on an annual recurring basis with the Health Board also being responsible for the necessary start-up costs associated with the project.

The Committee agreed to revise the establishment of the Social Work Directorate's Joint Day Care Services to create the posts of (a) a Senior Care Officer on Grade AP1; (b) 2 Care Officers on Grade GS1/2; (c) a part-time driver on Grade MW4; (d) a part-time Clerical Assistant on Grade GS1/2; and (e) a part-time Occupational Therapist and Therapist Assistant on Grades COT and OTA respectively.

(e) Addiction Centre Project, Vernon Street, Saltcoats: Project Leader Regrading

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager on the proposed regrading of the Project Leader at the Addiction Centre, Vernon Street, Saltcoats.

In August 1995 Strathclyde Regional Council considered a report on the staffing implications for Addiction Services and agreed that the Project Leader at the Addiction Centre, Vernon Street, Saltcoats be graded AP5/PO2 and the Project Leader at Townhead Addiction Centre, Irvine be graded PO2. It has now been established that the workload at both Centres is similar and it is therefore proposed to regrade the Project Leader's post at the Vernon Centre, Saltcoats to the same salary level as the post at Townhead Centre, Irvine.

The Committee agreed to regrade the post of Project Leader at the Vernon Centre from AP5/PO2 to PO2.

(f) Closure of Warner Street Children's Unit

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager on a decision of the Social Work Committee on 29 January 1997 to close the Warner Street Children's Unit.

The decision to close the Children's Unit will have staffing implications which the Director of Social Work will require to discuss with the Trade Unions. A further report will be submitted to the Support Services Committee, if appropriate, detailing the outcome of these negotiations.

Noted.

5. Commercial Services Directorate: Staffing Establishment - Cemetery Services

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager on proposed alterations to the staffing establishment within the Commercial Services Directorate in respect of the Cemeteries operation.

On 21 January 1997 the Corporate Strategy Committee agreed to a number of measures to improve cemetery operations including, subject to the approval of the Support Services Committee, the establishment of a new post of Cemetery Services Manager (grade PO10) and the redesignation and regrading of the Cemetery Officer's post (grade APIV) to Assistant Cemetery Services Manager (grade APV/PO1).

The Committee agreed to amend the staffing establishment of the Commercial Services Directorate by (a) the creation of a Cemetery Services Manager post (grade PO10); and (b) the redesignation and regrading of the Cemetery Officer's post (grade APIV) to Assistant Cemetery Services Manager (grade APV/PO1).

6. Provision of Independent Financial Advice to Council Employees

Submitted joint report by the Director of Financial Services and the Personnel Services Manager on proposals for the provision of a financial advisory service to employees.

The provision of such a service would allow employees access to an independent financial advice service to assist with financial issues. It is proposed that the Council invite interest from appropriate independent companies and that thereafter the Director of Financial Services along with the Personnel Services Manager, interview suitable candidates and submit recommendations to the Committee. The Council will receive no income or commission nor will they give any warranty as to the financial advice obtained or accept liability for any loss incurred as a result of such advice.

After discussion, the Committee agreed that the Director of Financial Services and the Personnel Services Manager submit a report to a future meeting of the Committee detailing recommendations with regard to the employment of 2 independent financial advisory agencies following completion of the selection process.

7. Politically Restricted Posts

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager detailing a proposed list of politically restricted posts within North Ayrshire Council.

The Local Government and Housing Act, 1989 requires Councils to prepare and maintain a list of politically restricted posts where they fall within criteria as defined in the Act relating to:-

- a) posts with a designation in the restricted category;
- b) posts where remuneration is equal to or greater than APT & C spinal column point 44; and/or
- c) posts of a sensitive nature.

The Committee agreed to approve the list of politically restricted posts as detailed in the report.

8. 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 nationally on certain conditions of service issues relating to (a) distant islands allowance and first aid allowance for certain categories of staff; and (b) the rates of pay for heating, venting and the domestic engineering industry.

The Committee agreed to approve the report and implement the condition of service circulars as detailed in the report.

9. Moorpark Training Unit

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager on a proposed partial restructuring of the Training Unit programme.

North Ayrshire Council contribute £260,000 per annum to the Moorpark Training Unit facility although the main funder of the Unit is Enterprise Ayrshire. Other sources of income to the Unit are generated through trainee work placements in private sector organisations and charges for project work undertaken for various organisations within North Ayrshire.

Enterprise Ayrshire's funding allocation from Scottish Enterprise for 1997/98 has been reduced by 0.5% and the Council have been advised that there will be changes in the funding arrangements for all youth and adult training schemes for the next financial year.

In light of this a review of the training programmes operated at Moorpark has been undertaken. Most programmes result in a qualification, but the painting and decorating and work experience programme is aimed at social need and targeted towards elderly people. Discontinuing the programme would allow the Training Unit to focus on courses which lead to qualifications.

After discussion, the Committee agreed (a) that the painting and decorating programme at the Training Unit be discontinued; (b) that trainees currently engaged on the programme be transferred to other training units programmes which would lead to SVQ outcomes; (c) that the staff employed on

the programme be given the opportunity of taking up the Council's offer of early retirement compensation scheme on a voluntary basis or transferring to other programmes within the Unit; (d) that the Director of Social Work be requested to investigate the adoption of a painting and decorating programme in the Supervised Attendance Order Scheme on a social needs basis; and (e) that the Personnel Services Manager submit a report on the functions of Moorpark House to a future meeting of the Committee.

10. Irvine: Heatherhouse Road Industrial Estate: Units 52 and 52 Second Avenue

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on the proposed sale of units 52 and 53 Second Avenue, Irvine.

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

11. Irvine: Land at Ayr Road: Harry Fairbairn Limited

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on a review of rent of land leased to Harry Fairbairn Limited at Ayr Road, Irvine.

The Committee agreed to approve the terms provisionally agreed by the Legal Services Manager.

12. Irvine: Fencedyke Farm

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on an application for the purchase of land and Minute of Waiver in respect of land at Fencedyke Farm, Irvine.

The Committee agreed, subject consultations with Mr. O'Neill and Mr. Dewar, to approve the disposal of land and Minute of Waiver on terms and conditions provisionally agreed by the Legal Services Manager.

13. Stevenston: Moorpark Place: Block 3: Scott Engineering

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on a review of rent in respect of premises at Block 3, Moorpark Place, Stevenston.

The Committee agreed to approve the terms provisionally agreed by the Legal Services Manager.

14. Ardrossan: Shop Property at 31 Glasgow Street: Mr. James Horne

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on an application for a Minute of Waiver in respect of property at 31 Glasgow Street, Ardrossan.

The Committee agreed to approve the terms and conditions provisionally agreed by the Legal Services Manager.

15. Ardrossan: Area of Ground Next to 95 Greenacres

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on the proposed sale of an area of land adjacent to 95 Greenacres, Ardrossan.

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

16. Ardrossan: Shop Property at 6 Central Avenue

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on an application for the lease of shop property at 6 Central Avenue, Ardrossan.

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

17. Kilbirnie: Electricity Sub-Station Site off Causeyfoot Drive

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on a rent review in respect of the electricity sub-station off Causeyfoot Drive, Kilbirnie.

The Committee agreed to approve the terms provisionally agreed by the Legal Services Manager.

18. Largs: Gateside Street: Former Gas Works Site

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on the proposed acquisition of the former gasworks site, Gateside Street, Largs.

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

19. Millport: Incinerator Site, Golf Road

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on the proposed sale of the derelict incinerator site at Golf Road, Millport.

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

20. Millport: Shed at Millport Pier

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on the proposed lease of a shed at Millport Pier to Little Cumbrae Estate.

The Committee agreed to approve the terms and conditions provisionally agreed by the Legal Services Manager subject to Little Cumbrae Estate vacating the office building on Millport Pier.

21. Urgent Items

The Chair agreed that the undernoted item be considered as a matter of urgency.

22. Capital Programme 1997/98

Submitted report by the Head of Corporate Business detailing priority items for inclusion in the 1997/98 Capital Programme in relation to:-

- financial systems;
- information technology systems;
- legal services;
- personnel services; and
- corporate business.

The Committee agreed (a) to approve the prioritised capital programme as detailed in the

report and (b) to refer the submission to the Corporate Strategy Committee.

23. Exclusion of Public

Resolved, in terms of Section 50(A)4 of The Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude from the meeting the press and the public for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1, 6 and 9 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

24. Irvine: Land at Merryvale Roundabout and McKinlay Crescent

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on the proposed sale of land at Merryvale Road and McKinlay Crescent.

The Committee agreed subject to suitable conditions being agreed to dispose of the land on terms agreed by the Legal Services Manager.

25. Chief Executive's Directorate: Early Retirement

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager on an application for voluntary early retirement.

The Committee agreed to approve the application

The Meeting ended at 3.00 p.m.