

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of HYBRID MEETING of the **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Tuesday 3 September 2024 at 2.00pm.

Present: Councillors GEORGE MEECHAN, LINDA CLARK, JULIE BELL, KENNY BRAES, SERENA COWDY, JACK CRUICKSHANKS, BILL DUFF, IAIN GALL, ROSS GREIG, MARK McDONALD, IAN McLAREN, GAVIN NICOL, LOIS SPEED and CRAIG FOTHERINGHAM.

Councillor MEECHAN, Vice-Convenor, in the Chair.

1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Chris Beattie, Brian Boyd, Derek Wann and Beth Whiteside, with Councillor Linda Clark substituting for Councillor Beattie and Councillor Craig Fotheringham substituting for Councillor Wann.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/STATEMENTS OF TRANSPARENCY

Councillors Duff and Gall each made a declaration of interest in relation to Item 10, Report No 254/24 – Montrose Common Good Fund, Project 2, as they were both Council appointed Directors of Montrose Golf Links Ltd. Both advised that they would not take part in any discussion and voting on that project and would leave the meeting during consideration of the item.

3. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minute of meeting of this Committee of 4 June 2024 was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convenor.

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 18 to 24 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, 9 and 10.

5. 2023/24 FINANCIAL OUTTURN AND DRAFT ACCOUNTS UPDATE

There was submitted Report No 240/24 the Director of Finance providing details of the unaudited financial outturn position on both a revenue and capital basis for 2023/24 for Angus Council, and an update regarding the 2023/24 draft Annual Accounts. The Report also sought approval to use part of the Council's uncommitted reserves towards specific works including winter resilience activity.

Having heard from the Director of Finance, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note that the 2023/24 Annual Accounts had been submitted to Audit Scotland by 30 June 2024 in accordance with statutory requirements;
- (ii) to note that the Council's Annual Accounts had been published on the Council's website on 28 June 2024;
- (iii) to note the revenue budget performance and associated commentary as set out in Section 5 and Appendices A, B & D of the Report;
- (iv) to note the capital budget performance and associated commentary as set out in Section 5 and Appendix C of the Report;
- (v) to approve that £0.075 million of prior year 100% carry forwards not utilised in 2023/24 due to delays in projects and plans be carried forward to 2024/25 as set out in Section 5.14 of the Report;

- (vi) to approve that funding of £1.0 million from the Council's uncommitted General Fund Reserve be utilised in the current financial year to support winter resilience works and activities and the additional costs of repairs arising from Storm Isha/Jocelyn which were not covered by the Bellwin Scheme as set out in Section 7 of the Report; and
- (vii) to note that use of the remaining uncommitted General Fund Reserve would be considered as part of the 2025/26 budget setting process.

6. 2024/25 FINAL CAPITAL BUDGET – GENERAL FUND

There was submitted Report No 241/24 by the Director of Finance presenting to members the updated 2023/2028 General Fund Capital Plan, incorporating the 2024/25 capital monitoring budget.

Having heard from the Director of Finance, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve the contents of the updated 2023/2028 General Fund Capital Plan, attached at Appendix A to the Report;
- (ii) to note that the 2024/25 capital budget represented the Council's approved budget for General Fund capital monitoring purposes; and
- (iii) to approve the request for additional funding of £0.100m, as detailed within Section 6.2 of the Report.

7. PREPARATION OF 2025/26 GENERAL FUND REVENUE & CAPITAL BUDGETS

There was submitted Report No 242/24 by the Director of Finance informing members of the current position in relation to the 2025/26 Revenue & Capital Budget preparation process, identifying the main stages of the budget timeline and seeking approval of the proposed strategy/approach for the 2025/26 budget process.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve the broad strategy and approach to the budget preparation as set out in Section 6 of the Report;
- (ii) to approve the budget timeline as set out in Appendix A to the Report;
- (iii) to note the intended continuation of the revised arrangements for the Policy & Budget Strategy Group as set out in Section 6.3 of the Report; and
- (iv) to note the final sign off of the Council's Revenue & Capital Budgets would take place in February 2025.

8. CHANGE PROGRAMME UPDATE

There was submitted Report No 243/24 by the Director of Finance providing a progress update in relation to the Council's Change Programme, covering the 3-year period, 2024/25 to 2026/27.

The Report indicated that while good progress had generally been made, there had also been some adjustment and slippage to several savings resulting in an updated target position of £5.938m for 2024/25, an in-year decrease of £0.370m, and the overall 3-year total reducing by £0.030m, to £12.175m (originally £12.205m). The amended position was due to a review of projects being undertaken to measure the deliverability of the full savings target as work continued towards achieving the 2024/25 position.

At this stage in the meeting, Councillor McDonald intimated a Notice of Motion.

The Committee agreed to a 10 minute recess to consider the motion. The meeting resumed at 2.32pm.

COUNCILLOR McDONALD, SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR BRAES, MOVED THAT THE COMMITTEE AGREES:-

- (i) TO NOTE THE PROGRESS UPDATE IN RELATION TO THE COUNCIL'S CURRENT CHANGE PROGRAMME (2024/25 TO 2026/27), ALONG WITH THE SUMMARY INCLUDED WITHIN APPENDIX 1 TO THE REPORT; AND
- (ii) TO NOTE THAT THE UNCOMMITTED BALANCE ON THE COUNCIL'S CHANGE FUND WAS NOW £NIL; AND
- (iii) THAT THE PLANNED SAVING OF £150,000 IN FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/25 FROM THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REVIEW (REFERENCE VCSG003) BE CANCELLED TO ENSURE THAT THE COUNCIL HAS AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICE THAT IS RESOURCED TO DELIVER ON OUR PRIORITIES AND FIT FOR THE FUTURE, WITH THE FINANCIAL IMPACT OF THAT CANCELLED SAVING IN 2024/25 BEING MET FROM THE COUNCIL'S UNCOMMITTED GENERAL FUND RESERVE.

Councillor Speed, seconded by Councillor Fotheringham, moved as an amendment, that the Committee defers consideration of the report and in particular (iii) as detailed above at this time, until the proposal can be considered in light of the wider budget context.

On a vote being taken, the members voted: -

For the motion: -

Councillors Meechan, Clark, Bell, Braes, Cowdy, Cruickshanks, Duff, Gall, Greig, McDonald, McLaren and Nicol (12).

For the amendment: -

Councillors Speed and Fotheringham (2).

9. COMMUNITY ALARM DIGITAL ALARM RECEIVING CENTRE

There was submitted Report No 244/24 by the Chief Officer, Angus Health and Social Care Partnership seeking approval to procure a digital Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC).

The Report indicated that the Community Alarm Control Centre was the main communications hub for the alarm service and had in the region of 3100 service users. The current system was experiencing numerous failures due to its age and pressure of supporting digital connections and was at high risk of connection failure due to the proposed switch-off of the analogue phone network. The Council was required to upgrade/replace their existing analogue alarm should they want to continue to offer a community alarm call centre.

The Committee agreed: -

- (i) to approve the procurement of a digital Alarm Receiving Centre service via the Scotland Excel Framework, as detailed in the Report;
- (ii) to delegate authority to the Chief Officer to formally enter into, execute and deliver the necessary contract documents for the procurement of a digital ARC service via the Scotland Excel Framework; and
- (iii) to note the procurement of the ARC would also meet the Openreach deadline of January 2027 that involved switching off the analogue telephony over to digital networks.

Having declared an interest at Article 2 above, Councillors Duff and Gall left the meeting prior to consideration of the application Reprofile of Coastal Rock Armour at Montrose Golf Course only.

10. COMMON GOOD FUNDS – ADDITIONAL PROJECTS APPROVAL 2024

There was submitted Report No 245/24 by the Director of Infrastructure and Environment seeking approval for Common Good property maintenance and improvement projects and for these projects to be funded from the respective Common Good funds in 2024/25.

The Committee agreed: -

- (i) to approve the requested funding for the projects from Arbroath, Brechin, Forfar and Montrose Common Good Funds as detailed in Appendix 2 of the Report; and
- (ii) to note the updated budget position for each Common Good Fund as contained in Section 7 of the Report.

Councillors Duff and Gall re-joined the meeting.

11. ACTIVE TRAVEL TRANSFORMATION: INFRASTRUCTURE – TIER 1 – PROGRAMME OF WORKS

There was submitted Report No 246/24 by the Director of Infrastructure and Environment updating the Committee on the delivery of the programme of projects funded in 2023/24 through the Cycling, Walking and Safer Routes (“CWSR”) fund, seeking approval to accept a funding offer from Transport Scotland and approval of the programme of projects to be funded during 2024/25 via the Active Travel Transformation: Infrastructure: Tier 1 fund.

The Committee agreed: -

- (i) to accept the funding offer from Transport Scotland as set out in Section 4.2 of the Report, delegating authority to Director of Infrastructure & Environment to execute and deliver any necessary acceptance documents, following consultation with the Director of Finance and Director of Legal, Governance and Change;
- (ii) to note the amended programme of projects undertaken during 2023/24, as set out in Appendix 1 to the Report;
- (iii) to approve the Active Travel Transformation: Infrastructure: Tier 1 programme of projects to be undertaken during financial year 2024/25 as set out in Appendix 2 to the Report; and
- (iv) to delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure and Environment to substitute projects listed in Appendix 2 with (a) projects listed in Appendix 3; and/or (b) other Active Travel projects if required.

12. COMMON GOOD REGISTER – BRECHIN AND FORFAR

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 8 June 2021, there was submitted Report No 247/24 by the Director of Legal, Governance and Change providing an update on the adoption of a publicly available Register of Common Good property assets for the former Royal Burghs of Brechin and Forfar following the separate publication of draft Registers for Brechin and Forfar Properties as required by Section 102 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 as amplified by Statutory Guidance subsequently issued by the Scottish Government in July 2018.

The Report advised that following the statutory consultation process, no responses had been received in respect of the Brechin Register, and one in respect of the Forfar Register which had simply indicated no concerns with the draft list. Therefore, there were no valid representations which required further consideration in relation to the adoption of the Common Good Asset Registers.

Following comments, the Committee agreed: -

- (i) to note that no representations had been received following upon the published statutory consultation on the List of Land and Buildings of Common Good Register for Brechin;
- (ii) to adopt the List of Land and Buildings set out in Appendix 1 to the Report, as part of the assets of the Common Good of the former Royal Burgh of Brechin, and to publish it in accordance with legislation and Statutory Guidance;
- (iii) to note the List of Buildings in Appendix 2 to the Report, were excluded from the Brechin Common Good on legal grounds;

- (iv) to note the representation received by the Council following upon the published statutory consultation on the List of Land and Buildings of Common Good Register for Forfar, detailed in Appendix 3 to the Report;
- (v) to note that the representation did not require any addition to or deletion from the published draft Register for Forfar as detailed in paragraph 7.3 of the Report;
- (vi) to adopt the List of Land and Buildings set out in Appendix 4 to the Report, as part of the assets of the Common Good of the former Royal Burgh of Forfar, and to publish it in accordance with legislation and Statutory Guidance; and
- (vii) to note the List of Buildings in Appendix 5 to the Report, were excluded from the Forfar Common Good on legal grounds.

13. COMMON GOOD REGISTER – MONTROSE

With reference to Article 7 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 8 June 2021, there was submitted Report No 248/24 by the Director of Legal, Governance and Change providing an update on the progress with compiling a publicly available register of Common Good property assets for the former Royal Burgh of Montrose.

The Report also sought approval for the Council to consult on a draft Register of the relevant Montrose Properties in implementation of Section 102 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 as amplified by Statutory Guidance subsequently issued by the Scottish Government in July 2018.

The Committee agreed: -

- (i) to note and approve the content of the Consultative draft List of Land and Buildings of the Common Good Register for the former burgh of Montrose as detailed in Appendix 1 to the Report;
- (ii) that the Consultative draft List be publicly consulted upon and duly published as required by the legislation;
- (iii) to note that that following completion of the period for consultation and publicity, the Director of Legal, Governance and Change will bring a Report back to a future meeting of this Committee on the representations received and the responses to them, and inviting the Committee to approve for publication the final List of Land and Buildings of the Common Good Register for the former burgh of Montrose; and
- (iv) to note progress with the compilation of, and consultation on, a publicly accessible register of Common Good property assets for the remaining Angus burghs of Brechin, Forfar and Kirriemuir along with Monifieth and Carnoustie.

14. UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND UPDATE AND COMMUNITIES & PLACE PRIORITY FUNDING ALLOCATION

With reference to Article 8 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 24 October 2023, there was submitted Report No 249/24 by the Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth providing an update on the delivery of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Investment Plan for Angus.

The Report also sought approval to allocate £1,100,000 from the Communities and Place Priority to a Community Asset Fund for capital costs (£600,000), to support community led projects and works to the four buildings (Kirriemuir Gateway to the Glens, Edzell Inglis Hall, Brechin Town House and Arbroath Community Centre), previously occupied by Angus Alive (£500,000).

The Committee agreed: -

- (i) to note the UKSPF update, following the approval of the Year 2 report and the projects summary as outlined in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 of the Report;
- (ii) to approve the allocation of £320,000 from the Communities and Place priority of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to support capital works to Kirriemuir Gateway to the

Glens Museum, Inglis Hall and Brechin Town House working in partnership with the interested community groups;

- (iii) to approve the allocation of £180,000 from the Communities and Place priority of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund towards works to Arbroath Community Centre roof; and
- (iv) to approve the allocation of £600,000 from the Communities and Place Priority to a Community Asset capital grant fund to support community led projects and to note that a further Report would be brought back to the next Policy and Resources committee for approval of, and funding allocations, for these projects.

15. ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE FUND APPLICATION

There was submitted Report No 257/24 by the Director of Infrastructure and Environment seeking authorisation for Council officers to make an application to the Scottish Futures Trust for the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund, in collaboration with Perth and Kinross Council, as detailed in the Report.

The Report indicated that in 2019 the Scottish government had set a net zero emissions target of 2045 and had a commitment to phase out the need for petrol and diesel cars and vans on the roads by 2030. It was recognised by Transport Scotland that in order to deliver the 2045 targets and to continue to grow ahead of demand, there was a need to transition away from the current ChargePlace Scotland model to accelerate private investment in Scotland. Therefore in 2022/23, Transport Scotland introduced a new grant fund, the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund. Monies were granted to each local authority to carry out a pathfinder exercise on how to deliver on these targets. In conjunction with this, Transport Scotland tasked Scottish Futures Trust (SFT) to administer this process.

To progress these proposals, in cognisance of the regional EV strategy, officers had developed a joint approach with Perth and Kinross Council colleagues. Transport Scotland's Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund was open for applications to progress the strategy and fund the potential charging infrastructure. A bid has been prepared in collaboration with Perth and Kinross Council, who were leading on the application.

The Committee agreed: -

- (i) to request that officers work collaboratively with Perth and Kinross Council officers to apply to Transport Scotland for Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Funding; and
- (ii) to note that a Report would be submitted to a future Communities Committee setting out the progress on, and a future strategy, for Electric Vehicle Infrastructure in Angus.

16. GRANT OFFER, MILTON OF CLOVA CAR PARK IMPROVEMENTS

There was submitted Report No 258/24 by the Director of Infrastructure and Environment seeking approval to accept a funding offer from Cairngorms National Park Authority under their Visitor Infrastructure Improvement Programme for improvement works at Milton of Clova Carpark.

The Report indicated that the Cairngorms National Park Authority had invited the Council to submit an expression of interest for capital funding as part of their Visitor Infrastructure Improvement Programme. The programme sought to provide a high-quality experience for visitors to the National Park by improving outdoor access, whilst also reducing potential conflicts between residents and visitors and supporting a diverse visitor profile.

A grant offer towards these works of up to £63,400 was available from the Cairngorms National Park Authority for the period of 2024 – 2025, and it was recommended that the grant offer be accepted to allow a contract in place for works to start March 2025.

The Committee agreed: -

- (i) to accept the funding offer from Cairngorms National Park Authority; and
- (ii) to delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure and Environment to execute and deliver any necessary acceptance documents, following consultation with the Director of Finance and Director of Legal, Governance and Change.

17. ROAD SAFETY IMPROVEMENT FUND 2024/25

There was submitted Report No 259/24 by the Director of Infrastructure and Environment seeking approval to accept funding from Transport Scotland under their Road Safety Improvement Fund for 2024/25.

A programme of works had been undertaken in 2023/24 to reduce the number and severity of road traffic accidents at 5 identified accident cluster sites, which were located at separate locations throughout Angus. The accident cluster sites were identified through the Accident Investigation and Prevent (AIP) Programme for the data period 2019 to 2021. A summary of the projects undertaken during 2023/24 was provided in Appendix 1 to the Report.

As the projects on the Road Safety Improvement Fund were developed, further details would be provided to members in the relevant ward(s), shared with community councils and publicised in advance of physical works commencing. Any major projects would also be subject to reporting to committee as appropriate. A grant offer towards these works of up to £251,343 had been received from Transport Scotland for the period of 2024 – 2025 and it was recommended that the grant offer be accepted to allow a contract for works to be completed by the end of March 2025.

The Committee agreed: -

- (i) to accept the funding offer from Transport Scotland, as detailed in the Report; and
- (ii) to delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure and Environment to execute and deliver any necessary acceptance documents, following consultation with the Director of Finance and the Director of Legal, Governance and Change.

18. PROCUREMENT APPROVAL REQUEST: MICROSOFT SUPPORT SERVICES

There was submitted Report No 250/24 by the Director of HR, OD, Digital Enablement, IT & Business Support seeking authority for the proposed procurement 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.

19. MONTROSE COMMON GOOD FUND UPDATE

There was submitted Report 251/24 by the Director of Finance providing information in relation to the Montrose Common Good Fund.

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

20. PROCUREMENT APPROVAL REQUEST: WINTER ROADS FORECASTING SERVICE

There was submitted Report No 252/24 by the Director of Infrastructure and Environment seeking approval to award a procurement for a Winter Roads Weather Forecasting Service.

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

21. ROUTE TO NET ZERO STUDY CONSULTANT- PROCUREMENT AUTHORITY REQUEST

There was submitted Report No 253/24 by the Director of Infrastructure and Environment seeking authority for the proposed procurement of consultants to undertake energy studies.

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

22. FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT FOR THE SUPPLY OF RECYCLED DOMESTIC FURNITURE AND STARTER PACK GOODS

There was submitted Report No 254/24 by the Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth seeking endorsement of the award of contracts to the successful tenderers for the supply of recycled domestic furniture and starter packs.

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

23. NEW PROPERTY LEASE – UNIT 2 BROOMFIELD INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, MONTROSE

There was submitted Report No 255/24 by the Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth relating to the new lease of a vacant commercial property at Unit 2 Broomfield Industrial Estate, Broomfield, Montrose.

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

24. RENEWABLE ENERGY MASTERPLAN AND INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY PLAN – PROCUREMENT AUTHORITY CONTRACT AWARD

There was submitted Report No 256/24 by the Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth seeking approval to award the procurement for the Renewable Energy Masterplan and Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

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