

# **ANGUS COUNCIL**

MINUTE of HYBRID MEETING of **ANGUS COUNCIL** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Thursday 19 December 2024 at 2.00pm.

**Present:** Provost LINDA CLARK, Depute Provost DAVID CHEAPE, Councillors CHRIS BEATTIE, JULIE BELL, BRIAN BOYD, KENNY BRAES, SERENA COWDY, JACK CRUICKSHANKS, LYNNE DEVINE, HEATHER DORAN, BILL DUFF, BRENDA DURNO, CRAIG FOTHERINGHAM, IAIN GALL, ROSS GREIG, MARK MCDONALD, IAN MCLAREN, GEORGE MEECHAN, LLOYD MELVILLE, GAVIN NICOL, LOUISE NICOL, RONNIE PROCTOR MBE, JILL SCOTT, MARTIN SHEPHERD, LOIS SPEED, TOMMY STEWART, DEREK WANN and BETH WHITESIDE.

PROVOST Clark, in the Chair.

## **1. APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies intimated.

## **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND STATEMENTS OF TRANSPARENCY**

Councillor Cheape declared an interest in Item 9, Report No 389/24, as a Council appointed Director of Carnoustie Golf Links Management Committee. He indicated that he would not take part in any discussion and voting and would leave the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor Boyd made a statement of transparency in relation to Item 9, Report No 389/24 in that he clarified that he did not receive corporate hospitality at the Senior Open.

## **3. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minute of meeting of Angus Council of 7 November 2024 was submitted and approved as a correct record.

## **4. MOTION IN TERMS OF STANDING ORDER 24(1)**

Councillor Doran, seconded by Councillor Scott, moved the following motion: -

'Angus Council recognises that there is an increased number of requests for energy related projects in Angus and recognises the need for updated energy infrastructure and technologies that provide green and renewable energy. For any applications submitted to Angus Council community councils are contacted as a statutory consultee. Applications for larger energy projects are handled by the Energy Consent Unit (Scottish Government), although engagement is encouraged, community councils are not listed as statutory consultees in relation to section 36 and section 37 applications submitted under the electricity act in their area when these are submitted.

Both the UK and Scottish governments agree that modernising and removing inefficiencies within the Electricity act 1989 is the best route for speeding up electricity infrastructure deployment, which is vital to achieving clean power for 2030 and beyond. They also agree that the requirements for involving communities and statutory consultees should be strengthened and a consultation on this took place recently.

Angus Council requests that the Chief Executive writes to the Scottish Government in order to request that the following changes be made in the interim period before the results of any changes to the Electricity act 1989 are implemented:

- The relevant Community Council(s) be notified directly by the Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit of all applications under section 36 and 37 of the Electricity Act 1989.
- To also request that the Electricity Act 1989 – sections 36 and 37: applications guidance is updated to include the relevant Community Council(s) as a consultee under Section 5.4.'

The Council unanimously resolved to approve the motion.

## **5. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES ETC**

### **(a) Family, Education & Justice Committee**

The Council noted that Councillor Duff had intimated his resignation from the Family, Education & Justice Committee.

The Council resolved to appoint Councillor Clark to fill the vacancy.

### **(b) Montrose Port Authority (Selection Panel)**

The Council noted that Councillor Whiteside had intimated her resignation from the Montrose Port Authority (Selection Panel).

The Council resolved to appoint Councillor Duff to fill the vacancy.

### **(c) Scottish Joint Council**

The Council noted that Councillor Whiteside had intimated her resignation from the Scottish Joint Council.

The Council resolved to appoint Councillor Duff to fill the vacancy.

### **(d) Angus Community Planning Partnership Board**

The Council noted that Councillor Whiteside had intimated her resignation from the Angus Community Planning Partnership Board.

The Council resolved to appoint Councillor Duff to fill the vacancy.

### **(e) Tayside and Central Scotland Transport Partnership**

The Council noted that Councillor McDonald had intimated his resignation from the Tayside and Central Scotland Transport Partnership.

The Council resolved to appoint Councillor Clark to fill the vacancy.

## **6. TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2024/25 MID-YEAR REVIEW**

With reference to Article 5 of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 12 September 2024, there was submitted Report No 386/24 by the Director of Finance requesting members to review Angus Council's treasury management arrangements, activities and performance for the period 1 April 2024 to 30 September 2024.

The Report advised that during the first 6 months of 2024/25 there had been a number of significant issues which had affected the economy including the Bank of England Base Rate which decreased from 5.25% to 5.00%; CPI inflation which fell from 2.3% in April to 2.2% in August and core CPI inflation which fell from 3.9% in April to 3.6% in August.

The Report indicated that at its monetary policy meeting in August 2024 the Bank of England cut the base rate by 25bps to 5.00%, and this rate was held at the September meeting, signifying preference for a more gradual approach to rate cuts. The potential for a rate cut in August/September was reflected by the markets as higher returns were available on shorter term rather than longer term investments.

Having heard from the Director of Finance, the Council resolved to note the treasury management activities for the period 1 April 2024 to 30 September 2024, as outlined in Appendix 1 to the Report.

## **7. MEDIUM TERM BUDGET STRATEGY 2025/26 TO 2027/28**

With reference to Article 9 of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 14 December 2023, there was submitted Report No 387/24 by the Director of Finance setting out an updated Medium Term Budget Strategy for Angus Council's General Fund Services incorporating the projected funding shortfall over the period 2025/26 to 2027/28. Such a strategy was critical to the council's medium term financial planning arrangements and in view of the ongoing constraints on public spending.

Following questions from members, and having heard from the Director of Finance, the Council resolved: -

- (i) to note the contents of the Report and, in particular, the need to continue to plan and deliver sustainable savings over the medium to long term to meet the continued significant financial challenges which the Council faced;
- (ii) to note that while the position for financial year 2025/26 was much improved following recent announcements regarding funding by the Scottish Government, the Council still faced significant financial challenges in the years ahead to remain financially sustainable and that this would have a significant and unavoidable impact on services to the public and the taxes and charges which the Council levied;
- (iii) to note the commentary on the implications for the Council's financial sustainability set out in Section 6 of the Report;
- (iv) to approve the updated Medium Term Budget Strategy for the period 2025/26 to 2027/28 attached as Appendix A to the Report;
- (v) to note the central role of the Council's Change Programme in trying to address the projected funding gap and the work that was being undertaken to update the programme, as outlined in Section 5.14 of the Report and Appendix A. which would be reported separately to members as part of the budget setting process for 2025/26;
- (vi) to note that it was essential that the Council planned its budget strategy over a rolling 3 year period and made decisions to ensure savings were planned and made across that rolling 3 year period; and
- (vii) to note the intention to update the strategy annually to ensure the Council had a rolling and detailed 3 year strategy for the revenue budget, and a 4 year strategy for the capital budget.

## **8. 2025/26 BUDGET CONSULTATION – RESULTS OF STAGE 1 CONSULTATION AND PROPOSED CONTENT FOR STAGE 2 CONSULTATION**

With reference to Article 6 of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 12 September 2024, there was submitted Report No 388/24 by the Director of Finance advising members of the results from the first stage of the Council's 2025/26 Plans and Budgets Consultation, and seeking approval for the second stage on the basis set out in the Report. The Report also provided a brief update on the progress of the 2025/26 budget setting process.

The Report provided an overview of the summary results and comments, and highlighted a number of consistent themes. Overall, the Stage 1 consultation had greater engagement than any previous budget engagement with the demographic profile also being more diverse with a significant increase in younger people sharing their views. The results had indicated broad support among respondents for the priorities and actions identified in the Council Plan.

The Council resolved:-

- (i) to note the results from Stage 1 of the Council's 2025/26 Budget Consultation as set out in Appendices A1 and A2 and that regard would need to be had to the feedback as the Council finalised its 2025/26 Plans and Budgets;
- (ii) to approve the proposals for Stage 2 of the 2025/26 Budget Consultation as set out in Appendix B, noting that minor refinements may be needed for the final version published; and

- (iii) to note the progress on the 2025/26 budget setting process shown in Appendix C.

*Having declared an interest at Article 2 above, Councillor Cheape left the meeting prior to consideration of the following item.*

## **9. CARNOUSTIE GOLF FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS – RESULTS OF PHASE 1 PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

With reference to Articles 4 and 5 of the minute of Special meeting of Angus Council of 1 August 2024, there was submitted Report No 389/24 by the Director of Finance advising members of the results of the public consultation undertaken during August and September 2024 on proposed changes to the operation and management of Carnoustie Golf Links.

The Report also advised of the updated position with the legal agreements required to implement the proposals, as well as the changes to these now being proposed following the consultation. The Report indicated that Council was not, at this time, being asked to formally sign off on the legal agreements as the legal agreements would be the subject of further reports intended to be brought to a Special Council in January 2025, this timescale being a current best estimate and subject to all parties to the legal agreements being in a position to sign in January.

Having heard from the Director of Finance, the Council resolved:-

- (i) to note the background to the consultation, how it was undertaken and promoted and the high level of interest generated;
- (ii) to note the statistical results of the consultation and all of the comments made through the survey, the separate letters and e-mails received as part of the consultation and the public drop-in events as set out in Sections 6 to 9 of the Report and Appendices B, C, D, E, F & G;
- (iii) to note the Common Themes and Issues (Section 9), the Overall Assessment and Conclusions (Section 10) and the Proposed Changes and Implications arising (Section 11), all as detailed in the Report;
- (iv) to note the feedback received by way of the consultation, as set out in the Report and to advise officers of any issues or concerns which the Council would wish to see addressed as part of the finalisation of the legal agreements which will enable the Phase 1 proposals to be implemented; and
- (v) to agree that legal agreements to implement the Phase 1 proposals be finalised having regard to and in light of the consultation results, with a view to bringing these back to a special Council meeting for final sign off / approval in January 2025, this timescale being a current best estimate and subject to all parties to the legal agreements being in a position to sign in January.

*Councillor Cheape re-joined the meeting.*

*Councillor Durno left the meeting.*

## **10. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK**

There was submitted Report No 390/24 by the Director of Finance presenting the Council's Performance Management Framework which set out a range of improvements to how performance was monitored and reported across the Council.

The Framework was intended to provide the required level of accountability and assurances in relation to performance management arrangements, building on the current Performance Led Council programme approach.

The Council resolved:-

- (i) to note that the Performance Management Framework included a range of information relating to operational matters aimed at supporting officers to discharge their duties,

while also including information which Elected Members may also find useful to support their scrutiny, strategy and policy decision-making roles;

- (ii) to approve the Performance Management Framework provided within Appendix 1, for implementation from 1 January 2025; and
- (iii) to delegate authority to the Director of Finance to make minor changes to the Performance Management Framework during the initial 12-month implementation period, as part of the remit of the Performance Led Council Board, should these be required once the new Framework was operating.

## **11. HOUSING MEMBER/OFFICER WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS**

With reference to Article 6(iii) of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 20 June 2024, there was submitted Report No 391/24 by the Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth setting out the findings of the Housing Member/Officer Working Group (MOWG) and requesting members to determine whether to establish a new Housing Committee. If Members determined to establish a Housing Committee, the Council was being asked to approve the proposed Terms of Reference and schedule of meetings, make appointments to the Committee and to appoint a Convener and Vice Convener. Members were also asked to agree to appoint three tenant representatives to the Committee in a non-voting capacity in terms of a Scheme adopted by the Council.

The Report indicated that in June 2024, Angus Council approved an amendment to a Motion declaring a Housing Emergency in Angus in light of the Scottish Government having declared a National Housing Emergency. Council also agreed to the establishment of a short-life Member/Officer Working Group to consider the establishment of a standalone Housing Committee, to oversee Angus Council's Housing Strategy and Policy, and take urgent action to address the Housing Emergency.

Having considered options including differing models namely a Housing Committee versus a Sub-Committee of an existing Committee or Committees, the MOWG recommended the establishment of a Housing Committee to fully reflect the importance of Housing and the need for regular scrutiny by elected members.

Councillor Duff, seconded by Councillor Wann, moved that the Council agrees:-

- (i) to note the recommendation of the MOWG to establish a new Housing Committee;
- (ii) to approve the establishment of a new Housing Committee;
- (iii) to approve the proposed Terms of Reference for the new Housing Committee as detailed in Appendix 1 and to delegate authority to the Director of Legal, Governance & Change to make the necessary amendments to the Council's Scheme of Governance, including the required amendment to Standing Orders;
- (iv) to appoint members to the Housing Committee in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order 31(3), and, so far as possible, to give effect to the principles of political balance as set out in Standing Order 31(4);
- (v) to appoint Councillors Whiteside, Scott and Greig as Convener, Vice-Convener and Tenant Participation Spokesperson of the Housing Committee, respectively;
- (vi) to approve the proposed schedule of dates for the proposed new Housing Committee as attached in Appendix 2;
- (vii) that three tenant representatives be appointed to the Committee in a non-voting capacity in accordance with a Scheme adopted by the Council, attached at Appendix 3 of the Report; and
- (viii) to delegate authority to the Housing Committee to approve the appointment of tenant representatives as and when the details of the nominees were known.

The Council resolved to unanimously approve the motion.

Thereafter, the membership of the Housing Committee was agreed as follows:-

Councillors Whiteside (Convener), Bell, Braes, Clark, Devine, Meechan and Melville for the Administration Group.

Councillors Cruickshanks, Greig (Tenant Participation Spokesperson), McLaren, Gavin Nicol, Louise Nicol and Ronnie Proctor MBE for the Opposition Group.

Councillors Scott (Vice-Convener), Doran and Speed for the Non-Aligned Members.

## **12. ANGUS LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND PARTICIPATION STATEMENT 2024**

With reference to Article 16 of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 14 December 2023, there was submitted Report No 392/24 by the Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth seeking approval of the Development Plan Scheme and Participation Statement 2024 which contained the timetable for the preparation of the next Local Development Plan (LDP) for Angus, alongside a Participation Statement outlining how and when consultation and engagement would occur during this preparation.

The Council resolved:-

- (i) to approve the responses to consultation undertaken on the draft Participation Statement, as set out in Appendix 2 to the Report, and the revised timeframe as set out in Paragraph 6.2 of the Report;
- (ii) to approve the Angus Development Plan Scheme and Participation Statement 2024 as contained within in Appendix 1 to the Report; and
- (iii) to delegate authority to the Chief Planner and Service Leader – Planning and Sustainable Growth to complete all other legislative procedural arrangements associated with the publication of the Development Plan Scheme and Participation Statement 2024.

## **13. ANGUS LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN DELIVERY PROGRAMME 2024**

With reference to Article 16 of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 14 December 2023, there was submitted Report No 393/24 by the Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth seeking approval of the Delivery Programme for the Angus Local Development Plan which detailed the actions required, timescales, lead and supporting partners and progress in the delivery of the Plan.

The Council resolved:-

- (i) to approve the Angus Local Development Plan Delivery Programme 2024, as detailed within Appendix 1, for adoption, submission to Scottish Ministers, and publication; and
- (ii) to delegate authority to the Chief Planner and Service Leader - Planning and Sustainable Growth to make minor formatting and drafting changes if required.