

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of HYBRID MEETING of the **COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Tuesday 1 October 2024 at 2.00pm.

Present: Councillors MARK McDONALD, KENNY BRAES, SERENA COWDY, ROSS GREIG, LYNNE DEVINE, BRENDA DURNO, CRAIG FOTHERINGHAM, IAN McLAREN, LLOYD MELVILLE, LOUISE NICOL, RONNIE PROCTOR MBE, JILL SCOTT, LINDA CLARK, LOIS SPEED, TOMMY STEWART and BETH WHITESIDE.

Councillor McDONALD, Convener, in the Chair.

1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Jack Cruickshanks, Bill Duff and Martin Shepherd, with Councillors Ross Greig, Brenda Durno and Linda Clark substituting respectively.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND STATEMENTS OF TRANSPARENCY

Councillor Nicol made a statement of transparency in relation to Item 5, Report No 288/24 in that she had children attending one of the schools (Letham) to be considered in the report.

Councillor Greig made a statement of transparency in relation to Item 5, Report No 288/24 in that a family member was a teacher at one of the schools (Letham) to be considered in the report.

Members made the Committee aware that most had had conversations with their communities regarding Item 5, Report No 288/24.

Councillor Melville made a statement of transparency in relation to Items 6, Report No 289/24, Item 7, Report No 290/24 and Report No 291/24 in that he is a council tenant.

3. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minute of meeting of this Committee of 20 August 2024 was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

4. REQUEST TO SPEAK

The Convener intimated that a request to speak had been received from Ms K Wales in relation to Report No 288/24 on School Friendly Zones at Angus Primary Schools Phase 2 and 3 Update, requesting that the committee approve removal of the School Friendly Zone at Muirfield Primary School. The Council resolved to receive the request from Ms Wales in the form of a video presentation.

Ms Wales' submission was played and advised that she was speaking on behalf of Action Against the Impact of the Hospitalfield School Friendly Zone who were against the approval of a permanent Traffic Regulation Order in respect of the additional School Friendly Zone at Muirfield Primary School, Arbroath. Ms Wales gave members an insight into how it felt to have a friendly zone forced upon them, outlining that there was a detriment to those with protected characteristics and they were restricting. She stated that she felt that the Group had not been fully informed of the restrictions and reminded members that there were 95 objections to the zone before implementation. She further outlined that there were possibilities of improving traffic flow within the school grounds.

The Convener thanked Ms Wales for her presentation.

5. SCHOOL FRIENDLY ZONES AT ANGUS PRIMARY SCHOOLS PHASE 2 AND 3 UPDATE

With reference to Article 8 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 23 February 2021, there was submitted Report No 288/24 by the Director of Infrastructure and Environment, relating to the progress to date and the determination of permanent Traffic Regulation Orders in phases 2 and 3 in respect of the School Friendly Zones at nine primary schools in Angus.

The Director of Infrastructure and Environment introduced the Report advising members that stakeholder meetings had taken place for each zone and that if approved the total number of zones would be eight primary schools.

Councillor Greig requested further information with regard enforcement of the zones if they were approved. Members were informed that Community Wardens would visit the schools and enforcement would be by Police Scotland as it would be a traffic violation.

There followed an opportunity for questions and comments from members on each of the zones.

The Convener indicated that each recommendation for the 9 School Friendly Zones would be considered individually.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the progress made in respect of School Friendly Zones as detailed in the report as provided for under Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders.

The Committee agreed at 2.58pm to adjourn for 10 minutes to allow the Convener to take advice from officers.

The meeting resumed at 3.08pm.

Councillor McDonald, seconded by Councillor Braes, moved that the Committee agrees:-

- (ii) to approve the making of a permanent Traffic Regulation Order in respect of the School Friendly Zone at Andover Primary School, Brechin.

COUNCILLOR SCOTT, SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR GREIG MOVED AS AN AMENDMENT THAT THE COMMITTEE AGREES TO APPROVE THE REMOVAL OF THE EXPERIMENTAL TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER IN RESPECT OF THE SCHOOL FRIENDLY ZONE AT ANDOVER PRIMARY SCHOOL, BRECHIN.

On the vote being taken, the members voted:-

For the motion:-

Councillors McDonald, Braes, Melville, Clark and Whiteside (5).

For the amendment:-

Councillors Cowdy, Greig, Devine, Durno, Fotheringham, McLaren, Nicol, Proctor, Scott, Speed and Stewart (11).

The amendment was declared carried and became the finding of the meeting.

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

- (iii) TO APPROVE THE MAKING OF A PERMANENT TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER IN RESPECT OF THE SCHOOL FRIENDLY ZONE AT CARLOGIE PRIMARY SCHOOL, CARNOUSTIE.

Councillor Greig, seconded by Councillor Scott moved as an amendment that the Committee agrees to approve the removal of the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order in respect of the School Friendly Zone at Carlogie Primary School, Carnoustie.

On the vote being taken, the members voted:-

For the motion:-

Councillors McDonald, Braes, Cowdy, Devine, Durno, Melville, Nicol, Clark and Whiteside (9).

For the amendment:-

Councillors Greig, Fotheringham, McLaren, Proctor, Scott, Speed and Stewart (7).

The motion was declared carried and became the finding of the meeting.

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

- (iv) TO APPROVE THE MAKING OF A PERMANENT TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER IN RESPECT OF THE SCHOOL FRIENDLY ZONE AT LETHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL.

Councillor Greig, seconded by Councillor Stewart moved as an amendment that the Committee agrees to approve the removal of the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order in respect of the School Friendly Zone at Letham Primary School.

On the vote being taken, the members voted:-

For the motion:-

Councillors McDonald, Braes, Cowdy, Devine, Durno, Fotheringham, McLaren, Melville, Nicol, Proctor, Scott, Clark, Speed and Whiteside (14).

For the amendment:-

Councillors Greig and Stewart (2).

The motion was declared carried and became the finding of the meeting.

In accordance with the provisions of Standing Order 15(12) Councillor Greig requested that his dissent be recorded in relation to the foregoing decision.

The Committee also agreed:-

- (v) to approve the making of a permanent Traffic Regulation Order in respect of the School Friendly Zone at Liff Primary School;
- (vi) to approve the removal of the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order in respect of the School Friendly Zone at Southesk Primary School, Montrose; and
- (vii) to approve the removal of the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order in respect of the additional School Friendly Zone at Muirfield Primary School, Arbroath.

Councillor McDonald, seconded by Councillor Braes, moved that the Committee agrees:-

- (viii) to approve the making of a permanent Traffic Regulation Order in respect of the School Friendly Zone at Maisondieu Primary School, Brechin.

COUNCILLOR SCOTT, SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR GREIG MOVED AS AN AMENDMENT THAT THE COMMITTEE AGREES TO APPROVE THE REMOVAL OF THE EXPERIMENTAL TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER IN RESPECT OF THE SCHOOL FRIENDLY ZONE AT MAISONDIEU PRIMARY SCHOOL, BRECHIN.

On the vote being taken, the members voted:-

For the motion:-

Councillors McDonald, Braes, Devine, Melville and Whiteside (5).

For the amendment:-

Councillors Cowdy, Greig, Durno, Fotheringham, McLaren, Nicol, Proctor, Scott, Clark, Speed and Stewart (11).

The amendment was declared carried and became the finding of the meeting.

Finally, the Committee agreed:-

- (ix) to approve the removal of the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order in respect of the School Friendly Zone at Seaview Primary School, Monifieth; and
- (x) to approve the removal of the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order in respect of the School Friendly Zone at Newtyle Primary School.

6. HOUSING SERVICES PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENT UPDATE AND ANNUAL ASSURANCE STATEMENT

With reference to Article 4 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 26 September 2023, there was submitted Report No 289/24 by the Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth, giving an update on the Council's performance in relation to housing services, the action being taken to improve performance and providing information to support members to agree the annual assurance statement required by the Scottish Housing Regulator.

The Report indicated that it should be noted that although performance had improved against some indicators in 2023/24 (the period covered by this Annual Assurance Statement), there were others where it had declined. Performance against the ARC Key Performance Indicators was outlined in Appendix 2 of the Report.

The Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth introduced the report with members' questions being responded to by officers.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the Council's performance in relation to its statutory obligations for housing services;
- (ii) that the evidence provided was sufficient to assure members that the Council was meeting its statutory obligations in relation to housing services with the exceptions noted at paragraph 6.2 of the Report;
- (iii) to approve the draft Annual Assurance Statement, attached as Appendix 1 of the Report;
- (iv) to note the Scottish Social Housing Charter Return results, detailed in Appendix 2 of the Report; and
- (v) to note the progress made in delivery of the Housing Service Improvement Plan, detailed in Appendix 3 of the Report.

7. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT CAPITAL PLAN 2023/28

With reference to Article 4 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 26 September 2023, there was submitted Report No 290/24 by the Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth, presenting the updated 2023/28 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Plan incorporating the 2024/25 capital monitoring budget.

The 2024/25 HRA Capital Plan had subsequently been updated to reflect the effect of the 2023/24 actuals, and a final 2024/25 capital monitoring budget of £12.323m detailed in Appendix 1 of the Report had been established following a comprehensive review of the 2023/28 Capital Plan, incorporating an updated position regarding specific projects in 2024/25.

The Director of Sustainable Communities and Vibrant Growth introduced the Report and it was noted that the construction industry continued to be impacted by nationwide economic factors including high inflation affecting materials and salary costs. Availability of suitably skilled employees with the appropriate trades and skills had affected many contractors. These factors had in-turn impacted the delivery of some of Angus Council's projects. The Service Leader – Assets updated members on a number of contracts.

Following questions and comments, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note that the 2023/24 actual position on the HRA Capital Plan as at 31 March 2024 was submitted to the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee on 3 September 2024, Report No 240/24 (paragraphs 5.30 – 5.34 inclusive and appendix C) refers;
- (ii) to approve the contents of the updated 2024/25 HRA Capital Plan as attached at Appendix 1 of the Report;
- (iii) to note that the 2024/25 HRA Capital Plan represented the HRA's approved budget for capital monitoring purposes; and
- (iv) to note the provisional budget for the 2025/26 – 2027/28 HRA Capital Plan.

8. REVISED COMMON ALLOCATION POLICY

With reference to Article 10 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 26 September 2017, there was submitted Report No 291/24 by the Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth, seeking approval for the proposed revised Common Allocation Policy. The revised policy took account of the requirements of key legislation; regulatory standards and statutory guidance; national policy developments; and the views of tenants, applicants, and other stakeholders.

In line with the standard review cycle, a full review of the policy was required to ensure the policy continued to comply with all relevant legislation and statutory guidance, policy developments; met the needs of applicants, tenants, landlords and other key stakeholders; and made the best use of the properties available to allocate. The review also considered whether continuing a Choice Based Lettings approach was the right approach to deliver the overall objectives of the policy.

The Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth introduced the Report with members' questions being responded to by officers who indicated that delaying the Report would have an impact on systems that required to be updated.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed at 4.05pm to adjourn for 10 minutes to allow the Convener to take advice from officers.

The meeting resumed at 4.15pm.

Councillor McDonald, seconded by Councillor Braes, moved that the Committee agrees:-

- (i) to approve the revised Common Allocation Policy as detailed in Appendix 1 of the Report;
- (ii) following consideration, to note the consultation which had been undertaken with applicants, tenants, staff and other stakeholders in preparing the revised Common Allocation Policy; and
- (iii) to note an exemption was agreed, under delegated authority, by the Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth to move the online application and choice-based letting system from Home Connections to NEC Software Solutions (Angus Council's current housing management system provider).

COUNCILLOR SCOTT, SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR SPEED, MOVED AS AN AMENDMENT THAT CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT BE DEFERRED TO THE MEETING OF ANGUS COUNCIL ON 7 NOVEMBER 2024.

On the vote being taken, the members voted:-

For the motion:-

Councillors McDonald, Braes, Devine, Durno, Melville, Clark and Whiteside (7).

For the amendment:-

Councillors Cowdy, Greig, Fotheringham, McLaren, Nicol, Proctor, Scott, Speed and Stewart (9).

The amendment was declared carried and became the finding of the meeting.

9. MONTROSE BASIN AND RANGER PROVISION IN ANGUS

There was submitted Report No 292/24 by the Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth, providing an update on Montrose Basin and seeking agreement for an options appraisal to be undertaken for ongoing ranger provision across Angus. The scope of that appraisal and next steps would be reported back to this Committee.

The Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth introduced the Report and responded to Councillor Greig's questions.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) the importance of Montrose Basin and made commitment to retaining the Local Nature Reserve status;
- (ii) to note that the wildfowling permit scheme element of the ANGUSAlive Change Request had transferred to Angus Council to be provided, however responsibilities relating to the management of the site remained outstanding, therefore the ANGUSAlive Change Request could not be agreed by Angus Council;
- (iii) to instruct officers to work with ANGUSAlive to undertake an options appraisal for the future of ranger activity across Angus to inform the requirements for a revised Service Level Agreement; and
- (iv) to note that a report would be brought back to Communities Committee on the scope of options of any review from Recommendation (iii) and next steps.

10. ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 2024 – 2028

There was submitted Report No 293/24 by the Director of Infrastructure and Environment, providing an update relating to the Angus Council Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy and noting authorisation for Angus Council officers to make an application to the Scottish Futures Trust for the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund in collaboration with Perth and Kinross Council for Angus as detailed in the report.

Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure had been installed across Angus over the last decade funded through Scottish Government grants. The Council had previously received annual grant funding through the Local Authority Installation Programme. The programme, which started in 2014, was funded by the Scottish Government and administered by Transport Scotland, successfully delivered Electric Vehicle chargers at strategic locations throughout Angus, with initial provision around the strategic road network. Provision was then expanded into each town, before moving into villages, then addressing gaps, and building up resilience.

The Director of Infrastructure and Environment introduced the Report and answered members questions.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the progress Angus Council had made to date in the delivery of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and the proposals to meet the national targets;
- (ii) that officers continue to work collaboratively with Perth and Kinross Council officers in developing Private Sector partnership for future Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure in Angus; and
- (iii) to note the application to Transport Scotland for Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Funding to facilitate this approach, approved by the Policy & Resources Committee on 3 September 2024, Report No 257/24 refers.

11. WINTER ROADS SERVICES POLICY AND PLAN FOR 2024 – 2025

With reference to Article 8 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 26 September 2023, there was submitted Report No 294/24 by the Director of Infrastructure and Environment, setting out the proposed Winter Roads Services Policy and detailing the proposed service provision for preventative treatment and snow clearing during the winter period 2024/25, together with contingency arrangements to cater for extreme conditions prevailing, in conjunction with the operational issues detailed in the Winter Roads Services Plan for 2024/25. This was as recommended by “Well Managed Highway Infrastructure – A Code of Practice”.

The Director of Infrastructure and Environment Introduced the Report and responded to members questions.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the service delivery, weather severity and outturn expenditure on winter road maintenance for 2023/24;
- (ii) to approve the Winter Roads Services Policy for the forthcoming winter 2024/25 as set out in Appendix 3 of the Report;
- (iii) to approve updates to the Winter Roads Services Plan for 2024/25 as set out in Appendix 4 of the Report;
- (iv) to note the arrangements proposed to meet the costs of the Winter Roads Services during 2024/25 as set out in the Report; and
- (v) to delegate authority to the Manager – Roads Assets to temporarily change the level of service as proposed in the report in extreme conditions to deviate from the road treatment contained in the Operational Plan within Appendix 4 of the report, and to introduce salt conservation techniques as proposed in the report if difficulties were experienced or anticipated in obtaining sufficient salt supplies.

12. B962 PANMURE STREET, MONIFIETH - AMENDMENTS TO EXISTING SPEED LIMITS

There was submitted Report No 295/24 by the Director of Infrastructure and Environment, informing the Committee of concerns raised over speeding on the B962 (Panmure Street) southbound approach into Monifieth, requesting to reduce the speed limit and detailing the findings of the engineering investigations carried out.

Appendix 1 to the Report showed the proposed amendment to the existing speed limit on the B962 Panmure Street, Monifieth.

Following some discussion, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the concerns of local residents regarding speeding on the B962 Panmure Street, Monifieth;
- (ii) to note the findings of the engineering investigations carried out to assess the concerns; and

- (iii) to approve the implementation of the amendments to the existing speed limits on the B962 Panmure Street, Monifieth.