

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE****MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 4 DECEMBER 1997 AT 1000 HRS
IN THE MEETING ROOM, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS,
LONDON ROAD, KILMARNOCK**

PRESENT: Councillors David Sneller, Eric Jackson, Drew McIntyre, Ronald Brailsford, Provost Robert Stirling, Councillors Jane Darnbrough, Kathleen Hall, Daniel Coffey, David Fulton, Kim Nicoll, George Turnbull, Eric Ross, Jim Kelly, Jimmy Boyd and Tommy Farrell.

ATTENDING: David Montgomery, Chief Executive; Fiona Lees, Depute Chief Executive; Des Tierney, Director of Commercial Operations; William Stafford, Director of Community Services; John Mulgrew, Director of Education; Gordon Clark, Director of Finance; John Hillis, Director of Housing; Iain McLachlan, Director of Personnel Services; Douglas Bulloch, Director of Social Work; Barbara Haughan, Director of Support Services; Alex McPhee, Senior Depute Director of Finance; Bernadette Docherty, Senior Depute Director of Social Work; Charles McIvor, Depute Director of Commercial Operations; Tom McHugh, Depute Director of Finance; Roddy Wallace, Head of Administration; Malcolm Roulston, Head of Information Technology; Douglas Campbell, Head of Public Relations and Marketing; George Fraser, Senior Policy Adviser; Helen Sinclair, Welfare Rights Officer; and Julie Armstrong, Senior Administrative Officer.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Irene Reeves, Douglas Reid, Wilma Doyle, Jim O'Neill and Bob Beattie.

CHAIR: Councillor David Sneller, Chair.

CHAIR'S REMARKS

1. The Chair opened the meeting by wishing all Members and Officers and their families a Merry Christmas and thanked everyone for the work they undertook in 1997 and also for the support given to him in his role as Chair of this Committee.

The Chair then proceeded to comment on the financial settlement for next year. He also advised that the Council had asked the Secretary of State for an independent review of Local Government finance.

CHILDREN'S PANEL PRESENTATION

2. The Chair welcomed Linda Holbein, East Ayrshire Chairman of Children's Panel to the meeting.

Linda Holbein then gave a presentation to the Committee on the background, role and responsibilities of the Children's Panel. Information was also given on the role of the Reporter to the Children's Panel and the involvement of the Social Work Department.

The presentation was followed by a question and answer session.

Linda then thanked the Council for the support which had been given to the Children's Panel and looked forward to continued support.

The Chair then thanked Linda Holbein for coming along to give the presentation.

SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES

3. There were submitted and approved, both as correct records and in respect of recommendations contained therein, the undernoted Sub-Committee Minutes (circulated) as contained in Appendices I to VIII of these Minutes.
 - 3.1 **MEMBERS SERVICES SUB-COMMITTEE OF 23 OCTOBER 1997** - Appendix I.
 - 3.2 **CHAIR'S SUB-COMMITTEE OF 6 NOVEMBER 1997** - Appendix II.
 - 3.3 **QUEENS DRIVE, KILMARNOCK AD HOC SUB-COMMITTEE OF 10 NOVEMBER 1997** - Appendix III.
 - 3.4 **CHAIR'S SUB-COMMITTEE OF 13 NOVEMBER 1997** - Appendix IV.
 - 3.5 **CIVIC CEREMONIAL SUB-COMMITTEE OF 18 NOVEMBER 1997** - Appendix V.
 - 3.6 **PERSONNEL SUB-COMMITTEE OF 18 NOVEMBER 1997** - Appendix VI.
 - 3.7 **DECENTRALISATION SUB-COMMITTEE OF 25 NOVEMBER 1997** - Appendix VII.
 - 3.8 **FINANCE AND PROPERTY SUB-COMMITTEE OF 25 NOVEMBER 1997** - Appendix VIII.

3.8.1 MATTERS ARISING

ITEM 5 - STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON REVENUE COLLECTION (Item 5, Page 2789)

The Senior Depute Director of Finance apologised for any misapprehensions which might have been raised regarding the non-availability of certain elements of the Assessor's records in respect of the Community Charge. He confirmed that a letter explaining the position had been sent to all Members of the Council. (This letter indicated that the Council continued to hold all necessary records on computer file and the absence of Assessor's records themselves constituted no disadvantage either to the Council or to its citizens.

The Committee then agreed to change the order of business for the next two items and considered the business as follows.

BUDGETARY CONTROL SUMMARY STATEMENTS (POLICY AND RESOURCES) TO 10 OCTOBER 1997 (PERIOD 7)

4. There were submitted and noted the undernoted reports (circulated) by the Director of Finance which advised Members of the current budgetary control position and the projected out-turn for the year to the period ended 10 October 1997 (Period 7), viz:-
 - (a) Policy and Resources (Support) - Report dated 12 November 1997;
 - (b) Policy and Resources (Central) - Report dated 12 November 1997; and
 - (c) Policy and Resources (Urban Aid Projects) - Report dated 12 November 1997.

**BUDGETARY CONTROL SUMMARY STATEMENTS TO
10 OCTOBER 1997 (PERIOD 7)**

5. There were submitted the undernoted reports dated 27 November 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Finance which advised Members of the current budgetary control position and the projected out-turn for the period ended 10 October 1997 (Period 7), viz:-

(a) COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS

The Committee noted the report.

(b) GENERAL SERVICES REVENUE ACCOUNT

It was agreed:

- (i) to approve an increase in the Education Department budget amounting to £260,000 as outlined in paragraph 3.1.1(b) of the report;
- (ii) to approve an increase in the Commercial Operations budget of £120,000 as outlined in paragraph 3.1.1(j) of the report; to be offset within the corporate management section being taken across all Departments for the remainder of this financial year.
- (iii) to remit to the Chief Executive to instruct the Director of Finance:
 - (a) to set up a Task Unit responsible to the Director of Finance, comprising senior Finance Department staff headed by the Depute Director (Accountancy and Budgeting) together with administrative support staff seconded from normal duties to work with the relevant finance staff within the Commercial Operations Department, to review the financial systems and accounting practices within the Commercial Operations Department, to ensure that appropriate procedures are in place and all necessary back-up information is to hand to ensure that a sound basis for budget setting and subsequent financial monitoring is established and operational from the start of the new financial year; and
 - (b) to submit an interim report to the Special Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 6 January 1998; and
- (ii) otherwise note the contents of this report.

DEBTOR BALANCES WRITE-OFF PROCEDURE

6. There was submitted a report dated 27 November 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Finance which recommended an amendment to the Scheme of Delegation to enable irrecoverable debts of certain categories and levels to be written-off.

It was agreed:

- (i) to delegate authority to the Director of Finance in accordance with the procedure for dealing with various debts as shown at paragraphs 4.1 to 4.3 of the report;
- (ii) to recommend to Council that the Scheme of Delegation be amended accordingly; and
- (iii) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

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ESTIMATES 1998/99 - PROPOSED TIMETABLE

7. There was submitted a report dated 18 November 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Finance on a proposed timetable for the preparation of estimates for 1998/99.

It was agreed to approve the 1998/99 estimates timetables for General Services and for the Housing Revenue Account as detailed in Appendix IX of this Minute.

CORPORATE PLANNING MECHANISM - PRODUCTION OF ANNUAL ACTION PLANS (Item 11, Page 2608)

8. There were submitted and approved reports (circulated) by the Directors of Support Services, of Personnel Services and of Finance which sought approval of Annual Action Plans for the Support Services, Personnel Services and Finance Departments (which had been appended to the reports) which (i) outlined the progress made in relation to the Service Plans 1996/99; (ii) outlined the Corporate Strategies Implementation Plans and the Accounts Commission Management Arrangements Audit (Module 1) Action Plan; and (iii) detailed the action required for 1998/99.

CORPORATE PLAN - PRODUCTION OF ANNUAL ACTION PLANS

9. There was submitted a report dated 28 November 1997 (circulated) by the Chief Executive on the production of Annual Action Plans by each of the Council's Service Committees, which recommended arrangements for the updating of the Council's Corporate Strategies and Corporate Plan and the circulation of documents to all Elected Members.

It was agreed:

- (i) to note that Annual Action Plans had been prepared and agreed by all of the Council's Service Committees;
- (ii) to note the arrangements proposed for the updating of the Council's Corporate Strategies and Corporate Plan and to receive update reports on each of the Council's Corporate Strategies at a future meeting;
- (iii) to note that copies of all Annual Action Plans would be collated and circulated to all Members of the Council;
- (iv) to note that in future years Performance Plans in accordance with the Council's Best Value submission would replace Annual Action Plans and would be reported to the October cycle of the Policy and Resources Committee; and
- (v) to otherwise to note the terms of the report.

SCOTLAND'S HEALTH - A CHALLENGE TO US ALL - EATING FOR HEALTH - A DIET ACTION PLAN FOR SCOTLAND - HEALTHY EATING POLICY: A RESPONSE BY EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL (Item 3, Page 1502)

10. There was submitted a report dated 28 November 1997 (circulated) by the Member/Officer Group on East Ayrshire Eating for Health Policy which recommended a proposed response to the Diet Action Plan for Scotland which would form the Healthy Eating Policy for East Ayrshire Council.

Various issues under the remit of the Education Committee were raised in relation to the implementation of the policy and it was noted that these issues would be raised at the Education Committee.

It was agreed:

- (i) to approve the proposed response contained within the report to the Diet Action Plan for Scotland and that this would form the Healthy Eating Policy for East Ayrshire;
- (ii) that monitoring and evaluation be undertaken by the Social Strategy Implementation Group for which the Director of Social Work had corporate responsibility; and
- (iii) that reports on progress be submitted to the Policy and Resources Committee.

Councillor Nicoll left the meeting at this point.

URBAN PROGRAMME TERMINATING PROJECTS - FINANCIAL YEAR 1998/99

11. There was submitted a report dated 28 November 1997 (circulated) by the Chief Executive which (i) advised of projects terminating during financial year 1998/99; (ii) recommended arrangements for the future financing of the Kilmarnock New Start Project; and (iii) proposed an evaluation process for the other projects.

It was agreed:

- (i) to note the projects terminating and those where evaluation by Council was required;
- (ii) that future funding for the New Start project be included as a growth item within the Development Services budget as part of the budgetary process;
- (iii) to approve the process for evaluating terminating urban projects detailed in Section 4 of the report;
- (iv) that the evaluation panel comprise of five Elected Members namely Vice-Chair of Policy and Resources Committee (Chair of Panel), Councillors Hall, Fulton, G Smith and Carmichael; and
- (v) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

Provost Stirling left the meeting at this point.

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO AYRSHIRE AND ARRAN HEALTH BOARD'S CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS

12. There was submitted a report dated 1 December 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Social Work which sought approval for the Council's response to Ayrshire and Arran Health Board's consultation documents as detailed below.
- (a) HEALTH IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY 1997-2002
 - (b) HEALTH PROMOTION STRATEGY 1997-2002
 - (c) MATERNITY STRATEGY 1997-2002
 - (d) CARDIAC SERVICES STRATEGY 1997-2002

It was noted that a Joint Seminar with Ayrshire and Arran Health Board would take place immediately following this meeting.

It was agreed:

- (i) to endorse the recommendations set out in Appendices 5 to 8 of the report;
- (ii) to include a comment in the response shown at Appendix 5 to call for an improvement to the Ayrshire GP Service in the south of East Ayrshire; and
- (ii) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

REPORTS FROM THE MEMBER/OFFICER GROUPS ON GRANTS

13.1 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES (Item 21, Page 2612)

There was submitted a report dated 4 November 1997 (circulated) by the Depute Director of Personnel Services which proposed an alternative Council approach when considering requests for grant aid support from organisations operating in the area of equal opportunities.

It was agreed:

- (i) to note the organisations currently requesting funding from East Ayrshire Council under the heading of equal opportunities;
- (ii) that the Policy and Resources Committee consider grant applications of a central nature from organisations in the equal opportunities sector, which included those previously considered by Service Committees, with existing Departmental resources for this purpose being transferred to this Committee;
- (iii) that a statement on progress in achieving an Equal Opportunities position acceptable to the Council should be completed by all organisations applying to the Council for grant aided support, subject to consulting the East Ayrshire Council for Voluntary Organisations on its implementation; and
- (iv) that the Member/Officer Group on Grants (Equal Opportunities) continue in order that they could consider the issue of "support in kind" and report back to a future meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee.

13.2 INFORMATION AND ADVICE SERVICES - INTERIM REPORT ON FURTHER CONSULTATION (Item 21, Page 2163)

There was submitted a report dated 26 November 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Support Services on progress regarding the further consultation exercise carried out by the Member/Officer Working Group on Information and Advice Services.

It was agreed:

- (i) to note the progress made to date;
- (ii) to continue consideration of the final Working Group report;
- (iii) to authorise the Group to continue consultation as necessary with the various interested parties in order to arrive at appropriate recommendations; and
- (iv) to receive a final report with recommendations from the Working Group to the Policy and Resources Committee on 29 January 1998.

ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY (Item 7, Page 871)

14. There was submitted a report dated 1 December 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Social Work which submitted for approval an Anti-Poverty Strategy for East Ayrshire Council.

The Chair, followed by the Chair of the Social Work Committee, congratulated staff for the quality of work done in the completion of this important document.

It was agreed:

- (i) to endorse the Anti-Poverty Strategy;
- (ii) that the Director of Social Work co-ordinate the implementation of the Strategy; and
- (iii) to redesignate the Social Work Department Welfare Rights and Money Advice Development Unit as the Council's Anti-Poverty Unit.

AWARDING OF TENDERS

15. There was submitted a report dated 21 November 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Support Services which provided, for information, details of tenders which had been awarded as follows:

<u>Contract</u>	<u>Successful Contractor</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Proposed Local Office at Bellfield, Kilmarnock	S T Connell & Co, Cumnock	£32,395.65
Proposed Local Office at Well Road, Auchinleck	James Wilson & Son (Auchmillan), Mauchline	£36,257.03

PUBLICATION OF CORPORATE IT STRATEGY AND CORPORATE IT SECURITY POLICY (Item 17.1, Page 447)

16. There was submitted and noted a report dated 25 November 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Support Services on the development and publication of a Corporate Information Technology Strategy and an Information Technology Security Policy for East Ayrshire Council.

Copies of the Corporate Information Technology Strategy and Security Policy were available at the meeting for Members' information.

Councillor Turnbull left the meeting at this point,

STATUS REPORT ON PROGRESS WITH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY RELATED YEAR 2000 ISSUES (Item 23, Page 2452)

17. There was submitted a report dated 11 November 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Support Services which gave a progress report on work being undertaken to address the potential effect the change of millennium may have on the Council's IT systems.

It was agreed:

- (i) that the Head of Information Technology submit an updated progress report to the Committee on 29 January 1998; and
- (ii) otherwise, to note the contents of the report.

MILLENNIUM CELEBRATIONS

- 18.** There was submitted a report dated 17 November 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Community Services which proposed the establishment of a short-term Member/Officer Working Group to co-ordinate the Council's approach to the celebration of the new millennium.

It was agreed to establish a Member/Officer Working Group on Millennium Celebrations which would comprise of the Chair of the Policy and Resources and Community Services Committees, the Provost, the Depute Provost, and Councillors Nicoll, Hall and Carmichael.

The meeting terminated at 1200 hrs.