

COMMUNITY SERVICES
STANDING SCRUTINY PANEL

Minutes of meeting in County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr,
on 2nd December 2009 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors John Allan (Chair), Ian Douglas, Bill Grant, Elaine Little, Alec Oattes, Robin Reid and Philip Saxton.

Attending: H. Garland, Executive Director – Children and Community; B. McInroy, Head of Service and School Management; K. Leinster, Head of Community Care and Housing; J. Cronin, Policy and Strategy Manager; M. Alexander, Housing Operations Manager; W. Carlaw, Principal Solicitor and A. Gerrish, Committee Administrative Officer.

Also attending: Councillor Douglas Campbell; John McDowall and Helen Moonie.

1. Item for Call-in – Review of Ayr Grammar Primary School.

Reference was made to the Minutes of the Leadership Panel of 24th November 2009 (Page 666, paragraph 3) when that Panel, having considered a report (issued) of 10th November 2009 by the Executive Director – Children and Community, had agreed

- (1) to note the progress to date in the negotiations on the Seafield site;
- (2) to approve the continuing development of the Seafield site proposal with NHS Ayrshire and Arran and Historic Scotland; and
- (3) to request that a further progress report be submitted to the Leadership Panel at its meeting on 9th March 2010.

The Panel was advised that the report had been the subject of a call-in for the following reasons:-

- (a) for additional information regarding the consequences for the school estate of the recommendation;
- (b) what are the resource implications in the event of failure to reach agreement with Historic Scotland? and
- (c) bearing in mind the uncertainty of concluding an agreement with Historic Scotland, what are the advantages/disadvantages of considering alternative options?

The Head of Service and School Management advised that discussions with NHS Ayrshire and Arran and Historical Scotland were ongoing and that he hoped very soon that the Children and Community Section would become involved in the negotiations and at the present time there were no alternative plans for Ayr Grammar School.

Councillor Moonie expressed her concerns that there were no alternative plans for Ayr Grammar School and that in her opinion a backup plan should be considered exploring various options. She also referred to various questions raised by Councillor Hunter and Councillor Davies at the Leadership Panel and the responses made by the relevant officers in relation to planning issues and expressed her disappointment that no one from the planning section was there to answer questions.

A full discussion took place on this matter and various questions and comments were raised by Members of the Panel in relation to the negotiations with Historic Scotland, the structure of the Mansion House at Seafield and the potential financial implications and the relevant Officers responded accordingly.

Councillor Saxton then moved a Motion that the report be referred back to the Leadership Panel with a recommendation that consideration be given to the early formulation of alternative options in consultation with parents.

Councillor Saxton failed to find a seconder and his Motion fell.

Councillor Saxton requested that his dissent be recorded.

Decided: following review, that the decision of the Leadership Panel in respect of this matter be confirmed and implemented.

2. **Minutes of previous meeting.**

Decided: to note the Minutes of the meeting of 4th November 2009 (issued).

3. **Briefing Paper on Factoring and Mixed Tenure Estates.**

There was submitted a report (issued) of 17th November 2009 by the Executive Director – Children and Community

- (1) detailing issues relating to mixed tenure estates as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report; and
- (2) outlining the future action which needed to be addressed to tackle mixed tenure issues in South Ayrshire over the next few months.

Following a full discussion on this matter, various questions were raised by Members of the Panel in relation to: controlled door entry systems; factoring; maintenance; sinking funds; the scheme of assistance; consistency of title deeds; and maintenance of open spaces, and the relevant Officers and the Portfolio holder responded accordingly.

Decided: to note the contents of the report.

C

4. Scrutiny Reviews 2010 – Children and Community.

There was submitted a report (issued) of November 2009 by the Executive Director – Children and Community recommending two areas of review planned for the next year within Children and Community.

Decided: to recommend that this Panel's programme of Scrutiny Reviews in 2010 comprise:-

- (1) Additional Support Needs; and
- (2) Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.

The meeting ended at 11.20 a.m.