

LEADERSHIP PANEL.

Minutes of meeting in County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr,
on 13th April 2010 at 10.00 a.m.

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

Attending: J. G. Peterkin, Depute Chief Executive and Executive Director – Development and Environment; H. Garland, Executive Director – Children and Community; C. Monaghan, Head of Policy, Performance and Communication; D. Alexander, Head of Corporate Resources; A. Wilson, Head of HR and Organisational Development; M. Williamson, Head of Curriculum and Service Improvement; K. Leinster, Head of Community Care and Housing; M. Newall, Head of Planning and Enterprise; I. Woodburn, Head of Customer and Community Services; V. Andrews, Head of Legal and Administration; W. Gray, Property and Asset Manager; P. Linton, Performance and Change Management Manager; D. Sherlock, Improvement Manager; J. Cronin, Policy and Strategy Manager; C. McPhail, Business Engagement Development Officer; C. Bradshaw, Assistant Public Communications Officer; E. Wyllie, Committee Administrative Officer; and A. Gerrish, Committee Administrative Officer.

Also Present: Rev. David Gemmell and Pastor Alastair Simmons (in attendance for items 1 to 3 only).

Community Services – Lifelong Learning.**1. Curriculum for Excellence in South Ayrshire Schools.**

Reference was made to the Minutes of 17th February 2009 (Page 80, paragraph 4) and there was submitted a report (issued) of 22nd March 2010 by the Executive Director – Children and Community

- (1) outlining the progress to date in implementing the Curriculum for Excellence in South Ayrshire schools;
- (2) advising
 - (a) that a Curriculum for Excellence Strategy Group had been formed which was responsible for ensuring a coherent approach being taken to support the Curriculum for Excellence adoption;
 - (b) that Learning Communities had been established which provided opportunities for cluster collaboration and for Head Teachers to meet to discuss strategic issues;
 - (c) that additional working time arrangements had been agreed in all schools to enable collegiate activity times across the authority to focus on Curriculum for Excellence; and
 - (d) that all establishments were continuing to develop appropriate arrangements and mechanisms for communication with parents and carers regarding Curriculum for Excellence e.g. open evenings, parental leaflets and informing that a Parental Conference showcasing innovative practice had been held in January 2010; and

(3) reporting

- (a) that the 2009/10 funding allocation was £0.790m;
- (b) that the project underspend was £0.040m which had been earmarked for use in 2010/11 to allow for the continuation of the two seconded teachers into the 2010/11 academic year as they were currently only funded until June 2010; and
- (c) that the 2010/11 budget for Curriculum for Excellence was £0.764m which would be used to support the activities outlined in the report.

Questions were raised by Members of the Panel in relation to:- the Parental Conference; modern languages; the transition of pupils from primary to secondary schools; and ways to continue driving the strategy forward and the Head of Curriculum and Service Improvement responded accordingly.

Decided: to approve the progress being made to date as identified within the report.

2. **S1 Intake to Kyle Academy.**

There was submitted a report (issued) of 23rd March 2010 by the Executive Director – Children and Community

- (1) seeking approval to increase the S1 intake at Kyle Academy from 140 to 159 pupils with effect from the start of the 2010/11 school session;
- (2) advising that the accommodation at Kyle Academy had changed over recent years following the closure of Mainholm Academy in 2007, the completion of the new annexe under the Council's Public Private Partnership programme and the creation of pupil support rooms; and
- (3) intimating
 - (a) that following a review of the accommodation schedule, the capacity of the school had increased from 805 pupils to 851 pupils; and
 - (b) that the new e-learning suite contributed to the increased capacity.

Decided: to approve the proposal to increase the S1 intake at Kyle Academy to 159 pupils with effect from the start of the 2010/11 session.

3. **School Holiday Arrangements 2011/12.**

There was submitted a report (issued) of 1st April 2010 by the Executive Director – Children and Community seeking approval for proposed school holiday arrangements for Session 2011/12 as contained in Appendix 1 of the report.

Decided: to approve option 1 for school holiday arrangements for 2011/12 as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report.

Community Services – Social Services.

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4. Establishing an Equality and Diversity Forum.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 31st March 2010 by the Head of Policy, Performance and Communication

- (1) seeking approval for the establishment of an Equality and Diversity Forum;
- (2) advising that there were three areas of responsibility that the Council had with respect to equality and diversity issues:- policy development; service provision; and as an employer; and
- (3) intimating
 - (a) that to meet its responsibilities in these areas the Council had over the last eight years produced Race, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes that set out the improvement actions the Council had agreed to take to address issues identified following consultation and the development of these schemes was supported by a fixed life Member/Officer Group that was informally extended but which had not met for over a year;
 - (b) that the existing three Schemes would be replaced in October 2010 by a Single Equalities Scheme that, in addition to addressing the characteristics of race, disability and gender would also cover age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and marriage and civil partnership; and
 - (c) that to deliver on its equality and diversity responsibilities the Council required to have in place structures and management arrangements that enabled it to consult, engage and involve stakeholders; develop policies and procedures; and progress improvement actions.

Decided: to agree

- (i) to discontinue the Member/Officer Group on equalities and diversity in favour of establishing an Equality and Diversity Forum with participation from Elected Members and voluntary sector stakeholders;
- (ii) that this Forum be chaired by the Social Services Portfolio Carrier; and
- (iii) to request that the Labour and Conservatives Groups and the Independents each nominate an Elected Member to participate in the Forum.

Community Services – Housing and Customer First.

5. Housing Capital Investment Programme 2009/10: Monitoring Report at Period 11; 28th February 2010.

There was submitted a joint report (issued) of 22nd March 2010 by the Depute Chief Executive and Executive Director – Development and Environment and Executive Director – Corporate Services

- (1) informing of the progress being made with the Housing Capital Investment Programme for 2009/10 at 28th February 2010 (Budget Monitoring Period 11) and outlining that actual expenditure equalled £5,872,548 based on a budget of £8,823,734, which represented 66.6% as detailed within the report;
- (2) advising that the Council's Housing Capital Investment Programme for 2009/10 had been approved at a Special Meeting of the Council on 4th February 2009 with the total funding being £9,195,000 and that the Council at its meeting on 9th July 2009 had agreed that £948,155 be bought forward from 2008/09 to fund the completion of projects; and
- (3) intimating that a number of adjustments were being proposed to the current programme as highlighted in the report.

A question was raised by a Member of the Panel in relation to the performance of utility companies and to what extent this impacted on the Housing Capital Investment Programme and the Property and Asset Manager responded accordingly.

Decided:

- (a) to note the progress made on projects to 28th February, 2010 as highlighted in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (b) to approve the adjustments requested in Section 4 of the report; and
- (c) to request that the Depute Chief Executive and Executive Director – Development and Environment write to Local MSPs and COSLA expressing concerns raised by this Panel in relation to the performance of utility companies and the impact on this Council's delivery of its Housing Capital Investment Programme.

6. Affordable Housing Development at Croft Street, Tarbolton.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 30th March 2010 by the Executive Director – Children and Community

- (1) advising of the intention to provide funding to Ayrshire Housing for the development of thirty new affordable homes at Croft Street, Tarbolton;
- (2) intimating that Tarbolton had been identified as a priority for the development of affordable housing within the Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan which had been approved in November 2009;

- (3) reporting that the cost of the project was £3,994,960 and that the Scottish Government had made an offer of grant to Ayrshire Housing of £2,307,719 based on current Scottish Government resource assumptions, and that in addition private finance of £1,607,242 was being raised by Ayrshire Housing; leaving a shortfall in funding of £80,000; and
- (4) recommending that £80,000 be taken from the Council's Affordable Housing Account to provide funding to Ayrshire Housing as part of a partnership approach to the provision of affordable housing in South Ayrshire.

A question was raised by a Member of the Panel in relation to the proposed development and homeless issues and the Head of Community Care and Housing responded accordingly.

Decided: to approve support for the development identified within the report advising of the intention to provide funding to Ayrshire Housing as part of a partnership approach to the provision of affordable housing at this location.

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7. **Affordable Housing: Council New Build Bid for Subsidy.**

Reference was made to the Minutes of 15th September 2009 (Page 500, paragraph 10) and there was submitted a report (issued) of 18th March 2010 by the Executive Director – Children and Community

- (1) seeking agreement in principle to sites being considered for Council new build and to the submission of a second bid to the Scottish Government for Council New Build subsidy;
- (2) advising
 - (a) that the Council has a statutory requirement to meet housing need through a variety of means with the need in South Ayrshire being estimated as a requirement for two hundred additional properties per year, plus a requirement for permanent housing to meet the need generated through the statutory requirement to abolish priority need for homelessness by 2012;
 - (b) that in December 2008, the Scottish Government had announced the availability of subsidy of up to £25,000 per unit to encourage Councils to consider new build as an option and that the Government had indicated that funding would be available in two rounds and Councils were asked to bid for the first round of funding by 12th January 2009 with a second round of funding announced with a deadline of 25th September 2009;
 - (c) that the Leadership Panel of 18th August 2009 had agreed that a proposal for Council new build should be developed at that time and agreed in principle, with the feasibility of two sites at Thornyflat and a site in Ayr North, then being investigated; and
 - (d) that in February 2010, the Scottish Government had announced a third round of subsidy of up to £30,000 per unit for Council new build; and

- (3) concluding
- (a) that two potential projects in Ayr North were currently under consideration as suitable for Council new build; and
 - (b) that, once all the information was available, the Council New Build Project Group would consider all the options with a view to selecting the project which would best meet the Scottish Government's criteria in terms of maximising the number of units within resources and would provide best value for the Council.

A question was raised by a Member of the Panel in relation to affordable housing provision and the need for the Council to have a proposed list of available sites for future opportunities should they arise and the Head of Community Care and Housing responded accordingly.

Decided: to agree

- (i) that the Council submit a bid to the Scottish Government for Council new build subsidy, by 30th April 2010 based on the proposals as outlined in the report; and
- (ii) in principle to the proposed sites for Council new build as outlined in paragraph 4.3 of the report.

Development and the Environment – Sustainability and the Environment.

8. Masonhill Crematorium – Options Appraisal.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 31st March 2010 by the Depute Chief Executive and Executive Director – Development and Environment

- (1) proposing the replacement of cremators and the installation of mercury abatement equipment at Masonhill Crematorium; and
- (2) advising
 - (a) that the recommended option of replacing the cremators and the installation of mercury abatement equipment would result in Capital Expenditure of £387,000 in 2010/11 to finance the building extension required;
 - (b) that a budget allocation of £600,000 had been made in the Capital Plan for 2010/11;
 - (c) that in addition, the balance of cost of the cremators and the abatement equipment of £800,000 would be covered by a finance lease option with the annual revenue costs being recovered from cremation fee increases; and
 - (d) that an amount of £65,000 for removal and demolition costs could not be included within either the capital sum or the finance lease and so would require to be funded from the Directorate's Revenue Budget for 2010/11.

Questions were raised by Members of the Panel in relation to leases and the difference between burial and cremation fees and the Head of Customer and Community Services responded accordingly.

Decided: to replace the cremators at Masonhill Crematorium and install mercury abatement equipment using Capital Expenditure and a finance lease, as set out in more detail in the Options Appraisal report appended to the report.

Corporate and Community Planning – Corporate, Strategic and Community Planning.

9. Improvement Agenda - Fourth Progress Report.

Reference was made to the Minutes of South Ayrshire Council of 9th July 2009 (Page 396, paragraph 5) and there was submitted a report (issued) of April 2010 by the Head of Policy, Performance and Communication

- (1) advising on current progress against the Improvement Agenda;
- (2) detailing the status for each improvement strand as at the end of March 2010; and
- (3) concluding that overall, good progress had been made across all improvement strands.

A question was raised by a Member of the Panel in relation to the progress of Improvement Strand 2 and the Head of Policy, Performance and Communication responded accordingly.

Decided: to note

- (a) the status of each improvement strand and the detailed information provided; and
- (b) that one improvement strand (Core ICT systems) had been graded as 'amber.'

10. South Ayrshire Council Directorate Plans.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 31st March 2010 by the Head of Policy, Performance and Communication advising

- (1) that the Audit of Best Value and Community Planning had identified that the Council needed to develop more clearly prioritised strategic plans that supported the delivery of the Council's Vision and Improvement Plan and needed to introduce effective performance management processes;
- (2) that the Directorate Plans formed a vital part of the 'golden thread' that ensured that the outcomes that the Council had agreed to achieve, were actually delivered through its services, teams and employees, in a clearly identifiable and accountable manner; and
- (3) that the Directorates had been taking forward the objectives and tasks that they identified within those Plans and had been reviewing and assessing the progress they had been achieving.

Questions were raised by Members of the Panel in relation to the extent of detail presented within the Plans and the Head of Policy, Performance and Communication advised that the next report to this Panel on 8th June 2010 should provide further detail.

Decided:

- (a) to approve the Children and Community Directorate Plan for 2010/13;
- (b) to approve the Corporate Services Directorate Plan for 2010/13;
- (c) to approve the Development and Environment Directorate Plan for 2010/13; and
- (d) to agree to remit these Plans to the relevant Standing Scrutiny Panels, to examine those sections that relate to their specific remits.

11. Development of Performance Management.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 31st March 2010 by the Head of Policy, Performance and Communication

- (1) seeking approval for the purchase of a performance management system (Covalent) in collaboration with NHS Ayrshire and Arran;
- (2) highlighting the benefits to the Council in purchasing such a system at this particular time; and
- (3) outlining the resource implications.

Questions were raised by Members of the Panel in relation to:- the efficiency of the system; shared services; information sharing; and purchase by negotiation and the Head of Policy, Performance and Communication responded accordingly and gave the requested assurances in respect of the efficiency of this system.

Decided: to approve the purchase of the Covalent performance management system to help strengthen the Council's ability to monitor, manage, evaluate and report progress.

12. Corporate Risk Management.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 12th March 2010 by the Head of Corporate Resources seeking approval of the revised Council Risk Management Strategy, updated Strategic Risk Register and proposed mitigations as contained within the Appendices to the report.

Decided:

- (1) to approve the revised Risk Management Strategy as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report;
- (2) to agree the Strategic Risk Register and proposed mitigations as outlined in Appendix 2 of the report;
- (3) to request that appropriate training for Elected Members be arranged; and
- (4) to remit this report for further consideration by the Corporate and Community Planning Standing Scrutiny Panel.

Corporate and Community Planning – Resources and Performance.

13. Council Tax Collection Statistics – Cash at 28th February 2010.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 30th March 2010 by the Head of Corporate Resources advising

- (1) of the collection levels which had been achieved in respect of Council Tax to 28th February 2010 and the action which had been taken to achieve Best Value in the collection thereof;
- (2) that the collection rate had been 93.24 per cent against the target collection of 93.19 per cent which equated to a positive variation of £26,620, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report; and
- (3) that, in order to address increased customer demand due to the economic recession, Corporate Services staff had worked controlled periods of overtime to ensure accurate benefit awards together with the prompt rebilling and recovery of Council Tax and that, in the event of non-payment, Council Tax arrears were now being passed earlier to Stirling Park, Sheriff Officers to maximise recovery and minimise the impact of the economic downturn upon collections.

Decided:

- (a) to approve the contents of the report; and
- (b) to request the Head of Corporate Resources to provide updated figures to the next meeting of this Panel.

14. Common Good Funds - Revenue and Capital Budgetary Control – Position Statement at 28th February 2010.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 19th March 2010 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 28th February 2010

- (1) detailing
 - (a) the revenue position at 28th February 2010, taking into account the Leadership Panel's decisions, as detailed in section 3 of the report, against the approved full year budget and projected balances; and
 - (b) the accumulated revenue position at 28th February 2010 and the projected accumulated revenue surpluses at 31st March 2010;
- (2) advising that the accumulated capital reserves balance on the Ayr Common Good Fund at 28th February 2010 was £2,550,317 with the projected accumulated capital position at 31st March 2010, taking into account the capital issues highlighted in Appendix 3 of the report, anticipated to be £2,560,317, an increase of £10,000 since 1st April 2009; and

- (3) intimating that the accumulated capital reserves balance on the Prestwick Common Good Fund at 28th February 2010 was £50,000 and that this position was likely to remain unchanged at 31st March 2010.

Decided: to approve the contents of the report.

15. Housing Revenue Account - Revenue Budgetary Control 2009/10 – Position Statement at 28th February 2010.

There was submitted a joint report (issued) of 22nd March 2010 by the Executive Director – Children and Community and the Executive Director – Corporate Services on the performance of the Housing Revenue Account's expenditure against its profiled budget for the period to 28th February 2010 and reporting

- (1) that in 2008/09 the HRA had achieved a surplus for the year of £0.829m which had been added to the surplus brought forward of £19.691m to give an accumulated surplus at 31st March 2009 of £20.520m;
- (2) that part of this surplus (£12.416m) was committed and that the balance of £8.104m would be considered as part of the 2011/12 Business Plan Review and that it was likely that it would be needed for future capital investment to avoid the need for long term borrowing;
- (3) that part of the committed surplus (£3.228m) related to funding for the 2009/10 Housing Capital Programme and that this would not be fully required in the current financial year due to slippage as at period 11 the amount required within 2009/10 had reduced to £1.146m; and
- (4) that the HRA was £1.065m underspent for the period to 31st December 2009 and that the projected surplus for the year to 31st March 2010 was £0.876m.

Decided: to approve the contents of the report.

16. Budget Management - Revenue Budgetary Control 2009/10 – Position Statement at 28th February 2010.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 31st March 2010 by the Executive Director – Corporate Services

- (1) presenting an overview of the General Services Revenue Account for 2009/10 as at 28th February 2010;
- (2) advising
 - (a) that the final audited accumulated surplus to 31st March 2009 was £7.453m;
 - (b) that of the accumulated surplus of £7.453m, £1.064m would require to be set aside to assist with the financing of the Council's Schools PPP project and £1.195m had been allocated to be spent on specific Council projects during 2009/10 with a further £0.895m being earmarked to be used in delivering the Council's affordable housing strategy in future years, leaving an uncommitted balance of £4.299m at 31st March 2009; and

- (c) that South Ayrshire Council at its meeting on 7th October 2009 had approved the use of £0.750m from the additional VAT monies received to fund severance costs resulting from the latest phase of organisational change, in addition to the £1.000m set aside for this purpose in the 2009/10 Revenue Budget;
- (3) intimating that the Revenue Budget for 2009/10 had been approved by the Council at its meeting on 11th February 2009 and that the approved budget had been based on the former management structures, with further work required by Directorates and Finance to restate the budgets to reflect the new management arrangements;
- (4) reporting that the Council's total planned expenditure had increased by £0.768m since the Budget Management Report to 31st December 2009 was considered by the Leadership Panel on 9th February 2010 which increase reflected notification from Scottish Government of additional Aggregate External Finance receivable for 2009/10 as follows:-

100 additional teachers	£0.060m	Added to Children and Communities' budget to enable recruitment of additional teaching staff;
Youth Justice	£0.022m	Added to Children and Communities budget to enable establishment of 'diversion from prosecution' scheme for young people under 18;
Teachers' induction	£0.533m	Added to Children and Communities' budget to enable recruitment of probationers; and
Fire commutations	£0.153m	Added to Miscellaneous Services budget to offset additional requisition amount to be paid to Fire Joint Board.

£0.768m

- (5) detailing revenue monitoring reports for each Directorate for the period to 28th February 2010 as provided in Appendix 1 of the report; and
- (6) 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 at least a break-even position at 31st March 2010 as follows:-
- **Chief Executive's Strategic Office** – showed a current underspend of £0.061m which was mainly due to minor overspends in administrative costs offset by savings in supplies and services costs and additional grant income with a year-end underspend of £0.263m currently being projected;
 - **Children and Community** – showed a current underspend of £2.426m which was mainly due to savings in employee costs, school running costs, and out-with authority placements and care packages for children and that these underspends would be offset by increased expenditure on homecare and residential care packages with a year-end underspend of £1.484m currently being projected;

- **Corporate Services** – showed a current underspend of £0.524m which was mainly due to underspends in ICT supplies and services and payments to agencies and increased income received by several services within the Directorate with a year-end under-spend of £0.543m currently being projected;
- **Development and Environment** – showed a current underspend of £0.201m which was mainly due to current underspends in Property and Design Trading supplies and services costs and an over-recovery of income in respect of Burns Festival and these under-spends were offset by increased third party payments relating to the Burns Festival with a year-end under-spend of £0.767m currently being projected; and
- **Miscellaneous** – showed an underspend of £0.284m which was mainly due to utilities costs which were currently under review, with a year-end underspend of £0.375m currently being projected due to anticipated savings on debt management costs and delays in contributions to Ayr Town Centre Renaissance and the Town Centre Heritage Initiative.

Decided:

- (i) to approve the carry-forward to 2010/11 of £1.761m as summarised in the table at paragraph 4.5.3 of the report and detailed in the service budgetary control reports in Appendix 1;
- (ii) to approve the management action being taken by Executive Directors to ensure a break-even budget at 31st March 2010 as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report;
- (iii) to approve the requests for virement as outlined in the Directorate budgetary control reports at Appendix 1 and as summarised in Appendix 2 of the report; and
- (iv) otherwise, to note the contents of the report.

17. General Services Capital Programme 2009/10: Monitoring Report at Period 11 – 28th February 2010.

There was submitted a joint report (issued) of 15th March 2010 by the Depute Chief Executive and Executive Director – Development and Environment and the Executive Director – Corporate Services

- (1) outlining the General Services Capital Programme for 2009/10 at 28th February 2010 and detailing that at the end of Period 11, actual expenditure and income stood at £9,892,674 (52.39% of total budget), against a full year approved budget of £18,883,184;
- (2) indicating that a number of adjustments were required to the Programme as follows:-
 - proposals to slip funding into 2010/11; and
 - projects where reductions in budgets were required; and

- (3) reporting that Appendix 2 of the report summarised these adjustments and would result in an overall reduction in net over-programming of £36,374.

Questions were raised by Members of the Panel in relation to:- the need for the kitchen at Troon Town Hall to be refurbished; and the results from the contamination survey being undertaken at Walker Road, Ayr and the Property and Asset Manager responded accordingly.

Decided:

- (a) to note the progress made on projects to 28th February 2010 as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report; and
- (b) to approve the proposed adjustments to the programme as outlined in Section 4 of the report.

18. Media Advertising Services Contract.

There was submitted a joint report (issued) of 26th March 2010 by the Head of Policy, Performance and Communication and Head of Corporate Resources

- (1) seeking approval to extend the existing contract for media advertising services from 31st May until 31st August 2010; and
- (2) proposing that this Council, along with North and East Ayrshire Councils, put in place a new Pan Ayrshire media advertising services contract to take effect from 1st September 2010.

A question was raised by a Member of the Panel in relation to the Pan Ayrshire approach and the Head of Corporate Resources responded accordingly.

Decided: to approve the extension of the current media advertising services contract with Advertising Works until 31st August 2010, in accordance with section 16.3 of the Council's Standing Orders Relating to Contracts.

19. Replacement of the All Ayrshire Approved List of Contractors.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 30th March 2010 by the Depute Chief Executive and Executive Director – Development and Environment

- (1) advising that the All Ayrshire Approved List of Contractors had been in existence since 1998 and was used by East, North and South Ayrshire Councils and that each Authority used the list to select contractors to tender for construction works contracts below the EU Procurement Threshold of £3,927,260 and outlining the current requirements to gain entry onto the list;

(2) proposing

- (a) to replace the All Ayrshire Approved List of Contractors for Construction Projects with a new process with effect from 1st October 2010;
- (b) that all tender opportunities would be advertised on www.publiccontractscotland.gov.uk, the Scottish Government's national tender advertising portal and that Contractors could access this portal free of charge and currently over 45,000 contractors had registered with the portal which would ensure that contractors received automatic e-mail alerts of tender opportunities in their chosen sphere(s) of interest;
- (c) that, in conjunction with East and North Ayrshire Councils, Financial Vetting would be undertaken by Equifax, through the Office of Government Commerce Buying Solutions Contract (Equifax is a business financial intelligence organisation);
- (d) that Health and Safety vetting would be carried out through the Contractors' Health and Safety Scheme (CHAS) and Safety Schemes in Procurement (SSIP) administered by the London Borough of Merton and were well recognised throughout the UK Public Sector and that currently approximately one third of the contractors on the Approved List had CHAS/SSIP accreditation with a nominal charge to companies for being vetted under this scheme;
- (e) that technical references would still require to be sought for potential contractors by the Property and Asset Management Service and that to generate efficiencies, a database would be set up between East, North and South Ayrshire Councils to share references and reduce the need for multiple reference checks; and
- (f) to have a transition period between now and 30th September 2010 which would allow the Councils time to publicise details of the new process to potential contractors and to write to contractors currently on the Approved List to notify them of the change;

(3) indicating

- (a) that the transition period would also allow contractors time to apply for Health and Safety accreditation to CHAS/SSIP; and
 - (b) that these new arrangements had been developed in conjunction with East and North Ayrshire Councils and it was intended that their implementation would be jointly managed to maximise future efficiencies from joint working; and
- (4) reporting that there would be no direct financial implications to this Council arising from changes proposed and that staff currently employed on duties related to the administration of the Approved List would now be involved in the management and administration of the new arrangements proposed in this report.

Questions and comments were raised by Members of the Panel in relation to:- the number of tenders being received; local contractors; and the type of information being displayed on the website and the Property and Asset Manager responded accordingly.

Decided: to agree to the replacement of the All Ayrshire Approved List of Contractors with the proposed new process as detailed in Section 4 of the report and at (2) (a) to (f) and (3)(a) and (b) above.

20. Proposals for the Utilisation of the Central Repairs Account in 2010/11.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 26th March 2010 by the Depute Chief Executive and Executive Director – Development and Environment

(1) advising

- (a) that the Council, in agreeing its Revenue and Capital Budgets for 2010/11 on 10th February 2010 had approved funding of £2,728,027 in respect of the Central Repairs Account (CRA) with a summary of the Budget as proposed for 2010/11 being provided in Appendix 1 of the report;
- (b) that in 2010/11, 44% of the total maintenance budget was being allocated to reactive maintenance, with 56% being allocated to planned maintenance;
- (c) that the information gathered through the Conditions Survey process was used to develop annual programmes of planned maintenance to be funded from the CRA and that in addition to planned maintenance items, the CRA also funded: -
 - expenditure on ongoing programmes designed to address and meet the Council's responsibilities in terms of legislative, regulatory and health and safety issues;
 - established contracts with external service providers;
 - the annual servicing of plant and equipment;
 - the staff costs involved in managing and administering the programme; and
 - responsive maintenance, being emergency and urgent repairs;
- (d) of the allocation of resources to legislative, regulatory or health and safety issues; and

(2) recommending

- (a) that of the £826,227 available to fund planned maintenance, £806,000 be committed to projects to be undertaken during the course of the financial year with the balance of £20,227 being held as a contingency and if not required during the course of the year, would be allocated to fund further planned work; and
- (b) that planned maintenance priorities had been identified by Property and Asset Management personnel from prioritised Conditions Survey data, and included the following: -
 - extensive redecoration and flooring work at both Ayr Grammar Primary and Queen Margaret Academy;
 - refurbishment work at Maybole Town Hall, including upgrade to some services;

- repairs and redecoration of central foyer and main stair area at County Buildings;
- repairs to Maybole Golf Clubhouse and Girvan Golf Clubhouse;
- renewal of the heating system at the McKechnie Institute in Girvan; and
- extensive programme of external decoration work to various buildings.

Decided: to approve the proposals as detailed in the report for the utilisation of the CRA in 2010-11.

21. Exclusion of Press and Public.

The Panel resolved, in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of items 22 to 25 of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information in terms of paragraphs 6 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7(A) of the Act.

22. Cottage No. 2, Carngillan, Tarbolton.

There was submitted a report (issued to members only) of 23rd March 2010 by the Depute Chief Executive and Executive Director – Development and Environment seeking approval for the sale of Cottage No. 2, Carngillan, Tarbolton.

Decided: to approve the sale of the subjects to Mr. John Fulton Frew and Mrs. Janette Lawrie Frew for the sum of Eighty Thousand, One Hundred Pounds (£80,100.00), and on such other terms and conditions as might be agreed by the Depute Chief Executive and Executive Director - Development and Environment, when concluding the legal transaction.

23. Templeton House, 40 Racecourse Road, Ayr.

There was submitted a report (issued to members only) of 22nd March 2010 by the Depute Chief Executive and Executive Director – Development and Environment seeking approval for the disposal of Templeton House, 40 Racecourse Road, Ayr (a former Residential Care Home and Respite Centre).

Decided:

- (1) as the offer from Care Concern Holdings Limited, in the sum of One Million One Hundred and Ten Thousand Pounds (£1,110,000.00) was, on the whole unconditional and settlement was likely to be achieved during the course of the financial year 2010/11, to approve the sale of the subjects to that Company and on such other terms and conditions as might be agreed by the Depute Chief Executive and Executive Director - Development and Environment when concluding the legal transaction; and
- (2) in addition, to approve the further grant of authority to conclude a deal with John Dickie Homes Limited, should the sale to Care Concern Holdings Limited fail to proceed within a satisfactory timeframe.

24. Ayr Renaissance – Delivery of Town Centre Regeneration Funding.

There was a submitted a report (issued to members only) of 7th April 2010 by the Chief Executive outlining the progress on the site assembly of the Riverside Block at the north end of Ayr High Street.

Questions were raised by Members of the Panel in relation to:- the development of the Business Plan; timescales; and the delivery of the Ayr Renaissance Strategy and the Depute Chief Executive and Executive Director – Development and Environment responded accordingly.

Decided: to note the contents of the report.

Development and the Environment – Economic Development, Tourism and Leisure.

25. West of Scotland Loan Fund.

There was submitted a report (issued to members only) of 31st March 2010 by the Depute Chief Executive and Executive Director – Development and Environment seeking approval to award loans from this Council's funds held in the West of Scotland Loan Fund.

A question was raised by a Member of the Panel in respect of one of the applications and the Business Engagement Development Officer responded accordingly.

Decided:

- (1) to approve
 - (a) the application by an engineering company for funding from the West of Scotland Loan Fund and that the applicants be offered a loan of £20,000 repayable over 36 months, the loan being conditional on satisfactory securities being agreed; and
 - (b) the application by an hotel company for funding from the West of Scotland Loan Fund and that the applicants be offered a loan of £25,000 repayable over 36 months, the loan being conditional on satisfactory securities being agreed; and
- (2) to note the funding performance of the West of Scotland Loan Fund since April 2009.

26. Closing Remarks.

The Chair reminded officers

- (1) that there should be no late papers submitted to meetings of the Leadership Panel;
- (2) that all reports should contain a section relating to consultation with Portfolio Holders; and
- (3) that, where reports contained options, the options appraisal assessment should be detailed within the report.

The meeting ended at 12.10 p.m.