

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of HYBRID MEETING of the **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Tuesday 4 June 2024 at 2.00pm.

Present: Councillors BETH WHITESIDE, KENNY BRAES, CHRIS BEATTIE, JULIE BELL, BRIAN BOYD, SERENA COWDY, CRAIG FOTHERINGHAM, BILL DUFF, ROSS GREIG, MARK McDONALD, IAN McLAREN, GEORGE MEECHAN, GAVIN NICOL AND LOIS SPEED.

Councillor WHITESIDE, Convener, in the Chair.

Prior to the commencement of business, the Convener reminded members that it was currently the pre-election period in light of the forthcoming UK Parliamentary General Election on 4 July 2024 and that members were to be mindful of the legal requirements in their discussion and debate today.

1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Jack Cruickshanks, Iain Gall and Derek Wann, with Councillor Craig Fotheringham substituting for Councillor Cruickshanks.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/STATEMENTS OF TRANSPARENCY

There were no declarations of interest or statements of transparency made.

3. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minute of meeting of this Committee of 30 April 2024 was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

4. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

The Committee agreed, in terms of Standing Order 27(2), that the public and press be excluded during consideration of Items 11-16 so as to avoid the disclosure of information which was exempt in terms of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, Paragraphs 6, 8 and 9.

5. PREVENTION AND PROACTIVE CARE

There was submitted Report No 168/24 by the Chief Officer, Angus Health and Social Care Partnership advising members as to progress made by the Angus Prevention and Proactive Care Programme Steering Group.

The progress and achievements of the programme were provided within Appendix 1 to the Report, together with how funding had been used to support prevention and proactive care activities. A financial report was also provided within Appendix 2 to the Report.

The Chief Officer introduced the Report and Councillor Bell congratulated the Angus Health and Social Care Partnership team on their early intervention and positive feedback received. It was noted that a final evaluation Report would be presented in April 2025.

Having heard from Councillor Greig, the Committee agreed to note the progress made in relation to the prevention and proactive care agenda aimed to reduce health inequalities and improve public health in Angus.

6. 2024/25 FINAL REVENUE BUDGET DOCUMENTS

There was submitted Report No 169/24 by the Director of Finance providing an update on the 2024/25 General Resource Grant and the Corporate revenue budgets, and seeking approval to publish the 2024/25 Final Revenue Budget Volume on the Council's website. The Report also sought approval for the use of additional funding which was confirmed after the Council's budget setting meeting.

The Committee agreed: -

- (i) to note the net increase of £1.468 million to the 2024/25 General Resource Grant allocated to the Council as set out in Section 6 and Tables 1 and 2 of the Report;
- (ii) to approve that £0.500 million of the sum be used to provide an increase to the agreed 2024/25 revenue and capital budgets for road maintenance with the balance of £0.968 million being earmarked for 2024/25 budget risks, both on a one-off basis as set out in paragraph 6.7 of the Report;
- (iii) to approve the use of the increased funding beyond 2024/25 be considered through the 2025/26 budget setting process which would begin in the near future; and
- (iv) to approve the publication of the 2024/25 Final Revenue Budget Volume on the Council Website.

7. CONSIDERATION OF THE INTRODUCTION OF A LOCAL VISITOR LEVY

With reference to Article 11 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 26 November 2019, there was submitted Report No 170/24 by the Director Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth providing an overview of the current stage of the Visitor Levy (Scotland) Bill through Parliament, and seeking agreement for officers to undertake engagement with key stakeholders on the potential for and outline of a proposed scheme to assess the resource implications for the Council.

It was noted that a further report would be presented on the potential detail of any proposal together with the resource implications.

During consideration of item 7, Councillor Boyd made a statement of transparency in that he was an owner of holiday lets.

The Bill proposed a number of requirements prior to the introduction of any visitor levy scheme. Should the Council wish to progress with the introduction of a visitor levy then it would require to prepare, and publicise, an outline of the proposed scheme, plus a statement of objectives and assessment of the impact of proposals in the area. An extensive consultation exercise must also be undertaken with representatives of communities, tourism organisations, businesses engaged in tourism and other persons likely to be affected.

The Committee agreed: -

- (i) to note the current progress of the Visitor Levy (Scotland) Bill;
- (ii) to note, that at this stage, the Committee were not being asked to make any formal decision to introduce a visitor levy;
- (iii) to instruct officers to undertake engagement with key stakeholders on the potential for, and outline of, a proposed scheme and to assess the resource implications for the Council; and
- (iv) to instruct the Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth to bring forward a further report on the results of the engagement, details of any proposed scheme and assessment of the resource implications for the Council.

8. ANGUS SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE – INVESTMENT REQUEST

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of the meeting of the Children and Learning Committee of 1 June 2023, there was submitted Report No 171/24 by the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning seeking approval for one-off investment to establish a small project team to progress the exploration and delivery of opportunities for improving the educational benefits and best value provided by the Angus learning estate.

As part of ongoing work to manage the Angus learning estate, potential opportunities had been identified to adapt and improve the learning estate, to ensure the needs of all children and young people are appropriately met. Delivery of improved educational benefits is central, in conjunction with considering the best value use of resources. These opportunities relate to

reviewing the Early Learning and Childcare offer and the continuum of provision to meet additional support needs in Angus.

The Committee agreed: -

- (i) to approve the allocation of funding of up to £240,000 for the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning to establish a project team in the Education and Lifelong Learning directorate to progress the exploration and delivery of opportunities for improving the educational benefits and best value provided by the Angus learning estate;
- (ii) to approve that this request for funding be met from the £1.5 million Spend to Save allocation which was earmarked in the Council's Reserves as part of the 2024/25 budget setting process;
- (iii) to note the expectation that this investment would enable options for educational and financial benefits to be identified for consideration by members; and
- (iv) to note that a proposed consultation programme would be brought before the Family, Education and Justice Committee by the end of 2024, including an outline of the educational benefits and potential financial benefits noting that any proposals which were subject to a formal consultation process cannot guarantee specific outcomes until they are concluded.

9. ANGUS ALIVE INVESTMENT PROPOSAL: ARBROATH LIBRARY BUILDING

With reference to Article 15 of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 3 November 2022, there was submitted Report No 172/24 by the Director of Legal, Governance and Change setting out proposals relating to the upgrading of Arbroath Library to improve the delivery of face-to-face Library/ACCESS services; along with changes to the use of the first floor of Arbroath Library to support and improve the storage and public access arrangements for the Council's Archives. The Report sought to share the proposals with elected members and progress the consultation which would inform a final decision in due course.

Following much discussion, the Committee agreed: -

- (i) to note the proposals for Arbroath Library, including the Library/ ACCESS services integration and the Archives design proposals (Appendix 1 to the Report), along with the implications for the Community Learning Shop, wedding ceremonies, and the Art Galleries;
- (ii) to note the decant proposals, including the use of the Community and General-Purpose spaces at Saltire Sports Centre to accommodate the delivery of Library/ ACCESS services, for the period during which the improvement works are being carried out in the Arbroath Library building;
- (iii) to carry out a consultation in relation to the proposals outlined at (i) and (ii) above, with the exception of the Library/ ACCESS merger which had been agreed, as detailed in Section 6.7.2 of the Report, and that it would not therefore form part of the proposed consultation exercise;
- (iv) to note that a further Report would be brought back to this committee once the consultation exercise had been completed to consider the outcome and agree the next steps;
- (v) to note the estimated total cost of £0.290m for the proposals would be funded from part of the £2.028m allowance in the General Fund Capital Programme for the Angus Alive Transformation Project – Library/ Facilities Investment (Angus wide), subject to the outcome from the consultation and the further committee report; and
- (vi) to note the various property and financial implications as a result of the above detailed proposals, subject to the outcome from the consultation and the further committee report.

At this stage in the meeting, the Committee agreed to adjourn for 5 minutes for a comfort break. The meeting resumed at 2.58pm.

10. CONSULTATION OUTCOME AND NEXT STEPS – DISPOSAL OF INCH PAVILION AND BOWLING GREEN, CROFT ROAD, MONTROSE

With reference to Article 15 of the minute of this Committee of 24 October 2023, there was submitted Report No 173/24 by the Director of Infrastructure and Environment outlining the representations made in response to the formal consultation undertaken by the Council on the disposal and change of use of Common Good Property. The Report requested the Committee to have regard to those representations and thereafter, to agree to proceed with the disposal of Inch Pavilion and Bowling Green at Croft Road, Montrose, subject to the consent of the Court.

The Committee was being asked to consider the Report and the accompanying exempt appendix 3 to Report 173/24 (item 11) which detailed the options appraisal carried out in relation to the disposal of the Inch Pavilion.

At this stage in the meeting (3.01pm) the Committee agreed to go into private to discuss the contents of the exempt appendix.

The meeting re-convened in public.

Much discussion took place and various members expressed their concerns regarding the proposed disposal of Inch Pavilion and Bowling Green at Croft Road, Montrose and felt that the matter should be considered at the forthcoming Council meeting.

At this stage, the Committee adjourned for 5 minutes to allow officers to give advice and re-convened at 3.21pm.

The Committee unanimously agreed to defer consideration of the Report to the meeting of Angus Council to be held on 20 June 2024.

11. CONSULTATION OUTCOME AND NEXT STEPS – DISPOSAL OF INCH PAVILION AND BOWLING GREEN, CROFT ROAD, MONTROSE

It was noted that this item had been considered as part of Item 10 above and the Committee unanimously agreed to defer consideration of Appendix 3 to the meeting of Angus Council to be held on 20 June 2024.

12. ENERGY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM – SERVICE CONTRACT – PROCUREMENT AUTHORITY REQUEST

There was submitted Report No 174/24 by the Director of Infrastructure and Environment seeking authority for the proposed procurement of an Energy Management Service Contract where the maximum value of the contract was above the Chief Officer's delegated authority limit.

The Committee agreed to approve the recommendations as detailed in the Report.

13. HOUSING AIDS AND ADAPTATIONS CONTRACT ARRANGEMENTS

There was submitted Report No 175/24 by the Director of Infrastructure and Environment seeking approval to undertake a two-stage tendering process to establish a multi-lotted framework for the delivery of Aids & Adaptation services to meet the needs of people with disabilities in Angus.

The Committee agreed to approve the recommendations as detailed in the Report.

14. PROCUREMENT AUTHORITY REPORT – WHOLE FAMILY WELLBEING SUPPORT SERVICE

With reference to Article 8 of the minute of this Committee of 25 October 2022, there was submitted Report No 176/24 by the Interim Director of Children, Families and Justice seeking approval to procure a Whole Family Wellbeing Support Service in Angus.

The Committee agreed to approve the recommendations as detailed in the Report.

15. SEATON GROVE CARE HOME, ARBROATH IMPROVEMENTS – PROCUREMENT AUTHORITY REQUEST

There was submitted Report No 177/24 by the Director of Infrastructure and Environment seeking approval to procure internal alterations and improvements to Seaton Grove Care Home, Arbroath.

The Committee agreed to approve the recommendations as detailed in the Report.

16. WET FIRE SUPPRESSION SYSTEMS – MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR SERVICE CONTRACT – PROCUREMENT AUTHORITY REQUEST

There was submitted Report No 178/24 by the Director of Infrastructure and Environment seeking authority for the proposed procurement of a Wet Fire Suppression Systems Maintenance and Repair Contract where the maximum value of the contract was above the Chief Officer's delegated authority limit.

The Committee agreed to approve the recommendations as detailed in the Report.