

LEADERSHIP PANEL.

Minutes of meeting in County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr,
on 19th February 2013 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors Bill McIntosh (Chair), Bill Grant, John McDowall, Rita Miller, Robin Reid, Philip Saxton and Margaret Toner.

Attending: E. Howat, Executive Director – Resources Governance and Organisation; H. Garland, Executive Director – Care, Learning and Wellbeing; L. Bloomer, Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment; V. Andrews, Head of Legal and Democratic Services; K. Leinster, Head of Community Care and Housing; C. Monaghan, Head of Policy, Community Planning and Public Affairs; J. McQuillan, Head of Property and Facility Services; R. Kingisepp, Team Leader (Capital Planning and Business Support); D. Strang, Manager (Schools and Service Support); W. Phillips, Revenues and Benefits Manager; T. Baulk, Chief Accounting Officer; A. Greenwood, Asset Co-ordinator; D. Robertson, Communications Manager; A. Gerrish, Committee Services Officer; and D. Knight, Democratic Services Administrator.

1. Declarations of Interests.

Councillor Saxton

(1) declared an interest in the following two items on the agenda:-

- Consultation on Taxi and Private Hire Car Licensing Proposals for Change as he was a private hire / owner / driver; and
- Schools Project pertaining to consideration of Marr College as he was on the Board of Governors of CK Marr Educational Trust; and

(2) indicated that he would withdraw from the meeting during consideration of these items at the appropriate points during the meeting.

Community Services – Social Services.

2. South Ayrshire Dementia Action Plan 2013-2016.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 8th February 2013 by the Executive Director – Care, Learning and Wellbeing

(1) advising

- (a) that the population in South Ayrshire was ageing with the proportion of people aged 65 and over expected to rise from around 21 per cent to around 31 per cent by 2035; and
- (b) that this demographic shift would result in growing pressure on health, housing and social care services locally and nationally and that it was essential that services were planned and designed accordingly; and

- (c) that the Scottish Government's strategic response to this challenge was to shift the balance of care and resources from institutional settings such as hospitals and care homes, to care in the community through the Reshaping Social Care agenda;
- (2) proposing that the draft South Ayrshire Dementia Action Plan 2012-15 attached as Appendix 1 of the report be approved; and
- (3) intimating that the Action Plan reflected the priorities set out in Scotland's National Dementia Strategy 2010-13 and had been developed with a focus on key strategic outcomes.

Clarification was sought as to whether the Dementia Action Plan had been submitted to the South Ayrshire Community Health Partnership for its consideration and the Panel was informed that the Action Plan had been submitted in the first instance to this Panel for its approval and would thereafter be submitted to the Community Health Partnership.

A discussion took place as to whether gender issues relating to Dementia sufferers and carers could be included in the Equalities Impact Assessment and an assurance was provided that this could be undertaken.

Thereafter, the Panel

Decided: to agree the draft South Ayrshire Dementia Action Plan 2013-2016, attached as Appendix 1 of the report.

3. Reshaping Care for Older People: Change Fund 2013/14.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 8th February 2013 by the Executive Director – Care, Learning and Wellbeing

- (1) advising that Reshaping Care for Older People was a national policy with the principal policy aim of "optimising independence and wellbeing for older people at home or in a homely setting" which would be achieved through shifting the balance of care of older people from hospitals to community settings;
- (2) indicating
 - (a) that the budget statement by the Scottish Government on 17th November 2010 had included indication of a "Change Fund" to support the Reshaping Care for Older People Programme with a national resource of £70m for 2011/2012; and
 - (b) that on 11th November 2011 revised Change Fund Guidance was issued which detailed an increase in the national resource to £80m for 2012/13, £80m in 2013/14 and £70million in 2014/15 with this Council's allocation for 2013/14, being the third year of the Change Fund, was £2.16m;
- (3) reporting that Appendix 1 of the report outlined a submission totalling £2.093m with the full year spend of £2.16m being achieved through further initiatives agreed by the Community Health Partnership during the course of the year; and

- (4) seeking agreement to the proposed 2013/14 Change Fund Bid Submission, subject to further agreement through the Community Health Partnership and Community Planning Partnership Board.

Having noted the importance of the Fund to the redesign of services with an emphasis on preventability, the Panel

Decided: to agree to the proposed 2013/14 Change Fund Bid submission.

Community Services – Housing and Customer First.

4. Housing Capital Programme 2012/13 – Monitoring Report at Period 9, 31st December 2012.

There was submitted a joint report (issued) of 12th February 2013 by the Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment and Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation

- (1) informing of the actual capital expenditure and income together with progress being made with the Housing Capital Programme for 2012/13 as at 31st December 2012 (Budget Monitoring Period 9);

- (2) advising that Appendix 1 of the report provided the progress made on projects to 31st December 2012; Appendix 1 to this report, each table providing the following information:-

Table 1: detailing the latest position in terms of current expenditure, full year income and expenditure budget and projected outturn;

Table 2: highlighting financial impacts on projects which required approval by Members;

Table 3: providing commentary on projects where target milestones have not been met but where there were no financial implications at the reporting period; and

Table 4: summarising the three year income and expenditure impact if approval was granted for the changes set out in table 2;

- (3) intimating that as outlined in Table 2 of Appendix 1 of the report, there were adjustments that required budgets to be re-profiled from 2012/13 to 2013/14 (Table 2, ref 1 – 4, 6 – 7, 10 - 11) and in year programme adjustments (Table 2, ref. 5, 8 and 9), with corresponding borrowing and CFCR adjustments also being required and, therefore, requesting that the required adjustments be approved as outlined in Table 2 of Appendix 1 of the report;

- (4) indicating that the adjustments highlighted at (3) above resulted in significant slippage of projects from 2012/13 to 2013/14 and that additional information to the reasons behind this slippage were outlined in a report at item 14 of this Minute; and

- (5) reporting that as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report, at the end of Period 9, actual expenditure stood at £6.546m representing expenditure of 40.4% of the total budget with the net impact of the proposed programme adjustments being outlined in section 4.2 of the report and that detailed in Table 2 of Appendix 1 of the report was a net reduction in programming expenditure of £4.282m with a corresponding reduction in borrowing and CFCR.

Concerns were raised about the slippage to the Housing Capital Programme and the effect that this would have on the Programme and the requirement to meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standards by 2015.

Clarification was sought in relation to the current position and progress being made with two properties being considered for buy back and the Head of Property and Facility Services advised the Panel that he would liaise with Housing Officers and advise Members of the current position.

Clarification having been sought and provided in relation to tender specifications and the timeous preparation of tenders and whether the budget for major component replacements was achievable having regard to previous years' backlog, the Panel

Decided:

- (a) to note the progress made on the delivery of the Housing Capital Programme to 31st December 2012;
- (b) to approve the amendments as outlined in Section 4.2 of the report and as detailed in Table 2 of Appendix 1 of the report; and
- (c) that in light of the concerns about the level of slippage and potential impact on the achievement of the Scottish Housing Quality Standards 2015, to refer this report to the next meeting of the Community Services Standing Scrutiny Panel to examine the reasons for the slippage and to identify actions which would assist in minimising slippage in the future and that their findings be reported back to the meeting of this Panel on 19th March 2013.

5. Lochside Maisonettes - Owner Occupier Negotiations.

Reference was made to the Minutes of 2nd October 2012 (Page 455, paragraph 1) and there was submitted a report (issued) of 8th February 2013 by the Executive Director – Care, Learning and Wellbeing advising of the overall negotiation process with owners within the Lochside maisonettes and seeking agreement to conclude missives for the acquisition of these twelve properties.

Clarification was sought and confirmation provided that the timescales for the project were on track in accordance with the programme, with demolition of the maisonettes expected to commence by the summer. The Panel then

Decided:

- (1) to note the process which had taken place to negotiate purchase prices for the 12 privately owned maisonettes in Ferguson Street and Sloan Street; and
- (2) to agree to the issue of formal offers to acquire these twelve properties and the conclusion of purchase on the terms agreed by the District Valuer with each owner, in accordance with the general principles of compensation for compulsory purchase, and on such other reasonable terms and conditions as agreed by the Executive Director – Care, Learning and Wellbeing.

Development and Environment - Economic Development, Tourism and Leisure.**C****6. Employability, Business Support and Enterprise.**

There was submitted a joint report (issued) of 11th January 2013 by the Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment and Executive Director - Resources, Governance and Organisation

- (1) advising
 - (a) that the basis for this report had originated in budget proposals agreed in December 2011 which addressed social enterprise and youth employment;
 - (b) that since then, further development work had taken place across the Council to incorporate business support and employability more generally integrating three work streams which taken together would make a significant impact; and
 - (c) that Raising Our Ambitions for South Ayrshire had helped to stress the need for taking an integrated approach and in this case bringing ‘Maximising the local economy’ to the forefront; and
- (2) outlining a set of new activities and extensions of existing programmes utilising budgets approved in December 2011 and 2012 to address Employability, Business Support and Enterprise needs in South Ayrshire.

Clarification was sought and provided that the project team could be set up by March 2013, that results would be achieved and delivered as outlined in the report, that there would be liaison with the Entrepreneurial Spark facility in Dundonald, that external sources of funding had been identified and whether any of the Council’s partners had been approached about providing funding and when progress reports would be submitted to the Panel, the Panel

Decided:

- (i) to approve an integrated package of additional activities that would address some of the most pressing economic challenges in South Ayrshire at this time, utilising £1.500m of funding provided in the Revenue Budget over a three year period to include the following components:-
 - (A) an employability component, to include the introduction of a South Ayrshire Job Readiness Scheme, an employment incentive, and getting more employers actively engaged in supporting employability initiatives, thereby assisting local people who have struggled to gain employment into sustainable jobs, as set out in more detail in paragraphs 4.4 to 4.7 of the report;
 - (B) a Business Growth component, aimed at generating more start-ups and getting more businesses growing by trading beyond the local market, thereby creating additional new jobs for local people, as set out in more detail in paragraphs 4.8 to 4.12 of the report; and
 - (C) a Social Enterprise development component that would support both the creation of new social/community enterprises and help existing social enterprises to expand, thereby creating sustainable employment opportunities within local communities, as set out in more detail in paragraphs 4.13 to 4.16 of the report;
- (ii) to delegate authority as required to each of the Executive Directors for their respective services to take such actions as required to implement the recommendations; and
- (ii) to request the relevant Officers to submit progress reports on a regular basis to future meetings of this Panel with the first such update to the meeting of this Panel in April or May 2013.

Councillor Saxton, having previously declared an interest in the following item of business, left the meeting during consideration of this matter.

Development and Environment - Sustainability and Environment.**7. Consultation on Taxi and Private Hire Car Licensing Proposals for Change.**

There was submitted a report (issued) of 12th February 2013 by the Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation

- (1) advising
 - (a) that the Scottish Government had made a number of proposals for changes to the current regime of Taxi and Private Hire Car Licensing with a view to tightening up the licensing process for taxi and private hire car drivers, vehicles and booking offices;

- (b) that some of the changes were significant but they wished to maintain the elements of the current system that worked well; and
 - (c) that any changes made should support local authorities and the police in creating and managing appropriate local arrangements and that ultimately their aim was to bring all drivers and firms up to the correct standards to benefit people and businesses who made use of and relied on these services;
- (2) highlighting that several of the proposals mentioned in the Consultation were already in place in South Ayrshire, for example, provision for Wheelchair access and compulsory training for drivers; and
 - (3) seeking approval for the submission of a response to the Scottish Government to a consultation on the Taxi and Private Hire Car Licensing as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report.

Clarification was sought and provided in relation to the uniformity of both taxi and private hire cars being metered and further clarification was sought as to whether local authorities should have the power to restrict the numbers of taxis and private hire cars and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services would undertake to provide Elected Members with more information on this matter, and the Panel

Decided: to approve submission of a response to the Scottish Government as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report, subject to the inclusion in the response to Question 30 that a uniform approach to metering should be adopted for both taxi and private hire cars.

Councillor Saxton rejoined the meeting at this point.

Corporate and Community Planning - Corporate, Strategic and Community Planning.

8. Revised Media Relations Protocol for South Ayrshire Council.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 12th February 2013 by the Head of Policy, Community Planning and Public Affairs

- (1) advising
 - (a) that the Council at its meeting on 2nd March 2010 (Page 162, paragraph 10) had approved a Media Relations Protocol to establish a corporate and consistent approach to dealing with the media and to ensure information was released to the media in the appropriate way and at the right times; and
 - (b) that since then, feedback from Elected Members and Officers had highlighted the potential to enhance the Media Relations Protocol to ensure further clarity and understanding throughout the Council on how Elected Members and Officers worked with the media;

- (2) seeking approval of the revised Media Relations Protocol which maintained the same basic principles as the original version as follows:-
- the protocol applied to all Officers and Elected Members when speaking on behalf of the Council, for example, Council Leader, Provost, or Portfolio Holder, and when representing the Council on partnership organisations;
 - it did not apply, for example, if a Councillor was speaking as a member of an individual political party or as an independent Councillor; and
 - when speaking to the media on behalf of the Council, official spokespeople such as members and employees should reflect the Council's position in relation to all issues unless speaking in another official capacity, such as a trade union official; and
 - the Council's communications team (available as required 24 hours a day, seven days a week) would be the primary point of contact between the Council and the media for both proactive and reactive issues; and
- (3) intimating that the revisions had taken account of both best practice and existing practice that had developed since the original protocol was approved, for example, the introduction of pre-election period guidance and also clarified the position in relation to photocalls related to Council business and the clearance of statements.

A request was made that in terms of paragraph 6.1.13 of the Appendix, all Elected Members should also receive a copy of news releases not just the Group Leaders and following confirmation of this, the Panel

Decided: to approve the revised Media Relations Protocol as set out in Appendix 1 of the report subject to paragraph 6.1.13 being amended to read that news releases issued to the media "will be copied at the same time to all Councillors for information".

Corporate and Community Planning - Resources and Performance.

9. Housing and Council Tax Benefit – Performance Monitoring – Position at 31st December 2012.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 12th February 2013 by the Executive Director - Resources, Governance and Organisation advising of the service improvements being undertaken to help achieve the full range of national housing and Council Tax benefit performance standards as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report.

Decided:

- (1) to approve the contents of the report; and
- (2) to request the Executive Director - Resources, Governance and Organisation to provide a further quarterly report on service delivery to a future meeting of this Panel.

10. Write-off of Non-Domestic Rates (Specific).

There was submitted a report (issued) of 12th February 2013 by the Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation

- (1) seeking approval to write-off rates relating to specific cases for 2010/11 and 2011/12, totalling £227,697.47, in accordance with the Council's policy; and
- (2) advising that the write-off was fully provided for in the Abstract of Accounts as at 31st March 2012 and that debts would continue to be pursued.

Clarification was sought and provided that the increase in the amounts being written-off could be partly as a result of the current economic downturn in the Town Centres and that the Scottish Government had been asked to consider the loophole regarding the setting up of "Phoenix" Companies, the Panel

Decided: to approve the write-off of rates amounting to £67,270.13 for 2010/11 and £160,427.34 for 2011/12.

11. Write-off of Housing Benefits Overpayments.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 12th February 2013 by the Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation

- (1) outlining procedures for the write-off of housing benefit overpayments once all attempts to recover such debts had been exhausted (and without prejudice to future recovery);
- (2) seeking approval to write-off housing benefit overpayments of £22,759.82 in accordance with the Council's policy; and
- (3) advising that the accounts submitted for write-off would be contained within the existing bad debt provision.

Decided: to approve the write-off of housing benefit overpayments totalling £22,759.821 as detailed in the Appendix of the report.

12. Budget Management – Revenue Budgetary Control 2012/13 – Position Statement at 31st December 2012.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 12th February 2013 by the Executive Director - Resources, Governance and Organisation

- (1) presenting an overview of the General Services Revenue Account, Housing Revenue Account and Common Goods Accounts for 2012/13 as at 31st December 2012;
- (2) advising that the unaudited General Services surplus at 31st March 2012 was £18.026m, the unaudited Housing Revenue Account surplus was £15.714m and the combined Common Good revenue surplus for all Common Good Funds was £0.934m and that the 2011/12 audit had been completed on 30th September 2012 with no changes to the reserves positions being required;

- (3) outlining the current position with regard to:-
- overview of services position at 31st December 2012;
 - Council Tax Income;
 - Repairs and Renewal Fund; and
 - Accumulated Balance at 31st December 2012;
 - Contingency Balance 2012/13;
 - General Reserve Balances;
 - Housing Revenue Account Balance; and
 - Common Good Funds; and
- (4) reporting that all Directorates had committed to bringing their budget in on-line as minimum by 31st March 2013 and that an accumulated surplus of £9.801m was currently anticipated at 31st March 2013 for General Services, £1.857m accumulated surplus for the Housing Revenue Account and a combined £0.841m accumulated surplus for the Common Good Funds.

Members requested that in future reports, the Appendices should have page numbers.

Clarification was sought and provided in relation to the unspent budget for energy efficiency measures, the loss of rental income to the Ayr Common Good Fund whilst the Wallace Tower remained unoccupied, progress with the Golf Business Development Plan, the projected overspend and increased pressures on the budget for homecare care packages for Older People and seeking assurances that their safety would not be compromised, the Panel

Decided:

- (a) to approve the virement as outlined in the Directorate financial performance reports as outlined in Appendix 1 and summarised in 4.1 (2) of the report;
- (b) to note the revised earmarking for carry forward of resources to 2013/14 and to approve the new requests as outlined in 4.1 (3) of the report;
- (c) to approve the £0.340m draw from contingency from Children and Community relating to the revenue budgets not required in 2012/13 for the new build Children's residential unit as outlined in 4.1 (4) of the report;
- (d) to note the management action being taken by Directors to ensure a break-even position at 31st March 2013 as outlined in 4.1 (5) of the report;
- (e) to note the Council Tax collection rates as outlined in 4.2 report;
- (f) to request that the Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment submit a report to the meeting of this Panel on 19th March 2013 confirming the outcome of the investigation underway in relation to the £0.839m energy efficiency measures as referred to in paragraph 4.3 of the report and outlining the details of the proposed projects and any energy generation aspects within these; and
- (g) otherwise, to note the contents of the report.

13. General Services Capital Programme 2012/13: Monitoring Report as at Period9: 31st December 2012.

There was submitted a joint report (issued) of 12th February 2013 by the Executive Director– Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment and the Executive Director - Resources, Governance and Organisation

- (1) advising that a number of adjustments to the Programme had been approved by Leadership Panels and South Ayrshire Council since approval of the 2012/13 General Services Capital Programme, leading to a revised income budget of £12,680,423 and expenditure budget of £11,977,564 which was reflected in Appendix 2 of the report;
- (2) outlining the General Services Capital Programme for 2012/13 as at 31st December 2012 and detailing that at the end of Period 9, actual expenditure stood at £5,348,477m and represented expenditure of 44.7% of the total budget; and
- (3) reporting
 - (a) that Appendix 1 to the report provided the progress made on projects to 31st December 2012, each table providing the following information:-
 - Table 1:** detailing the latest position in terms of current expenditure, full year income and expenditure budget and projected out-turn;
 - Table 2:** highlighting financial impacts on projects which required approval by Members;
 - Table 3:** providing commentary on projects where target milestones have not been met but where there were no financial implications at the reporting period; and
 - Table 4:** summarising the three year income and expenditure impact if approval was granted for the changes set out in Table 1; and
 - (b) that as outlined in Table 2 of Appendix 1 of the report there were a number of adjustments that required budgets to be re-profiled from 2012/13 to 2013/14 (Table 2, ref 3, 5, 7 - 17, 19 - 21 and 23), adjustments requiring budget re-profiling from 2013/14 to 2012/13 (Table 2, ref 6 and 22) and in year programme adjustments (Table 2, ref 1 - 2, 4 and 18), with corresponding borrowing adjustments also required;
 - (c) that as outlined in Appendix 1 (Table 2 ref 26) income from capital receipts were anticipated to reach £1,040,000 in 2012/13 which required to be carried forward to 2013/14 to match the re-profiled expenditure;
 - (d) that the adjustments highlighted in (3)(b) above had resulted in significant slippage of projects from 2012/13 to 2013/14 and that additional information regarding the reasons behind this slippage were outlined in a report at item 14 of this Minute; and
 - (e) that in total £3,215,668 of projects required to be re-profiled to 2013/14 as outlined in Table 2, ref 3, 5, 7 - 17, 19 - 21 and 23) with a corresponding re-profiling of borrowing and capital receipts.

Concerns were raised about the scale of the slippage within the General Services Capital Programme and what actions would be taken to address this with particular reference to the schools project and accumulated slippage from previous years.

Clarification was sought and provided in relation to how the slippage would affect the outstanding works to classrooms at Queen Margaret Academy, the completion of the Multi Use Games Area and the position with regard to the wall and the Planning Consent that was now required at Braehead Primary School, the Panel

Decided:

- (i) to note the progress made on the delivery of the General Services Capital Programme on projects to 31st December 2012;
- (ii) to approve the adjustments as outlined in Section 4.2 and Table 2 of Appendix 1 of the report; and
- (iii) that in light of concerns about the level of slippage, potential for increased costs and the impact on service delivery, to refer this report and the Capital Programme Management Report referred to at 4 (2) on the agenda and at item 14 below to the next meeting of the Corporate and Community Planning Standing Scrutiny Panel to examine the reasons for the slippage and to identify actions which would assist in minimising slippage in the future and to request that their findings be reported back to the meeting of this Panel on 19th March 2013.

14. Capital Programme Management.

There was submitted a joint report (issued) of 12th February 2013 by the Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment and Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation

- (1) outlining proposals to improve performance within both General Services and Housing Capital Investment Programmes, with a view to achieving higher expenditure levels and reduce slippage; and
- (2) advising of the current constraints and limitations of capital programme management.

Clarification having been sought and provided in relation to the additional staffing resources being made available to progress project management development, and the significant improvement whereby information was being provided to project officers on a monthly basis, the Panel

Decided:

- (a) to note the contents of this report and to approve the actions being taken to improve performance and to reduce slippage as detailed within the report; and
- (b) to refer this report to the next meeting of the Corporate and Community Planning Standing Scrutiny Panel as detailed in the preceding item.

15. Treasury Management Quarter 3 Report 2012/13.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 12th February 2013 by the Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation

- (1) presenting an update of the economic background from 1st September to 31st December 2012;
- (2) outlining the following within the Treasury Management Investment Strategy:-
 - (a) policy on investment;
 - (b) list of investments held as at 31st December 2012;
 - (c) credit ratings;
 - (d) investment performance;
 - (e) long term borrowing;
 - (f) borrowing in advance of need; and
 - (g) Treasury / prudential indicators; and
- (3) detailing the resource implications for General Services and Housing Revenue Account.

After noting the report, the Panel

Decided: to approve the contents of the Treasury Management Quarter 3 Report for 2012/13.

16. Request from Corporate and Community Planning Standing Scrutiny Panel.

Reference was made to the Minutes of the Corporate and Community Planning Standing Scrutiny Panel of 31st January 2013 (Page 141, paragraph 4) when that Panel, having considered the Report to Members and the Controller of Audit on the 2011/12 Audit that had been presented to the Council on 29th November 2012, had agreed in recognition of the Panel's concerns relating to the lack of a longer term investment strategy and the need for asset rationalisation, and the Auditors' comments in this regard, to request the Executive Director – Corporate Services to report back to the Leadership Panel on behalf of this Panel as the Audit Committee with a recommendation that the Leadership Panel should consider ways in which to undertake a rationalisation process of the Council's assets to maximise long term service delivery, with the involvement of Elected Members and there was submitted a report (issued) of 13th February 2013 by the Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation on this matter. The Panel

Decided: to agree to accept the Standing Scrutiny Panel's recommendations and that in the first instance, the Portfolio Holders would meet to discuss how to take this matter forward, would then discuss the detail with Officers and that their findings would be reported to the next meeting of this Panel.

17. Scottish Welfare Fund – Budget Allocations.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 12th February 2013 by the Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation

(1) advising

- (a) of the Council's funding allocations for the new Scottish Welfare Fund which would be delivered by local authorities in Scotland on an interim basis from April 2013 with the objectives of the new scheme being to:-
- provide a safety net in a disaster or emergency when there was an immediate threat to health or safety – Crisis Grants; and
 - enable independent living or continued independent living, preventing the need for institutional care – Community Care Grants;
- (b) that the funding for 2012/13 would be included in the Local Government Finance (Scotland) Amendment Order 2013 and paid during the last two weeks of March 2013 and that the funding for 2013/14 would also be included in the 2013 Amendment Order, and paid from 1st April as part of the Authority's weekly General Revenue Grant payments; and

- (c) that in order to achieve consistency of service provision across Scotland, local authorities were requested to apply a financial management approach to managing Community Care Grant and Crisis Grant budgets that was based on similar principles:-
- (i) the Scottish Welfare Fund budgets would be ring-fenced;
 - (ii) the original budget for Crisis Grants and Community Care Grants would be the baseline allocation for each local authority;
 - (iii) authorities would be free to vire between these budget headings providing the budget headings remained as follows:-
 - Crisis Grants must be within the range of a minimum of 20 per cent of programme funding and a maximum of 35 per cent, being £142,581 and £249,516 respectively; and
 - Community Care Grants must be within the range of a minimum of 65 per cent of programme funding and a maximum of 80 per cent, being £463,388 and £570,324 respectively;
 - (iv) the respective budgets would, therefore, be profiled over a 12 month period from 1st April 2013 and monitored/ reviewed on a monthly basis in accordance with the parameters at 1(c)(iii) above; and
 - (v) the award of grants would be determined by priority ratings, with the focus being given to high priority cases, which would have a substantial and immediate effect in resolving or improving the circumstances of the applicant; and
- (2) reporting that the basis of the distribution of funding beyond 2014/15 would be reviewed as part of the broader review of the interim scheme.

Clarification having been sought and provided in relation to how the Council would monitor and facilitate the administration of the Scottish Welfare Fund and how this would be reported, the Panel

Decided:

- (A) to approve the contents of the report; and
- (B) to request the Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation to provide regular reports on delivery of the Scottish Welfare Fund to this Panel.

18. Invoice Scanning System Upgrade.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 12th February 2013 by the Head of Policy, Community Planning and Public Affairs seeking approval to negotiate a contract with a specific contractor for the provision of an upgrade to the Council's existing Invoice Scanning System to ensure that the software was compatible with the new version of Oracle e-Business Suite to be implemented later this year.

Decided: that under the provisions of paragraph 4.2.9 of the Council's Standing Orders Relating to Contracts, to grant approval to the Executive Director - Resources, Governance and Organisation to negotiate a contract with Readsoft UK Ltd for an upgrade of the Council's existing Invoice Scanning System.

19. Exclusion of press and public.

The Panel resolved, in terms of Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, that the press and public be excluded during consideration of the remaining items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information in terms of paragraphs 8 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

20. Wallace Tower Customer Contact Centre.

There was submitted a report (issued to Members only) of 12th February 2013 by the Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment advising of an appointment of architects made under delegated authority and seeking approval for additional funding to meet contractual obligations.

Clarification having been sought and provided in relation to the progress of the work being carried out to the Wallace Tower, procedures and processes regarding the awarding of contracts, the financial implications and the monitoring of work that had been undertaken and project management issues, the Panel

Decided:

- (1) to note the appointment of Munro Architects by the Executive Director - Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment under delegated authority G3 with the fees being as outlined in the report;
- (2) to approve additional funding availability as outlined in the report (inclusive of recommendation (1) above) to be met from the Ayr Common Good Capital Fund;
- (3) to approve adjustment of appointments for other associated technical services to reflect these revised arrangements; and
- (4) to request the Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment to submit a report to a future meeting of the Leadership Panel outlining procedures and processes for the project management of contracts.

21. Land at Old Dailly.

There was submitted a report (issued to Members only) of 12th February 2013 by the Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation requesting that the Panel declare land at Old Dailly surplus to requirements extending to approximately 300m² or thereby as shown outlined on the attached plan in Appendix 1 of the report and to approve its disposal.

Decided: to agree, subject to appropriate Scottish Government approval:

- (1) to declare land at Old Dailly surplus to Council requirements and available for disposal to Mr. Andrew Watson; and
- (2) to delegate authority to the Executive Director - Resources, Governance and Organisation to conclude that transaction on suitable terms and conditions.

22. Variation of Lease – Units 5-9 Newton Trading Estate, Ayr.

There was submitted a report (issued to Members only) of 12th February 2013 by the Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation seeking approval to vary the terms of the existing lease of the premises occupied by ICT and Property Maintenance and Construction Services at Newton Trading Estate, McCalls Avenue, Ayr.

Clarification having been sought and provided in relation to the terms of the lease, the Panel

Decided: to authorise the Executive Director - Resources, Governance and Organisation to conclude a draft Minute of Variation, recording the new landlord from 8th January 2013 as being TRUFFLE 1 LLP and providing for rent reviews to open market value on a five yearly basis during the extended term of the lease.

Councillor Saxton, having previously declared an interest in the Schools Project pertaining to consideration of Marr College, advised that he would withdraw from the meeting when Marr College was being discussed. However, he remained in the meeting during consideration of and decision on the Schools Project pertaining to Ayr Academy.

C-I

23. Schools Projects.

There was submitted a joint report (issued to Members only) of 12th February 2013 by the Executive Director – Care, Learning and Wellbeing and Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation providing an update on progress on Ayr Academy and Marr College and seeking approval to conclude negotiations in respect of land at both sites.

Clarification having been sought and provided in relation to the current position regarding the new build of Ayr Academy and concerns about the background to this matter and the outcome of negotiations with Marr Trust, and following discussion, the Panel

Decided:

- (1) to agree to adopt the site of the former pitch and putt course on Craigie Estate as the preferred location for the new Ayr Academy;
- (2) to authorise the Executive Director - Care, Learning and Wellbeing to commence and expedite the necessary processes, including consultation, to progress delivery of the new school and report back to a future meeting of this Panel;
- (3) to agree that the Executive Director - Care, Learning and Wellbeing notify the University of the West of Scotland of this decision and report back any further proposals resulting from this;
- (4) to note the position in respect of negotiations with representatives of the Marr Trust in respect of the land and buildings and confirm delegated authority to the Executive Director – Care, Learning and Wellbeing to conclude the purchase from the Trust and the revised leasing arrangements for the Pavilion and Playing Fields on the basis of the Option selected by the Trust (as set out in paragraph 4.2 of the report) and such other reasonable and appropriate terms and conditions as the Executive Director shall agree; and
- (5) to request Officers to provide an update on the outcome of the negotiations in relation to Marr College to a future meeting of the Leadership Panel.

24. Consideration of Disclosure of the above Confidential Reports.

Having heard the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, the Panel

Decided:

- (1) to authorise the disclosure of the whole of the following reports falling under Standing Order 31.2 when the related transactions had been concluded:-
 - Land at Old Dailly; and
 - Variation of Lease – Units 5-9 Newton Trading Estate, Ayr; and
- (2) not to authorise the disclosure of the whole or part of any documents of the following reports falling under Standing Order 31.2:-
 - Wallace Tower Customer Contact Centre; and
 - Schools Projects.

Councillor Saxton rejoined the meeting during consideration of the above item.

The meeting ended at 11.45 a.m.