

## **LEADERSHIP PANEL.**

Minutes of meeting in County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr,  
on 28th May 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, Chief Executive; L. Bloomer, Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment; V. Andrews, Head of Legal and Democratic Services; K. Leinster, Head of Community Care and Housing; M. McCulloch, Acting Head of Education; C. Monaghan, Head of Policy, Community Planning and Public Affairs; M. Newall, Head of Neighbourhood Services; M. Hastings, Enterprise Manager; D. Burns, Housing Policy and Strategy Manager; A. Gerrish, Committee Services Officer; and D. Knight, Democratic Services Administrator.

Also attending: Mrs. Mairi Raeburn.

Apologies: Miss Phil Davey, Rev. David Gemmell and Pastor Alastair Simmons.

### **Chair's Remark's.**

The Chair, on behalf of the Panel, welcomed Eileen Howat to this meeting as Chief Executive.

#### **1. Declarations of Interest.**

There were no declarations of interest by Members of the Panel in terms of Council Standing Order No. 17 and the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

### **Community Services - Lifelong Learning.**

#### **2. School Holiday Arrangements 2014/15.**

There was submitted a report (issued) of 30th April 2013 ([link attached](#)) by the Executive Director – Care, Learning and Wellbeing seeking approval of the school holiday arrangements for 2014/15.

The Panel

**Decided:** to approve Option 1 of the school holiday arrangements for 2014/15 as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report.

### **Community Services - Social Services.**

#### **3. South Ayrshire Mental Health and Learning Disability Action Plans 2013/16.**

There was submitted a report (issued) of 8th May 2013 ([link attached](#)) by the Executive Director – Care, Learning and Wellbeing seeking agreement for the new draft Action Plans for Mental Health and Learning Disability for 2013-2016.

Clarification was sought in relation to the interaction of these plans with the Scottish Government's intention to remove Adult Care from local authorities and the shadow period was explained, and the Panel

**Decided:** to approve the draft South Ayrshire Mental Health Action Plan 2013/2016 and the draft South Ayrshire Learning Disability Action Plan 2013/16 as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report.

#### **4. Request to Tender for Pan Ayrshire Wide Joint Equipment Store.**

There was submitted a report (issued) of 13th May 2013 ([link attached](#)) by the Executive Director – Care, Learning and Wellbeing seeking agreement to develop a tender for an Ayrshire wide Joint Equipment Store on a negotiated contract basis in partnership with North and East Ayrshire Councils and NHS Ayrshire & Arran.

The Panel was pleased to welcome the establishment of a Pan Ayrshire joint equipment store.

Assurances were sought that the store would be located within Ayrshire and the Officer confirmed that no proposals would be finalised without further approval of this Panel, and the Panel

**Decided:**

- (1) to agree to a partnership approach to the delivery of a Joint Equipment Store service;
- (2) to note a “negotiated procedure with competition” approach to procurement of a Joint Equipment Store service; and
- (3) to request that the outcome of the procurement process and a full cost analysis of provision of a Joint Equipment Store be presented to a future meeting of this Panel for consideration.

## **Community Services - Housing and Customer First.**

### **5. Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2013/14 to 2017/18.**

There was submitted a report (issued) of 8th May 2013 ([link attached](#)) by the Executive Director – Care, Learning and Wellbeing seeking approval for the content of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) for submission to the Scottish Government on 28th June 2013.

The Panel noted that on Page 5, table 2 that “Hillcrest, Girvan” should be amended to read “McConnell Square, Girvan”.

Clarification was sought and provided that in relation to the Balanced Housing Market Group outcome “BHM3 Existing Housing Stock in South Ayrshire is used in the most effective way” and whether consideration could be given to altering the layout and size of existing stock rather than providing new builds, any opportunities to do so were considered subject to availability of funding; the amount of funding that this Council received from the Scottish Government to assist with new builds had varied over previous years, the resource planning assumptions for 2012 to 2015 were £5.199m per annum (not in total) for three years; as to an indication of the current amounts that had been borrowed and progress being made with new developments, and the Panel

**Decided:** to approve the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) as detailed in Appendix 1 of this report and that the Plan be submitted to the Scottish Government by 28th June 2013.

### **6. Empty Homes Strategy Amendments.**

There was submitted a report (issued) of 13th May 2013 ([link attached](#)) by the Executive Director – Care, Learning and Wellbeing seeking agreement to make minor amendments to South Ayrshire Council’s Empty Homes Strategy.

Clarification was sought and provided in relation to the number of applications that had been submitted to the loan fund so far and the expected effect of amending the scheme as now proposed, and the Panel

**Decided:**

- (1) to agree the amendments to South Ayrshire’s Empty Homes Strategy as outlined in the report; and
- (2) to request the Executive Director – Care, Learning and Wellbeing to provide a quarterly report to future meetings of this Panel on the take up of loans from the revolving loan fund.

## 7. Land Disposal at Woodpark, Ayr.

There was submitted a joint report (issued) of 13th May 2013 ([link attached](#)) by the Executive Director – Care, Learning and Wellbeing and Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment seeking agreement to dispose of HRA land at Woodpark, Ayr to Ayrshire Housing and to provide £90,000 from the second Homes Council Tax fund to support the overall development of new affordable housing on this site.

A concern was raised about the timescale for the development of six affordable houses on this site and clarification was provided that it could be delivered before 31st March 2015 subject to planning consent, and the Panel

### **Decided:**

- (1) to approve the disposal of the former lock up site at Woodpark, Ayr as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report to Ayrshire Housing, subject to Ministerial consent; and
- (2) to provide £90,000 from the second Homes Council Tax fund to Ayrshire Housing to support the development of new affordable housing on this site, subject to successful Planning Consent for a minimum of six homes to be delivered by 31st March 2015.

## Development and Environment - Sustainability and Environment.

### 8. Consultation on Late Hours Catering Policy.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 14th May 2013 ([link attached](#)) by the Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation seeking approval for the commencement of a consultation on the hours for late hours catering licences.

The Panel noted an observation from a Member of the Panel that most of the incidents relating to early morning disorder referred to in the Police Report had taken place in Ayr Town Centre.

**Decided:** to agree to commence a consultation on the hours for late hours catering licences.

### 9. Consultation on Licensing of Metal Dealers.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 14th May 2013 ([link attached](#)) by the Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation seeking approval for the submission of a response to the Scottish Government to a consultation on the Licensing of Metal Dealers.

The Panel

**Decided:** to approve submission of a response as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report to the Scottish Government.

**10. Further Agency Agreement for the Management, Maintenance and Cleaning of Bus Shelters.**

There was submitted a report (issued) of 17th May 2013 ([link attached](#)) by the Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment seeking approval to enter into a Bus Shelter Agency Agreement with Strathclyde Partnership for Transport for the management, maintenance and cleaning of this Council’s bus shelter stock.

Clarification was sought and provided in relation to the current arrangements in place to monitor the management, maintenance and cleaning of bus shelters and whether the bus owners made a financial contribution and the estimated value of the contract and scope for savings, and the Panel

**Decided:** to approve the Bus Shelter Agency Agreement with Strathclyde Partnership for Transport for the management, maintenance and cleaning of this Council’s bus shelter stock, under the provisions of paragraph 23.2 of the Council’s Standing Orders Relating to Contracts.

**Development and Environment - Economic Development, Tourism and Leisure.**

**11. Next Generation Broadband – “Step Change 2015” – Minute of Agreement.**

There was submitted a report (issued) of 29th April 2013 ([link attached](#)) by the Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment seeking approval to enable the Council to enter into a legal agreement with Scottish Ministers for the implementation of the broadband infrastructure enhancements in South Ayrshire that the Next Generation Broadband “Step Change 2015” project would provide.

The Panel welcomed the broadband infrastructure enhancements in South Ayrshire including the inclusion of the Grangestone Industrial Estate, Girvan within the Agreement.

**Decided:** to approve

- (1) the main terms of the Minute of Agreement (MoA) that would be entered into by the Council and Scottish Ministers, relating to Step Change 2015 (Rest of Scotland) Project, as linked under Background Papers; and
- (2) delegated authority to the Executive Director - Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment:-
  - (a) to conclude negotiations on Parts 1 and 2 of the Schedule to the MoA, on terms that accord with the minute of the Leadership Panel of 4th December 2012: Next Generation Broadband – “Step Change 2015”, and
  - (b) to sign the Minute of Agreement for the Step Change 2015 (Rest of Scotland) Project.

## 12. Ayrshire Joint Planning Unit.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 3rd May 2013 ([link attached](#)) by the Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment seeking approval to dissolve the Ayrshire Joint Planning Unit and to agree alternative ways of joint working on joint planning matters.

The Panel

**Decided:** to agree

- (1) that the Ayrshire Joint Planning Unit be dissolved and that joint planning work be absorbed within the work of the existing Planning Service;
- (2) that the Ayrshire Joint Steering Group that oversaw the Ayrshire Joint Planning Unit be dissolved; and
- (3) that work continued, as appropriate, on a voluntary basis across the three Ayrshire Councils on matters of joint planning interest.

## 13. Golf South Ayrshire Direct Debit Scheme.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 2nd May 2013 ([link attached](#)) by the Head of Community, Enterprise and Development seeking approval for the extension of the Golf South Ayrshire direct debit membership scheme.

Clarification was sought and provided in relation to whether there could be potential exploitation of the scheme depending on the time of year membership was taken out and the effect of the proposed arrangements on golf income generation, and the Panel

**Decided:** to agree to extend the Golf South Ayrshire direct debit membership scheme to allow prospective members to join all year round.

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

### 14. Raising Our Ambitions: Progress Report 3.

Reference was made to the Minutes of South Ayrshire Council of 27th September 2012 (Page 448, paragraph 13) and there was submitted a joint report (issued) of 14th May 2013 ([link attached](#)) by the Head of Policy, Community Planning and Public Affairs and Head of Employee and Customer Services providing the third progress report on Raising our Ambitions.

The Panel noted that with regard to the section on Recruitment on Page 1 of the report, that “Donald Hutchison” should read “Douglas Hutchison”.

**Decided:** to note the third progress report on Raising our Ambitions and to agree that this report be referred to the next meeting of the Corporate and Community Planning Standing Scrutiny Panel for its consideration.

**15. Provost's Medal – Review of Guidelines.**

There was submitted a report (issued) of 13th May 2013 ([link attached](#)) by the Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation reviewing the guidelines that applied to the award of the Provost's Medal.

The Panel

**Decided:** to approve the revised guidelines as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

**Corporate and Community Planning - Resources and Performance.**

**16. Council Tax Write-off - Irrecoverable Debt.**

There was submitted a report (issued) of 14th May 2013 ([link attached](#)) by the Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation seeking approval to write off Council Tax during 2012/13 relating to specific cases in accordance with Council policy.

The Panel

**Decided:** to approve the write-off of Council Tax amounting to £54,041.56 during 2012/13.

**17. Housing and Council Tax Benefit – Performance Monitoring – Position at 31st March 2013.**

There was submitted a report (issued) of 14th May 2013 ([link attached](#)) 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.

An update was sought in relation to the impact of Welfare Reform, and the Panel

**Decided:**

- (1) to approve the contents of the report;
- (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; and
- (3) to note that the Chief Executive would circulate information on the impact of Welfare Reform to Members and should any matter arise from this information that required consideration by this Panel, then a report would be presented to a future meeting.

**18. Solace Benchmarking Indicators.**

There was submitted a report (issued) of 15th May 2013 ([link attached](#)) by the Head of Policy, Community Planning and Public Affairs presenting information on how South Ayrshire had performed against the SOLACE Benchmarking Indicators and identifying the areas that were now proposed to undertake benchmarking work with other Councils.

Concerns were raised by Members of the Panel regarding the usefulness and value of the benchmarking exercise and that each local authority had differing targets and priorities and use of different data sets to set targets. The Leader of the Council advised that these concerns had been raised with SOLACE, and the Panel

**Decided:**

- (1) to note the analysis of performance against the SOLACE benchmarking indicators for 2010/11 and 2011/12; and
- (2) to agree that the benchmarking work proposed for the indicators as set out at paragraph 4.6 of the report be progressed through the SOLACE benchmarking exercise.

**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 6, 8 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

**20. External Stonework Repairs, Wallace Tower.**

There was submitted a report (issued to Members only) of 10th May 2013 by the Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment seeking approval to restrict the tender for conservation stonework repairs to the exterior of the Wallace Tower restoring the appearance of the building and allowing replacement of the high level windows.

The Panel

**Decided:** to authorise the Executive Director - Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment to invite quotations to carry out conservation stonework repairs at the Wallace Tower up to a maximum value of £65,000 from three nominated contractors and applying the procedures under paragraph 3.3.1 of the Council's Standing Orders Relating to Contracts notwithstanding the value of the contract.

**21. Contract Awards – Request for Delegated Authority during Council recess.**

There was submitted a joint report (issued to Members only) of 13th May 2013 by the Executive Director – Care, Learning and Wellbeing and Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment seeking approval

- (1) for delegated authority to appoint contractors evaluated as the Most Economically Advantageous Tenders to the Council, when judged on a combination of price and quality, for a number of tenders due for return during Council recess; and
- (2) to extend a pre-nursery placement and Ayr Community Recycling Facility contracts due for expiry to provide continuity of service.

Clarification was sought and provided in relation to a number of matters regarding the tenders detailed within the report, and the Panel

**Decided:** to agree

- (a) to grant delegated authority under paragraph 19.2.2 of the Council's Standing Orders Relating to Contracts to the Executive Director - Care Learning and Wellbeing to accept the tender and award the contract in accordance with the award criteria for the projects as outlined in section 4.1 of the report subject to prior consultation with the Chief Executive who would in turn consult with the Leader of the Council (or Depute in his absence);
- (b) to grant delegated authority under paragraph 19.2.2 of the Council's Standing Orders Relating to Contracts to the Executive Director - Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment to accept the tender and award the contract in accordance with the award criteria for the projects outlined in section 4.2 of the report subject to prior consultation with the Chief Executive who would in turn consult with the Leader of the Council (or Depute in his absence);
- (c) that should any of the tenders be ready for approval of award in sufficient time before the Council recess, they would be submitted to the meeting of the Council on 27th June 2013 for decision (if required) and to note that one of the tenders, as outlined in the report, was no longer required;
- (d) that where tender submissions exceeded the available budget, the contract would only be awarded with the approval of the Chief Executive;
- (e) the extension of the provision of an Ayr Community Recycling Facility on a monthly basis until a procurement process had been completed as outlined in section 4.2.2 of the report;
- (f) the extension to eleven external providers of pre-nursery placements to meet demand for one year, as outlined in sections 4.5 to 4.7 of the report subject to satisfactory outcomes and performance reporting as defined within the contract; and
- (g) that a report be presented to a future meeting of this Panel after Council recess outlining the outcomes and any financial savings identified as a result of the contract awards referred to above.

**22. Replacement Sound System for County Hall, County Buildings, Ayr.**

There was submitted a report (issued to Members only) of 21st May 2013 by the Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation seeking approval to accept a tender for a Wireless Conference System to replace the existing Sound System for County Hall that was not the lowest priced tender.

Clarification was sought and provided in relation to the financial implications of the tender outcome, and the Panel

**Decided:** to grant authority to the Executive Director - Resources, Governance and Organisation in terms of paragraph 19.2.2 of the Council's Standing Orders Relating to Contracts to accept the tender by SSUK Limited for a Wireless Conference System for County Hall.

**Community Services - Social Services.**

**23. Outcome of Complaints Review Committee of 15th May 2013.**

There was submitted a report (issued to Members only) of May 2013 by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services informing of the outcome of the Complaints Review Committee which had been held on 15th May 2013.

The Panel

**Decided:** to note the conclusions reached by the Complaints Review Committee following the Hearing on 15th May 2013, as detailed in the Appendix of the report.

**Development and Environment - Economic Development, Tourism and Leisure.**

**24. Procurement of an Evaluation Study for the Ayrshire LEADER.**

There was submitted a report (issued to Members only) of 15th May 2013 by the Head of Policy, Community Planning and Public Affairs seeking approval to procure an Evaluation Study for the Ayrshire LEADER Programme 2007-2013 that was not the lowest priced option.

The Panel

**Decided:** to agree that the contract for the Evaluation Study of the Ayrshire LEADER Programme 2007-2013 is awarded to Rocket Science UK Ltd.

**25. Ayr Townscape Heritage Initiative Small Grants Scheme.**

There was submitted a report (issued to Members only) of 10th May 2013 by the Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment seeking approval for the creation of an Ayr Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) Small Grants Scheme.

Clarification was sought and provided in relation to the progress being made with regard to the conservation and repair of the priority buildings in Ayr, negotiations with owners of properties and future projects, and the Panel

**Decided:**

- (1) to note the deadline for Priority Building applications to the THI of 5th June 2013;
- (2) to approve the creation of a Small Grants Scheme for eligible properties within the THI area, utilising the unallocated funds at 5th June 2013;
- (3) to grant delegated authority to the Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment to award grants of up to £25,000 for the Small Grants Scheme; and
- (4) to agree that the Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment submit a report to a future meeting of this Panel providing information on the take up of the Small Grants Scheme.

**26. Consideration of Disclosure of the above Confidential Reports.**

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

**Decided:** not to authorise the disclosure of the whole or part of any documents of the following reports falling under Standing Order 31.2:-

- External Stonework Repairs, Wallace Tower;
- Contract Awards – Request for Delegated Authority during Council Recess;
- Replacement Sound System for County Hall, County Buildings, Ayr;
- Outcome of Complaints Review Committee of 15th May 2013;
- Procurement of an Evaluation Study for the Ayrshire LEADER; and
- Ayr Townscape Heritage Initiative Small Grants Scheme.

The meeting ended at 11.05 a.m.