

CLACKMANNANSHIRE COUNCIL

**MINUTE OF MEETING of the SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held within the Council Chamber,
Greenfield, Alloa, on THURSDAY 21 JANUARY 2010 at 10.00 am**

PRESENT

Councillor Donald Balsillie (Convener)
Councillor John Biggam
Councillor Alastair Campbell
Councillor Harry McLaren
Provost Derek Stewart

IN ATTENDANCE

Grahame Blair, Director of Services to People
Garry Dallas, Director of Development and Environmental Services
Peter Broadfoot, Head of Administration and Legal Services
Deirdre Cilliers, Head of Social Services
Barry Dickson, Head of Business Improvement and Technology Services
John Gillespie, Head of Housing Property and Benefit Advice
Jim Goodall, Head of Education and Community Services
Aileen Littlejohn, Business Support Manager (Clerk to the Committee)
Susan MacKay, Finance Manager
Elaine McPherson, Head of Strategic Policy

Also in Attendance

Grace Scanlin, Grant Thornton UK LLP

SC(10)211 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mark English and Councillor Gary Womersley.

SC(10)212 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

SC(10)213 MINUTE OF MEETING HELD ON 3rd DECEMBER 2009

The Committee approved the minute of the meeting held on Thursday 3rd December 2009 as a correct record of proceedings; the minute of the meeting was signed by the Convener.

Moved by Provost Derek Stewart. Seconded by Councillor John Biggam.

SC(10)214 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN

A list of ongoing actions from Scrutiny Committee meetings was submitted. The Committee agreed to note the following:

SID: 2211: Minute of Meeting held on 22 October 2009

The Scrutiny Committee Convener to meet with the Head of Administration and Legal Services to agree a protocol for questions to Portfolio Holders and to discuss substitute arrangements for the Committee. Once finalised, the Protocol for questions to Portfolio Holders to be submitted to the Committee for approval.

Action: Head of Administration and Legal Services

SID: 2182: End of Year Balanced Scorecard 2009/10

Action completed; members have provided feedback on the effectiveness and presentation of measures to enable the effective scrutiny of performance. Scrutiny of performance remains work in progress.

SC(10)215 AUDIT REPORT FOR YEAR ENDED 2008/09

A report on the annual report by the Council's external auditors, Grant Thornton UK LLP, on the audit of the Council's accounts for 2008/09 was submitted by the Finance Manager. The report by the Council's External Auditor (Report on the 2008-09 Audit) was appended and provided an overview of the financial statements for 2008/09 and also covered Governance and Performance issues examined over the year.

The Committee had opportunity to put questions to Grace Scanlin, Grant Thornton UK LLP.

Motion

That the Committee notes the information set out in the report subject to a further management report being submitted to the Scrutiny Committee of either 8th April or 20th May 2010 which addresses the following specific points from the External Audit Report (Report on the 2008-09 Audit) in relation to :

- developing budgetary control and financial reporting arrangements to ensure greater accuracy in budget monitoring reports.
- reviewing the role of the Scrutiny Committee and developing a consensus on how best the Committee should discharge its functions across all elements of scrutiny including effectiveness of policy implementation.
- considering the Council's approach to participating in the National Fraud Initiative, in particular the decision not to include electoral role and council tax information in the data matching exercise.

Moved by Councillor Donald Balsillie. Seconded by Councillor Alastair Campbell.

Decision

The Committee agreed unanimously to support the motion.

Action:

Chief Executive

SC(10)216 GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2009/10

A report detailing the latest General Fund revenue spend for the current financial year 2009/10 based on actual spend to date and detailed discussion with Service Managers on likely forecasts for the year was submitted by the Finance Manager.

The report highlighted the revised estimate for each service area including the use of earmarked reserves brought forward from 2008/09 and recorded the probable variances from these budgets as a result of the current assessment of projected outturn spend.

Motion

That the Committee notes the current financial forecast position and supports the proposal moved by Councillor Campbell, seconded by Councillor Balsillie, to ask the Director of Development and Environmental Services to report back to Committee on forward planning in relation to non-domestic rates valuations with particular emphasis on the new secondary schools.

Moved by Provost Derek Stewart. Seconded by Councillor John Biggam.

Decision

The Committee agreed unanimously to support the motion.

Action

Director of Development and Environmental Services

SC(10)217 GENERAL SERVICES CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2009/10 TO 2011/12

A report on the General Services Capital Programme for this financial year which presented the latest anticipated out-turn for this year and the following two years based on current review with project managers was submitted by the Finance Manager.

The report was an update report highlighting variances from the August position that was reported to the Scrutiny Committee at its previous meeting.

Motion

That the Committee note the information set out in the update report.

Moved by Councillor Campbell. Seconded by Councillor McLaren.

Decision

The Committee agreed unanimously to note the information set out in the update report.

SC(10)218 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT 2009/10 BUDGET MONITORING

A report on the projected out-turn of the Housing Revenue Account for the financial year 2009/10 based on the financial position at 30th November 2009 was submitted by the Finance Manager.

The report highlighted the projected position at the year-end in that there will be a net contribution to reserves in the year of £65k, a decrease of £195k compared to the budgeted position of £260k before any reserves are transferred to the capital programme.

Motion

That Committee notes the information set out in the report.

Moved by Councillor John Biggam. Seconded by Provost Derek Stewart.

Decision

The Committee agreed unanimously to note the information set out in the report.

SC(10)219 HOUSING CAPITAL ACCOUNT 2009/10 TO 2011/12: MONITORING REPORT

A report on the projected out-turn of the Housing Capital Programme for the financial year 2009/10 and a summary of budgets for 2010/11 and 2011/12 based on the current review of the programme was submitted by the Finance Manager.

The report detailed variations from budgets approved by Council in March 2009 including carry forward of unspent budgets from 2008/09 which were previously reported and also detailed anticipated savings and overspends in specific budgets in the current year following the latest review of the programme and highlighted any variances.

Motion

That Committee notes the information set out in the report.

Moved by Councillor Alastair Campbell. Seconded by Provost Derek Stewart.

Decision

The Committee agreed unanimously to note the information set out in the report.

SC(10)220 INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL REPORTING STANDARDS (IFRS)

A report outlining the background to the introduction of International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) within local government and demonstrating the work required for the Council to achieve full compliance for financial year 2010/11 was submitted by the Finance Manager.

The Council has engaged CIPFA and PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) to provide technical advice and support throughout the IFRS transition process; the overall objective of which is to ensure a smooth IFRS transition process that is delivered accurately, consistently and with minimum disruption.

Motion

That Committee notes the information set out in the report and the progress in implementing IFRS to date.

Moved by Councillor Harry McLaren. Seconded by Provost Derek Stewart.

Decision

The Committee agreed unanimously to note the information set out in the report and the progress in implementing IFRS to date.

SC(10)221 IMAGINE ALLOA - ALLOA TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION

A report to bring the Committee up to date with the Imagine Alloa Project was submitted by the Head of Strategic Policy.

In April 2009 the Scottish Government announced the Town Centre Regeneration Fund (TCRF) and invited bids for capital works to improve town centres. The terms of the fund were that only capital expenditure was eligible and that any award of funding had to be spent by the end of March 2010; subsequently this condition had been revised so that capital has to be committed but not necessarily spent.

Motion

That Committee notes the progress to date in implementing Imagine Alloa.

Moved by Provost Derek Stewart. Seconded by Councillor Alastair Campbell.

Decision

The Committee agreed unanimously to note the progress to date in implementing Imagine Alloa.

SC(10)222 SOCIAL WORK INSPECTION AGENCY (SWIA) 2008 FOLLOW UP INSPECTION REPORT DECEMBER 2009

A report presenting the Social Work Inspection Agency (SWIA) Follow Up Inspection Report on Clackmannanshire Social Work Services' performance was submitted by the Head of Social Services.

The report provided a summary of outcomes of the Follow Up Inspection for the Committee's information; the SWIA Report was attached as Appendix 1.

The Committee heard a short presentation from the Head of Social Services and had opportunity to put questions to her.

Motion

That Committee notes the contents of the Follow Up Report and the progress that has been, and will continue to be, made to improve Social Work Services.

Moved by Councillor Harry McLaren. Seconded by Provost Derek Stewart.

Decision

The Committee agreed unanimously to note the contents of the Follow Up Report and the progress that has been, and will continue to be, made to improve Social Work Services.

SC(10)223 CLACKMANNANSHIRE CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2008-2009

A report on the Clackmannanshire Child Protection Committee (CPC) annual report which reviews achievements and sets out an action plan for the forthcoming year was submitted by the Head of Social Services.

The CPC annual report is a standard format that is completed by the Lead Officer for the CPC supported by the multi agency partners who constitute the CPC membership and is required to be submitted to the Chief Officers (within Clackmannanshire Council, NHS Forth Valley and Central Scotland Police) and Scottish Government each year. Each local authority area is required to submit an annual report.

Motion

That Committee notes the information set out in the Clackmannanshire Child Protection Committee report.

Moved by Councillor Alastair Campbell. Seconded by Provost Derek Stewart.

Decision

The Committee agreed unanimously to note the information set out in the Clackmannanshire Child Protection Committee report.

SC(10)224 HMIE AND CARE COMMISSION REPORTS SESSION 2009-10

A report containing a summary of the outcomes of the inspections of the Council's early years and pre-school education provision was submitted by the Head of Education and Community Services.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) is responsible for the external evaluation of schools. HMIE aim to inspect schools at least once every seven years. A set of national quality indicators (How Good is Our School?) is used to evaluate the quality of the service provided by schools.

Motion

That Committee notes the information set out in the report.

Moved by Councillor John Biggam. Seconded by Councillor Alastair Campbell.

Decision

The Committee agreed unanimously to note the information set out in the report.

**SC(10)225 REGISTRATION (BIRTHS, DEATHS AND CEREMONIES) 2009
STATISTICS**

A report on the Registration Service's annual review of service activity was submitted by the Head of Administration and Legal Services.

The report indicated that the Registration year runs from January to December. At the end of each calendar year, the local Registrar provides a review of service activity for the previous twelve months. As well as providing performance related information, the opportunity is taken to comment on some of the registration facts that may be of topical community interest.

Motion

That Committee notes the information set out in the report.

Moved by Provost Derek Stewart. Seconded by Councillor John Biggam.

Decision

The Committee agreed unanimously to note the information set out in the report.

Ends 12.00 pm

