

Corporate Strategy Committee  
27 September 1996

**Irvine, 27 September 1996** - At a Special Meeting of the Corporate Strategy Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 10.00 a.m.

**Present**

James Clements, Jack Carson, Stewart Dewar, David Gallagher, Jane Gorman, James Jennings, Joseph McKinney, Thomas Morris, Robert Rae, Robert Reilly and John Sillars. Also present Margaret Highet, David Munn, Margaret Munn and Irene Oldfather.

**In Attendance**

The Chief Executive; The Director of Commercial Services; The Head of Corporate Business; The Legal Services Manager; A Herbert, Head of Accountancy Services (Financial Services); B Gardner, Head of Resource Services, (Education); M Hewitt, Corporate Policy Officer, J Bannatyne, Administration Officer and C Graham, Assistant Administration Officer (Chief Executive). Also attending Chief Superintendent A Cameron and Inspector J Thomson, Strathclyde Police.

**Chair**

Mr Clements in the Chair.

**Apologies for Absence**

Patrick Browne and Ian Clarkson.

**1. Irvine: Woodlands Primary School: Fire**

The Head of Education Resource Services reported that at 4 a.m. on the morning of the Committee, approximately one-third of Woodlands Primary School, Bank Street Irvine had been damaged by a fire which had completely destroyed the infant wing, new nursery, staff room and resource base with some smoke and water damage to the remainder of the building. Smoke damage had been minimised by internal fire doors and Strathclyde Fire Brigade had succeeded in saving the remaining two-thirds of the school.

Radio messages had been released in the early morning advising parents of the fire incident and no pupils attended the school. Representatives from the Architectural Services Department and the Building Control section were on site assessing the extent of the damage. Security problems were envisaged and an indication was given that there may be a need to re-locate a small number of pupils to other local schools. New build requirements will require to be undertaken. Insurance assessors were due on site and it was confirmed that the Council's insurance cover carries an excess of £25,000. All steps possible were being taken to have all pupils back in place, if necessary in temporary classrooms, at the earliest possible opportunity. The nursery provision will take longer to re-start.

The Committee expressed their concern over the incident and agreed to note the position meantime.

## **2. Operation Spotlight**

Submitted report by the Head of Corporate Business on the 'Operation Spotlight' Initiative to be introduced by Strathclyde Police giving details of the twelve specific areas of crime to be targeted and of the general format for the Initiative.

The Chair welcomed Chief Superintendent Cameron and Inspector Thomson from Strathclyde Police who had been invited to give a presentation on the Initiative.

The aim of the 'Spotlight' Initiative is to reduce violent crime and public disorder while attempting to address public fear of crime. The proposed Initiative was formally announced by the Chief Constable on 17 September 1996 at a Strathclyde Police Community Safety Seminar in Glasgow and will commence on 1 October 1996 for a period of three months. Recent statistics indicate a slight rise in violent crime with a substantial increase in public disorder. The Chief Constable is confident that addressing public disorder will have a positive effect on other areas of crime. The Initiative will target the undernoted twelve specific areas of crime which were highlighted during a public consultation exercise previously undertaken by Strathclyde Police:-

- (a) Offensive Weapons
- (b) Under Age Drinking
- (c) Drinking In Public Places
- (d) Transport And Disorder On Public Transport
- (e) Hotspots
- (f) Litter And Public Nuisance
- (g) Truancy
- (h) Vandalism
- (i) Parks And Public Places
- (j) Street Robbers
- (k) Licensed Premises
- (l) Sporting Events

The Initiative will involve high profile community policing over the three month period and in order to maximise the uniformed police presence, additional funding is to be made available by Strathclyde Police. Officers from the Community Involvement Branch, Licensing Branch, Mounted Police, Underwater Units, Pipe Band etc. will participate. In addition a number of Special Constables will lend their support and Divisional Commanders will meet every two weeks for discussion. It is further intended that the Initiative will receive a high level of media cover and will be widely publicised in national/local newspapers and in various council publications (e.g. Look North).

The need for Strathclyde Police to work in partnership with the Council and have its full support was stressed in order to ensure the ultimate success of the Initiative. Consultations have already taken place with representatives of the Council regarding joint publicity for the Initiative and further consultations are being sought with a view to initiating joint projects and the possible establishment of Diversion Schemes for young people.

The Head of Corporate Business confirmed that the Council welcomed the proposed Initiative and concurred with its objectives. Arrangements will be made for the various Directorates of the Council to liaise with Strathclyde Police to ascertain the nature and level of

support which can be provided towards the Initiative. Funding implications will however, require to be investigated beforehand. Regular meetings will be arranged with the Police throughout the three month period of the Initiative.

The Committee agreed (i) to welcome Strathclyde Police 'Spotlight Initiative'; (ii) to provide support for the Initiative through all Directorates of the Council; (iii) that the Head of Corporate Business consult with all Directors to ascertain (A) how they can provide assistance towards the 'Spotlight Initiative', and (B) the funding implications of the assistance to be provided; (iv) to remit to the Chairs of each of the Council's Standing Committees in consultation with the appropriate Directors to determine the nature and extent of their Directorates involvement in the Initiative, taking into account the funding implications; and (v) that regular meetings be held with Strathclyde Police to discuss the support to be provided by the Council, thus ensuring full co-operation.

### **3. Strathclyde Passenger Transport: Isle of Arran: Bus Service Contracts Renewal**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the outcome of consultations with Strathclyde Passenger Transport on tenders received for the renewal of school and local bus service contracts on Arran.

Although Arran lies outwith the SPT's area of responsibility, SPT act as the Council's agent in relation to the provision and monitoring of school and local bus services on the island. The current yearly cost of bus service contracts on Arran, held by Stagecoach, is £317,810 (£174,795 of which is attributable to Education and £143,014 to Roads and Transportation). The contracts which expire on 12 October 1996 consist of nine combined local bus service and school contracts, five school contracts and one local bus service contract.

Tenders had been sought over the summer period to renew the contracts and a sole tender by Stagecoach showed a 30-35% increase over the current costs. Following consultations between the Council and SPT with a view to reducing the level of costs, SPT were authorised to re-invite tenders by 17 September 1996 in an attempt to refine costs and stimulate competition. Tenders were then re-invited for contracts on a six-monthly, one-yearly and four-yearly basis and on the basis of both the Rural Fare Scale with a maximum fare of £1.50, as is currently operational on Arran, and with a normal Subsidised Bus Service Fare Scale where fares rise in relation to distance travelled.

Following a second advertisement, Stagecoach was again the sole tenderer with the following annual costs:-

<u>Application of Rural Fare Scale</u>	<u>Application of Standard Fare Scale</u>	<u>Period of Contracts</u>
£425,022	£415,537	4 Years (no change from f tender)
£472,023	£462,987	12 Months
£568,967	£565,911	6 Months

The Committee expressed concern that whilst it is considered that the current level of service provision on Arran must be maintained, the Council's ability to do so will be tested in the absence of competition on the island. These concerns had already been made known to the Secretary of State during the Council's earlier campaign for the inclusion of Arran within the SPT's area of responsibility. The Council do however wish to ensure continuation of school/local bus

services on Arran from 13 October 1996.

The Committee agreed (a) that in order to meet the requisite provision the contracts should be awarded to Stagecoach for a twelve-month period to allow the alternative options to be examined in an effort to reduce future costs on Arran and avoid any potential monopolies both on the island and on the mainland; (b) that Strathclyde Passenger Transport be authorised to investigate these options in consultation with appropriate Officers and report as required to a Sub-Committee comprising the Chair and the Council's two representatives on Strathclyde Passenger Transport viz. Councillors Munro and Sillars; (c) that the cost of the Rural Day Card be reviewed in the early part of next year and annually thereafter; and (d) that an urgent meeting be sought with the Secretary of State to press for additional funding to offset any increases in the costs of providing services on the island and to seek the support of the local MP and the Euro-MP in making these representations.

#### **4. Conferences: Invitations**

Submitted invitations to attend the undernoted conferences:-

(a) Convention of Scottish Local Authorities Conference entitled "Responding to Drugs Problems - A Conference for Local Authorities on Scotland" to be held in the Council Chambers, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh on Thursday 3 and Friday 4 October 1996; and

(b) The Scottish Local Government Information Unit in association with COSLA East Lothian Council and Rural Forum entitled "New Councils: New Approaches to Quality Services in Rural Communities" to be held in the Marine Hotel, North Berwick, East Lothian on Thursday 5 and Friday 6 December 1996.

The Committee agreed to authorise Mr Gallagher to attend (a) and Mr Sillars to attend (b).

#### **5. Saltcoats: Manse Street Office: Possible Alternative Use**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the proposed use of the former Social Work Directorate premises at Manse Street Saltcoats.

The Manse Street premises which were vacated by the Social Work Directorate staff in early August could provide an opportunity to enhance the delivery of a specialist learning disability service. Potential users of a community based resource at Manse Street include clients from the existing Resource Centres at Hazeldene and Fergushill. In addition the premises could be used as a base for two local projects/activities and as a meeting point for assessing other community resources locally. Kilmarnock College is committed to providing locally based courses and these could be taught at Manse Street.

The Committee agreed to approve the proposed future use of the former Social Work Directorate premises at Manse Street Saltcoats as the base for the delivery of a range of services to adults with learning difficulties for an initial pilot period of one year.

The meeting ended at 10.45 a.m.