

LEADERSHIP PANEL.

Minutes of meeting in County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr,
on 22nd November 2011 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors Margaret Toner (Chair), Douglas Campbell, Peter Convery, Hywel Davies, Nan McFarlane and Robin Reid.

Attending: D. Anderson, Chief Executive; L. Bloomer, Executive Director – Development and Environment; E. Howat, Executive Director – Corporate Services; H. Garland, Executive Director – Children and Community; V. Andrews, Head of Legal and Administration; C. Monaghan, Head of Policy, Performance and Communication; J. McQuillan, Head of Property and Neighbourhood Services; D. Alexander, Head of Corporate Resources; M. Williamson, Head of Curriculum and Service Improvement; K. Leinster, Head of Community Care and Housing; J. Cronin, Acting Head of Community Development; A. Valenti, Early Years Manager; D. Burns, Manager (Housing Development and Monitoring); D. Bell, Managing Director, Ayr Renaissance LLP; P. Ewing, Registration, Bereavement and Archives Manager; C. Bradshaw, Assistant Public Communications Officer; D. Knight, Committee Services Officer; and A. Gerrish, Committee Administrative Officer.

Apology: Councillor Bill McIntosh.

Also Present: Rev. David Gemmell, Mrs. Mairi Raeburn and Pastor Alastair Simmons (in attendance for items 1 and 2 only).

Apology: Miss Phil Davey.

Community Services - Lifelong Learning.**1. Reconfiguring Early Years Services to Improve Early Intervention Support to Children and Families.**

There was submitted a report (issued) of 15th November 2011 by the Executive Director – Children and Community

(1) advising

- (a) that in 2008 the Government had published the Early Years Framework which provided a shift from intervening when a crisis happened to prevention and early intervention,
- (b) that in September 2011 the Scottish Government had announced a £50m investment for Early Years for the support of projects that could deliver early intervention and the development of children and family centres; and
- (c) that there had been no official announcement on how this money would be spent or the amount that would be invested in South Ayrshire;

- (2) informing that enrolment for nursery education would take place in January 2012 for children starting in August 2012 and that obtaining approval for a service reconfiguration would enable consultation and strategically planned resources in line with the Early Years Framework;
- (3) outlining proposals that would result in an overall increase to the teacher staffing complement of 0.9 fte, an overall decrease in the number of nursery nurse posts of 11.5 fte and a reduction in the number of school assistants in rural areas with changes being implemented as part of the annual school staffing exercise;
- (4) seeking approval to commence a reconfiguration of services to improve early intervention and support to children and families; and
- (5) indicating that a report would be submitted to a future meeting of the Leadership Panel (Summer 2012) setting out additional proposals in line with the priorities and outcomes identified in the Early Years including detailed proposals on the use of the savings that had been identified.

Questions were raised by Members of the Panel in relation to the redeployment of staff, the use of the savings identified, the work of the community food worker and why was this post not being funded by the NHS, how this service would be directed to those most in need, should the changes to the pre-school provision not be implemented earlier than August 2012 and would early intervention improve services to families most in need and the relevant Officers responded accordingly.

Decided: to approve

- (i) the improving approaches to early intervention through the implementation of a universal parenting programme;
- (ii) greater integration of services at a local level with the evolution of 'family centres' with improved partnership work with agencies and organisations, including the voluntary sector;
- (iii) the funding for 1 fte Community Food Worker post to enable the Council to continue implementation of this nationally recognised good practice and to improve health outcomes for children;
- (iv) the continuing provision of an increase in hours of pre-school education and that from August 2012 this would be provided through 'free at three' (children would start the week after their third birthday) instead of 3 hour sessions;
- (v) building resource capacity to enable the Council to continue to reconfigure services in line with Early Years Framework; and
- (vi) the creation and deletion of posts as outlined within the report which would result in a net reduction of 10.18 fte posts.

Community Services – Social Services.

2. Children and Community Annual Report 2010/11.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 19th October 2011 by the Executive Director – Children and Community outlining the Annual Report for Children and Community relating to the financial year 2010/11 attached as an Appendix to the report and seeking approval for the publication of this document on the Council's website and via other electronic media in such a way as to make it accessible to stakeholders including staff, partners, other local authorities and service users.

A question was raised by a Member of the Panel in relation to the introduction of a corporate debt strategy and the Executive Director – Corporate Services advised that she would examine this matter within financial constraints.

Decided: having recorded their appreciation of the work undertaken by the Executive Director – Children and Community, all his staff and teachers, to approve the publication of the Annual Report for Children and Community for 2010/11.

Community Services – Housing and Customer First.

3. Housing Capital Investment Programme 2011/12: Monitoring Report at Period 6, 30th September 2011.

There was submitted a joint report (issued) of 11th November 2011 by the Executive Director – Development and Environment and Executive Director – Corporate Services

- (1) informing of the progress being made with the Housing Capital Investment Programme for 2011/12 at 30th September 2011 (Budget Monitoring Period 6);
- (2) indicating that actual expenditure and income at Period 6 was £7,275,546 based on a budget of £15,477,000;
- (3) advising that a number of adjustments to the Programme had been approved by the Council on 30th June 2011 and the Leadership Panels on 26th October 2010, 15th February, 19th April and 16th August 2011, leading to a revised budget of £23,416,179, which was reflected in Appendix 1 of the report; and
- (4) proposing a number of adjustments to the Programme as indicated in Section 4 of the report.

A question was raised by a Member of the Panel in relation to slippage within the Programme and the Head of Property and Neighbourhood Services responded accordingly.

Decided:

- (a) to note the progress made on projects to 30th September 2011 as highlighted in Appendix 1 of the report; and
- (b) to approve the adjustments outlined in Section 4 of the report.

4 Interim Housing Asset Management Plan – November 2011 to November 2012.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 7th November 2011 by the Executive Director – Children and Community seeking approval to adopt the draft Interim Housing Asset Management Plan and to support the implementation of the actions included therein.

Decided:

- (1) to approve the draft interim Housing Asset Management Plan as contained within the Appendix of the report subject to the amendment noted to Page 31, line 2 to take out the word “not” as 59% of the Council’s housing stock did meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard; and
- (2) to agree the implementations of actions included within the Plan.

Development and the Environment - Sustainability and the Environment.

5. Modernisation of Neighbourhood Services.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 14th November 2011 by the Executive Director – Development and Environment

- (1) seeking approval to introduce a number of efficiency measures within the refuse collection and street cleansing services delivered by Neighbourhood Services;
- (2) proposing
 - (a) the introduction of a shift working arrangement within the Refuse Collection section similar to that within the Neighbourhood Services section with Option (vi) as contained within Appendix 1 of the report being recommended for implementation;
 - (b) the introduction of revised optimised refuse collection routes as identified by the route optimisation project; and
 - (c) that Option 3 as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report be introduced for street cleansing working arrangements for the Ayr Depot only, due to limited establishment resources shift working did not offer a cost efficient solution for satellite depots servicing the towns of Troon, Girvan and Maybole; and
- (3) reporting that implementing the proposed changes would realise estimated full year savings in the region of £236,000.

Questions were raised by Members of the Panel in relation to the privatisation of these services, how would the changes to the refuse collection be notified to households, the arrangements in place for emptying dog bins, emptying bins in the late evening before a shift finished and arrangements for staff cover between services and the Head of Property and Neighbourhood Services responded accordingly.

Decided: to approve

- (i) the introduction of the shift system of working for refuse collection as detailed at Option (vi) of Appendix 1 to the report;
- (ii) the introduction of revised refuse collection routes as identified from the Route Optimisation project as detailed in paragraph 4.4 of the report as soon as practically possible; and
- (iii) the introduction of the shift working pattern for street cleansing as detailed at Option 3 of Appendix 2 of the report.

C

6. **Responsibility for Maintenance and Safe Condition of Privately Owned Cemetery Memorials.**

Reference was made to the Minutes of the Council of 30th June 2011 (Page 458, paragraph 14) and there was submitted a report (issued) of 11th November 2011 by the Executive Director – Corporate Services

- (1) advising of feasible options around the current Management Rules in relation to responsibility for maintenance and safe condition of privately owned cemetery memorials;
- (2) informing
 - (a) that current Management Rules reflected both the legal liability position and the practices current when they had been adopted in 2009, and that while the legal liability position remained unchanged, Health and Safety considerations had led to the introduction of Memorial Inspections which were set out in Appendix 2 of the report; and
 - (b) that the Council's current operational practice provided for a 'no cost' solution to headstone stability; and
- (3) recommending that section 7(b) of the Management Rules as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report should be amended to reflect operational practice currently undertaken through the Headstone Safety Programme.

A question was raised by a Member of the Panel in relation to securing the memorial on the head of the grave and the Registration, Bereavement and Archives Manager responded accordingly.

Decided:

- (i) to agree that the options appraisal set out in Appendix 3 of the report identified that it would be financially onerous for the Council to fund repairs to privately owned cemetery memorials where there was no liability to do so;
- (ii) to agree that the operational practice of making memorials safe allowed for a 'no cost' option which could assist owners of graves where there was financial hardship;

- (iii) to approve the amendment to section 7(b) of the Management Rules to reflect the operational practice undertaken through the Headstone Safety Programme; and
- (iv) to refer the amendment of Section 7(b) of the Management Rules for ratification to the next meeting of South Ayrshire Council on 15th December 2011.

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

7. Progress Against the Council Corporate Plan to 30th September 2011.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 11th November 2011 by the Head of Policy, Performance and Communication

- (1) detailing the progress achieved to 30th September 2011 against the Council's Corporate Plan's aims and objectives;
- (2) advising that overall the progress against the Council's Corporate Plan to 30th September 2011 showed that:-
 - 60 strategic and Directorate objectives were 'on target';
 - 3 'not on target with some concerns'; and
 - 1 'not on target – major concerns'; and
- (3) informing
 - (a) that the detail that supported this performance information, down to task level, of which there were 255 in total had been scrutinised by the Standing Scrutiny Panels; and
 - (b) that there were 8 tasks where the Standing Scrutiny Panels required further action to be taken and these were detailed in paragraph 4.4 of the report.

Questions were raised by Members of the Panel in relation to the number of cultural strategies that were in existence, delay in filling the vacant Access Officer post and would the Money Advice Review result in a more proactive service and the relevant Officers responded accordingly.

Decided: to approve the progress being achieved during the past six months to 30th September 2011 as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report.

Corporate and Community Planning - Resources and Performance.

8. Housing and Council Tax Benefit – Performance Monitoring – Position at 30th September 2011.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 11th November 2011 by the Executive Director - Corporate Services 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.

A question was raised by a Member of the Panel enquiring whether opening benefits offices each day at 10.30 a.m. would enable staff to process more claims and the Executive Director – Corporate Services advised that she would ascertain how many claimants visited the offices each day between 10.00 a.m. and 10. 30 a.m. and advise Elected Members accordingly.

Decided:

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

9. Common Good Funds – Revenue and Capital Budgetary Control – Position Statement at 30th September 2011.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 11th November 2011 by the Executive Director – Corporate Services in relation to the revenue and capital accounts of Ayr, Prestwick, Troon, Maybole and Girvan Common Good Funds for the period to 30th September 2011 and

- (1) indicating that the 2011/12 audit had been completed on 30th September 2011 with no changes to the reserves position being required;
- (2) detailing
 - (a) the revenue position at 30th September 2011, against the approved full year budgets and projected balances; and
 - (b) the accumulated revenue position at 30th September 2011 and the projected accumulated revenue surpluses at 31st March 2012;
- (2) advising that the accumulated capital reserves balance on the Ayr Common Good Fund at 30th September 2011 was £2,333,817 with the projected accumulated capital position at 31st March 2012, taking into account the capital issues highlighted at 3.6 of the report and in Appendix 3 of the report, was anticipated to be £1,693,817, a reduction of £640,000 since 1st April 2011; and
- (3) intimating that the accumulated capital reserves balance on the Prestwick Common Good Fund at 30th September 2011 was £50,000 and that this position was anticipated to remain unchanged at 31st March 2012.

Questions were raised by Members of the Panel in relation to the current position with regard to Plot 9 and when would the engineer's report be available for the steeple at Freemans Hall, Prestwick and the relevant Officers responded accordingly.

Decided: to approve the contents of the report.

10. Housing Revenue Account – Revenue Budgetary Control 2011/12 – Position statement at 30th September 2011.

There was submitted a joint report (issued) of 11th November 2011 by the Executive Director – Children and Community and the Executive Director – Corporate Services detailing the performance of the Housing Revenue Account's expenditure and income against its profiled budget for the period to 30th September 2011 and reporting

- (1) that there was an accumulated surplus as at 31st March 2011 of £13.957m and highlighting an updated list of the approved commitments against this surplus totalling £13.643m and that the use of the uncommitted balance of £0.314m had been approved at the Special Meeting of the Council on 17th November 2011 (Page 674, paragraph 3) as part of the 2012/13 rent setting process ; and
- (2) that the HRA was underspent by £0.779 for the period to 30th September 2011 and that the projected surplus for the year to 31st March 2012 was £1.091m.

Decided: to approve the contents of the report.

11. Budget Management – Revenue Budgetary Control 2011/12 – Position Statement at 30th September 2011.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 11th November 2011 by the Executive Director – Corporate Services

- (1) presenting an overview of the General Services Revenue Account for 2011/12 as at 30th September 2011;
- (2) advising
 - (a) that the 2010/11 audited accumulated surplus was £15.302m at 31st March 2011 and of the accumulated surplus,
 - £0.532m would require to be set aside to assist with the financing of the Council's Schools PPP project;
 - £0.625m had been earmarked to be used in delivering the Council's affordable housing strategy in future years;
 - a further £2.493m had been allocated to be spent on specific Council projects during 2011/12;
 - £1.000m of the then anticipated surplus had been set aside to assist in funding the 2011/12 budgeted service expenditure;
 - £0.120m had been ring-fenced towards the cost of the 2012 local elections; and

- £3.000m had been carried forward to fund severance costs likely to be incurred in 2011/12 and beyond as part of the down-sizing of the organisation and reduction in workforce numbers; and

leaving an uncommitted balance of £7.532m at 31st March 2011;

- (b) of the current position with regard to the Council's deposits in the Icelandic banks;
 - (c) that the Council's Revenue Budget for 2011/12 had been approved on 10th February 2011, with total planned expenditure of £265.849m and that the budget had included various corporate allocations and targets that had, at that stage, still to be allocated across Directorates;
 - (d) that in addition, further funding required to be transferred between Directorates to recognise changes in responsibilities following the implementation of the revisions to the Council structure during 2010 and that these transfers/allocations were now reflected in the Directorate budgets;
 - (e) that the approved 2011/12 budget had included Aggregate External Finance (AEF) due from Scottish Government of £211.178m, as notified in Finance Circular 2/2011 and that a further £0.344m re-determination notification in relation to teachers pay negotiation had been received from the Scottish Government, resulting in revised AEF due of £211.522m;
 - (f) that specific grants receivable from Scottish Government as part of AEF of £9.073m have been included within appropriate Directorates' net service expenditure for budget monitoring purposes;
 - (g) that within the revenue and capital budgets 2011/12 approved by the Council on 10th February 2011 as outlined at (2)(a) above, £1.000m of the 2010/11 surplus had been set aside to be utilised to fund expenditure in 2011/12; and
 - (h) that as outlined in (2)(c) above, the approved budget included various corporate efficiencies and targets yet to be allocated and that the Budget Management Report presented to the Leadership Panel of 16th August 2011 had identified that £2.440m of the target had yet to be achieved and therefore had agreed that £2.200m of alternative out-turn savings be allocated instead, leaving a balance of £0.240m still to be identified;
- (3) detailing revenue monitoring reports for each Directorate for the period to 30th September 2011 as provided in Appendix 1 of the report;
 - (4) indicating that a number of service and budget issues were being raised in these reports and that Executive Directors had committed to management action to ensure that there was a break-even position at 31st March 2012 as follows:-
 - **Chief Executive's Strategic Office** – showed a current underspend of £0.051m which was mainly due to underspends in within the budget set aside for best value initiatives with a break-even position being currently projected at 31st March 2012;

- **Children and Community** – showed a current underspend of £1.120m which was mainly due to underspends in employee costs, payments to agencies offset by overspends in administrative costs and transport costs with a year-end underspend of £2.098m being currently projected at 31st March 2012 subject to year-end approval of carry forward of resources within the Schools Scheme of Delegation and the probationer funding to be used to complete the academic year in 2012/13, this underspend would reduce to £1.477m;
 - **Corporate Services** – showed a current overspend of £1.178m which was mainly due to supplies and services and administration costs, offset by an underspend in payment to agencies and an over-recovery of income with a year-end overspend of £0.045m currently being projected at 31 March 2012.;
 - **Development and Environment** – showed a current overspend of £1.000m which was mainly due to a current shortfall in income related to Property Maintenance and Construction Trading offset to some extent by underspends in employee costs with a year-end overspend of £0.519m being currently projected at 31st March 2012; and
 - **Miscellaneous** – showed an underspend of £0.019m which was mainly due to income from utility rebates with a year-end underspend of £0.056m being currently projected at 31st March 2012;
- (5) reporting that in setting the 2011/12 Revenue Budget, Members had approved efficiency measures of £3.496m which required further investigation and development by Officers and requested that regular updates on progress be submitted to this Panel;
- (6) intimating
- (a) that the Budget Management report to the Leadership Panel on 16th August 2011 had identified that £0.300m of the £2.740m corporate efficiencies held in the Miscellaneous Services account could be allocated to Directorates and that of the £2.440m remaining, Members had approved alternative savings of £2.200m in relation to payroll management, children’s residential units, transport cost supplies and services and debt charges;
 - (b) that these savings have been allocated as outlined in Appendix 1e of the report with a further £0.240m also being identified for approval in Appendix 1e; and
 - (c) that to date only £0.042m of the original £3.496m requiring further investigation remained unachieved at Period 6 and, as outlined in the table at 4.1(3) of the report, work was ongoing to identify the required measures to achieve the necessary saving;
- (7) outlining the current position with regard to:-
- targeted reductions;
 - Council Tax Income;
 - Repairs and Renewal Fund; and

- Accumulated Balance at 30th September 2011 including:-
 - Contingency Balance 2011/12; and
 - General Reserve Balances;

(8) informing

- (a) that all Directorates had committed to bringing their budget in on-line as minimum by 31st March 2012 and that an accumulated balance of £9.317m was currently anticipated at 31st March 2012; and
- (b) that due to the reduction in capital funding over the next three years, expected to result from the recent Scottish Government spending review, it was recognised that additional internal funds might require to be identified to help support the essential investment in South Ayrshire Council's property and assets; and

(9) recommending that any surplus above the £8.000m uncommitted general fund balances required to be achieved by 31st March 2013 be considered as part of the 2012/13 budget setting process for investment in property and assets.

Councillor Reid requested that the Panel should consider with regard to recommendation (4) of the report that the words "for the investment in property and assets" should be removed from this recommendation and from 5.1 (2) within the report.

Decided:

- (i) to approve the management action being taken by Executive Directors to ensure a break-even budget at 31st March 2012 as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report;
- (ii) to approve the virement as outlined in the Directorate budgetary control reports at Appendix 1 and summarised in Appendix 2 of the report;
- (iii) to note the Council Tax collection rates as outlined in Appendix 3 of the report;
- (iv) to agree, as outlined in 5.1 (2) of the report that any surplus above the £8.000m target required to be achieved by 31st March 2013 be considered as part of the 2012/13 budget setting process; and
- (v) otherwise, to note the contents of the report.

12. General Services Capital Programme 2011/12: Monitoring Report as at Period 6 : 30th September 2011.

There was submitted a joint report (issued) of 11th November 2011 by the Executive Director – Development and Environment and Executive Director – Corporate Services

- (1) outlining
- (a) the General Services Capital Programme for 2011/12 as at 30th September 2011 and detailing that at the end of Period 6, actual expenditure and income stood at £4,732,649 against a revised base expenditure budget of £16,853,819; and
 - (b) the progress being made on projects to 30th September 2011 as highlighted in Appendix 1 of the report; and
- (2) recommending adjustments to the Programme as outlined in Section 4 of the report and as detailed in Appendices 2 and 3 of the report in relation to:-
- consideration of levels of Capital Receipts for 2011/12;
 - new grants awarded 2011/12;
 - funding for projects required to be carried forward from 2011/12 to 2012/13 and 2013/14;
 - projects requiring new / additional funding in 2011/12;
 - projects where funding might be released back to the Programme; and
 - effect on over programming.

Decided:

- (i) to note the progress made on projects to 30th September 2011, as highlighted in Appendix 1 of the report; and
- (ii) to approve the adjustments as outlined in Section 4 of the report.

13. Treasury Management Quarter 2 Report 2011/12.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 11th November 2011 by the Executive Director – Corporate Services

- (1) presenting an update of the economic background from 1st July to 30th September 2011; and
- (2) outlining the following within the Treasury Management Investment Strategy:-
 - (a) investments;
 - (b) list of investments held as at 30th September 2011;
 - (c) Icelandic investments held;
 - (d) credit ratings definition;
 - (e) investment performance;
 - (f) borrowing
 - (g) borrowing in advance of need; and
 - (h) prudential indicators; and
- (3) detailing the resource implications for General Services and Housing Revenue Account.

A question was raised by a Member of the Panel in relation to interest being paid on the investments in the Icelandic Banks and the Executive Director – Corporate Services responded accordingly.

Decided: to approve the contents of the Treasury Management Quarter 2 Report for 2011/12.

14. Strategic Risk Management.

Reference was made to the Minutes of the Corporate and Community Planning Standing Scrutiny Panel of 3rd November (Page 000, paragraph 7) and there was submitted a report (issued) of 11th November 2011 by the Executive Director – Corporate Services

- (1) providing an update on the reviewed Strategic Risk Register – October 2011, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report, in line with the agreed reporting framework; and
- (2) advising that, following updates from the risk owners in relation to the seventeen risk themes, key points had been highlighted as detailed within the report.

Decided: to agree the seventeen key risks and to endorse the work currently being undertaken or proposed by risk owners to mitigate these risks.

C

15. Role of Audit Committee.

Reference was made to the Minutes of the Corporate and Community Planning Standing Scrutiny Panel of 3rd November (Page 000, paragraph 6) and there was submitted a report (issued) of 11th November 2011 by the Executive Director – Corporate Services

- (1) seeking approval of the proposals from the Role of the Audit Panel Working Group;
- (2) informing that the Working Group had considered a number of topics and had agreed that the following three key issues would be explored further:-
 - (a) the need for a better understanding of the Standing Orders relating to the audit function, to consider practices in other Councils;
 - (b) that the Audit Panel function should be more clearly set apart from the wider scrutiny business of the Panel; and
 - (c) the development of a tracking mechanism to all issues raised at meetings to be actioned and the progress monitored;
- (3) reporting that (2)(b) and (c) above had already been addressed through the structuring of the agenda and the regular review of both internal and external audit actions;
- (4) advising that the Working Group had developed an Audit Committee Handbook, attached as Appendix 1 of the report and that that the Standing Scrutiny Panel had recommended that this now be submitted to this meeting of the Leadership Panel for formal approval; and
- (5) proposing that any required revisions to the Scheme of Delegation were progressed by the Executive Director – Corporate Services as part of the next review.

Decided:

- (i) to approve the contents of the Audit Committee Handbook, attached as Appendix 1 of the report;
- (ii) to request Officers to reflect any required revisions regarding the Scrutiny Panel's remit in the next revision of the Scheme of Delegation.

16. Paddle Steamer Waverley: Application for Funding.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 11th November 2011 by the Executive Director – Corporate Services

- (1) advising
 - (a) of an appeal for emergency funding from Waverley Excursions Ltd.;
 - (b) that apart from an annual grant from Glasgow City Council, the ship was operated almost entirely on income provided by fare-paying passengers and that the ship had, however, been hit by escalating fuel costs, and customers have been deterred by a succession of wet summers;
 - (c) that the ship was also in need of a statutory refit to enable it to sail in 2012, which was the 200th anniversary of steam navigation; and
 - (d) that as a result, earlier this year, Waverley Excursions Ltd. had launched a major public fundraising appeal to save the Waverley and unless the charity could raise £350,000, the ship would cease to sail;
- (2) reporting
 - (a) that approximately £140,000 had already been raised from public donations, and that a motion in support of the Waverley had been tabled in the Scottish Parliament and that volunteers have also pledged around £38,000 worth of labour for the winter refit;
 - (b) that Waverley Excursions Ltd. were now contacting all Councils where the Waverley sailed to appeal for emergency funding in the form of a one-off grant and that in terms of South Ayrshire, the charity was seeking a contribution of £15,000 and that contributions of £15,000 have been confirmed by North Ayrshire, Inverclyde and Argyll and Bute Councils; and
 - (c) that if the Waverley service was ceased, this was likely to have a negative impact on the Council's core objective of regenerating its communities and increasing employment, particularly the outcome of increasing visitors to the area by 10 per cent each year as outlined in the Ayrshire and Arran Tourism Strategy; and
- (3) proposing that a one-off grant of £15,000 from the Council's uncommitted balances at 31st March 2011 be awarded to Waverley Excursions Ltd. subject to the following conditions:-
 - that the charity was able to secure the total funding package of £350,000; and
 - that the Council received a guarantee that the Waverley would continue to provide a local service with sailings to and from Ayr and Girvan.

Decided: to approve a one-off grant of £15,000 subject to conditions to Waverley Excursions Ltd. as set out in the report.

17. **Wireless Access – Elected Members’ Library.**

Reference was made to the Minutes of 25th October 2011 (Page 629, paragraph 5) and there was submitted a report (issued) of 11th November 2011 by the Head of Policy, Performance and Communication

(1) advising

- (a) that subject to approval, a secure wireless access point would be installed in the Library, linked by existing cable infrastructure back to the server room in County Buildings which would then connect to a new broadband service, with appropriate security applied for use by Elected Members only;
- (b) that it should be noted that only information deemed to be “unclassified”, that is, information deemed appropriate to be in the public domain should be copied to personal PC’s, laptops, tablets etc.;
- (c) that the facility would be made available, initially for a period of twelve months, during which time consultation would take place with Elected Members to gauge the effectiveness of the provision to allow a further decision to be made in respect of continuation of service;
- (d) that as part of the consultation process, on-going consideration would be given to guidance, advice and instructions from the UK Government’s Communications-Electronics Security Group (CESG) in respect of equipment that members of the GSi and GSx communities could connect to their networks and still meet accreditation requirements;
- (e) that guidance to be considered would include particular functionality requirements of mobile devices such as smart phones, laptops, tablets, netbooks etc., and the additional needs to maintain integrity of data and the overall security of the Council’s computer networks; and
- (f) that in conjunction with the on-going rollout of the Council’s approved Information Classification Scheme, this consultation would inform the appropriate device that could be used to store information in each of the identified classification forms and allow proposals to be developed to reduce the requirement for the use of printed materials by Elected Members; and

(2) reporting that the acquisition and rental costs for this facility were as follows:-

Wireless access point	£200
Broadband installation	£106
Total	£306

with line rental and broadband service being £40 per month and that these costs could be met from within existing Members’ support resources.

A full discussion then took place in relation to Members’ requirements for wireless access.

Decided: to instruct the Chief Executive

- (i) to arrange for the installation of standalone wireless access points in the Members' Library, Members' accommodation and the County Hall and all Committee Rooms to provide a connection to the Internet via broadband enabling access to email and the Wire from Members own computer devices; and
- (ii) to deal with any resource implications that arise.

18. 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 from the meeting 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.

19. Ayr Townscape Heritage Initiative Procurement.

There was submitted a report (issued to Members only) of 14th November 2011 by the Executive Director – Development and Environment seeking approval to invite tenders for the first phase of works of the Ayr Townscape Heritage Initiative under the circumstances as outlined in the report.

A question was raised by a Member of the Panel in relation to the risk assessment with regard to the project work to the buildings and the Managing Director, Ayr Renaissance LLP responded accordingly.

Decided:

- (1) to authorise the Executive Director - Development and Environment to invite tenders for works under the Townscape Heritage Initiative on the basis that a minimum of 80% of funding was currently in place, rather than the 100% required under paragraph 8 of Council's Standing Orders Relating to Contracts; and
- (2) to note that no contract would be awarded until there were contractual arrangements in place for 100% of required funding.

20. Sale of former Taylor Street Depot, Ayr.

There was submitted a report (issued to Members only) of 14th November 2011 by the Executive Director – Development and Environment seeking approval of the sale of the former Taylor Street Depot, Ayr as identified on the plan attached as an Appendix of the report.

Decided: to approve the sale of the former Taylor Street Depot, Ayr for Two Hundred and Forty Thousand Pounds Sterling (£240,000), to MKM Building Supplies Ltd. subject to planning permission being obtained and on such other terms and conditions as might be agreed by the Executive Director - Development and Environment, when concluding the legal transaction.

21. Prestwick Indoor Bowling Rink, Bellevue Road, Prestwick.

There was submitted a joint report (issued to Members only) of 9th November 2011 by the Executive Director – Development and Environment and Executive Director – Children and Community seeking approval to sell Prestwick Indoor Bowling Rink and associated land to Mr. Jim Clark, trading as Ambassador (Prestwick) Ltd. for the sum of £1 to enable him to develop additional facilities to create a sustainable facility to support the Indoor Bowling Rink and to create a focus on leisure activities at this location.

Decided: to approve the disposal of the Prestwick Indoor Bowling Rink, Bellevue Road, Prestwick, as shown on the plan attached as an Appendix to the report, to Ambassador (Prestwick) Ltd. for the sum of £1 and to delegate authority to the Executive Director - Development and Environment to negotiate the detailed terms with Ambassador (Prestwick) Ltd.

Community Services – Housing and Customer First.

C-I

22. Appointment of Design Team for Council House and Children’s Residential Unit Plans at Forehill, Ayr.

There was submitted a joint report (issued to Members only) of 9th November 2011 by the Executive Director – Children and Community and Executive Director – Development and Environment seeking agreement to the appointment of a Design Team for the creation of plans for nineteen new Council houses and a children’s residential unit in Forehill, Ayr.

Decided:

- (1) to agree to the appointment of the Design Team as outlined in section 4.1 to 4.3 of the report; and
- (2) to approve the revised cost, number of units and funding for the New Build Council Housing project as outlined in section 5.1 of the report.

The meeting ended at 11.45 a.m.