

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Minute of Meeting of the Environment Committee held in the Council Chambers, Fourth Floor, Council Building, 2 High Street, Perth on Wednesday 8 June 2011 at 10.00am.

Present: Councillors A Grant, L Caddell, K Baird, I Campbell, C Gillies, T Gray, E Maclachlan (substituting for B Ellis); H McDonald, D Scott, L Simpson, P Mulheron (substituting for K Lyall); B Vaughan (substituting M Lyle) and A Younger.

In Attendance: J Valentine, Depute Director (Environment); K McNamara, A Clegg, B Clough, J Evans, A Godfrey, A Olejnik, B Reekie, B Renton, D Stubbs and R Thomson (all the Environment Service); G Fogg, C Flynn and P Frazer (all Chief Executive's Service).

Apologies for Absence: Councillors B Ellis, K Lyall and M Lyle.

Councillor A Grant, Convener, Presiding.

324. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made in terms of the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

325. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minute of Meeting of the Environment Committee of 30 March 2011 (Arts. 181 – 184) was submitted, approved as a correct record and authorised for signature.

326. THE ENVIRONMENT SERVICE – JOINT BUSINESS MANAGEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN AND ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2011-2014

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Environment) (11/287) presenting the Joint Business Management and Improvement Plan and Annual Performance Report 2011-2014 for The Environment Service.

Resolved:

- (i) Following consideration, the contents of The Environment Service Joint Business Management and Improvement Plan and Annual Performance Report 2011 – 2014 as detailed in Appendix 1 to report 11/287, and pertaining to the Committee's area of responsibility, be approved.
- (ii) It be noted that Report 11/287 would also be considered by the Enterprise and Infrastructure Committee and the Special Community Safety Committee on 8 June 2011, and would be submitted to the Scrutiny Committee on 15 June 2011 to scrutinise and comment as appropriate.

327. QUEEN ELIZABETH II FIELDS 2012 CHALLENGE IN PERTH AND KINROSS

There was submitted a report by the Depute Director (Environment) (11/302) (1) setting out the aims of the Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge to celebrate the Golden Jubilee in 2012; and (2) recommending a number of sites which could be put forward as part of this legacy project.

Resolved:

- (i) It be agreed to participate in the Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee in 2012.
- (ii) Sites identified in report 11/302 that would be submitted as part of the legacy project, be agreed.

328. BEN VRACKIE: RENEWAL OF ACCESS AGREEMENT AND FORMATION OF AN ADDITIONAL CAR PARK

There was submitted a report by the Depute Director (Environment) (11/303) seeking permission: (1) for the formation of an additional car park to serve the needs of the public visiting Ben Vrackie; and (2) to renew an existing access agreement.

Resolved:

- (i) The establishment and future maintenance of an additional car park to facilitate public access to Ben Vrackie, be agreed.
- (ii) Renewal of current agreements with the landowner to maintain the path to the summit of Ben Vrackie, the existing car park and proposed new car park, be agreed.

329. ALLOTMENT PROVISION IN PERTH AND KINROSS

There was submitted a report by the Depute Director (Environment) (11/304) (1) setting out the Council's responsibility for allotment provision; and (2) recommending how this could be achieved across the area following an increase in local interest for allotments

Resolved:

- (i) The policy of promoting Allotment Associations as the preferred model of allotment provision in Perth and Kinross and that priority is given to the use of surplus Council-owned land for allotment use, be agreed.
- (ii) It be agreed that officers from the Environment Service meet with local people, who have expressed an interest in having an allotment, to assist them to form constituted Allotment Associations in order to develop and self-manage local allotment areas.
- (iii) It be agreed that first consideration for allotment use should be land which belongs to the Council but is surplus to requirement or lacking a local function. Failing that, other land which was suitable for conversion to allotments, would be identified and consultation held with the wider communities on the proposals.
- (iv) It be agreed to develop proposals for the layout and basic infrastructure on agreed sites; submit applications for planning permission; acquire sites where

necessary and implement the proposals within the constraints of the budget available.

330. PERTH AND KINROSS COUNTRYSIDE TRUST: SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

There was submitted a report by the Depute Director (Environment) (11/305) outlining the achievements of the Perth and Kinross Countryside Trust (PKCT) over the last two years and recommending the approval of a new Service Level agreement with the Trust for 2011/12.

Resolved:

- (i) The achievements of PKCT in relation to the approved Service Level Agreement from 2009/10 to 2010/11, be noted.
- (ii) That PKCT has substantially achieved the outcomes set out as part of the Service Level Agreement, be agreed.
- (iii) A new Service Level Agreement with PKCT for 2011/12, providing a financial contribution to the Trust to the value of £109,000, be agreed.

B CLOUGH LEFT THE MEETING AT THIS POINT.

331. COMFORT SCHEME REVIEW

There was submitted a report by the Depute Director (Environment) (11/306) detailing: (1) the process to review the Council's Comfort Scheme partnerships; and (2) proposals for a rationalisation of the current scheme to meet the budget savings proposed at the Special Council Meeting of 17 February 2011.

Councillors I Campbell, K Baird, H McDonald and B Vaughan wished their dissent to be noted.

B CLOUGH ENTERED THE MEETING AT THIS POINT.

Resolved:

The proposed reduction in Comfort Scheme Partnerships, as presented in Appendix 1 to report 11/306, be agreed.

332. RATIONALISATION OF PLAY AREA PROVISION IN PERTH AND KINROSS

There was submitted a report by the Depute Director (Environment) (11/307) resulting from the review of equipped play area provision in Perth and Kinross which was undertaken as part of the Service budget savings exercise in 2010. The report seeks to reduce the Council's annual revenue expenditure on maintaining public play areas by £115,000 by identifying play areas which could be removed and reductions to the major repair and renewal budget.

This report was deferred for further consultation.

333. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE – SITE ASSESSMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

There was submitted a report by the Depute Director (Environment) (11/308) detailing work to review areas of land currently receiving a grounds maintenance service, which were not under Council ownership or constituted less prominent green space sites including: (1) the process to identify such sites; (2) the assessment criteria; (3) the creation of a site based level of service; and (4) and how changes to maintenance schedules would be implemented and communicated.

Resolved:

- (i) That the hierarchy and typologies presented in report 11/308, and the quality based indicators, detailed in section 16, be used to assess the fitness for purpose of greenspace sites, be agreed.
- (ii) It be agreed that where sites are under Council ownership and graded as only of local importance, opportunities are identified to reduce maintenance or transfer responsibility for maintenance to other parties.
- (iii) It be agreed that where sites are not in Council ownership the following options would include: maintenance to be handed back to the land owner or the community; apply a charge for continued maintenance; cease maintenance operations altogether; or the Council could continue to maintain the site.
- (iv) Instruct the Deputy Director, Environment to submit a further report on the outcomes of the site assessment process to Committee in November 2011.

334. COMMUNITY GREENSPACE BRIDGES: WORKS PROGRAMME

There was submitted a report by the Depute Director (Environment) (11/309) providing an account of: (1) the loss of bridges over the last 20 years as a result of extreme weather and erosion: (2) the prospect of further loss: and (3) seeking approval for a programme for future replacements.

Resolved:

- (i) The programme of planned countryside bridge replacements and refurbishments as set out in report 11/309, be agreed.
- (ii) It be agreed, that in the event that any structure with a higher priority being damaged due to severe weather, the Executive Director, in consultation with the Convener, may revise the programme.
- (iii) The replacement of Kitty Swanson's Bridge, on condition that Path Agreements are concluded and planning consent obtained, be approved.
- (iv) Should erosion of the bank undermine its stability, the removal of the Black Bridge at Almondbank, be agreed.

335. DRAFT PERTH AND KINROSS FOREST PLAN 2012 – 2032

There was submitted a report by the Depute Director (Environment) (11/310) outlining the preparation of a Perth and Kinross Council Forest Plan 2012 - 2032 for Council owned land which would: (1) provide woodland enhancement for the enjoyment of communities and visitors; and (2) meet the aims of national and local forestry strategies. Approval was sought for a series of public meetings to discuss

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outline proposals and gather public comments in preparation for submitting the plan for Committee approval at a later date. This would save staff costs in preparing separate Management Plans for individual sites.

Resolved:

To undertake a public consultation on the preparation of a Perth and Kinross Council Forest Plan 2012 – 2032, in line with Forestry Commission guidance for scoping prior to the production of a Plan, be approved.

336. TENDERS ACCEPTED AND WORKS AWARDED UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

There was submitted a report by the Depute Director (Environment) (11/311) outlining tenders accepted and works awarded by the Executive Director (Environment) under delegated powers during the period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011.

Resolved:

The contents of this report and the contract awards as detailed in the attached appendices 1 to 5 to report 11/311, be agreed.

R THOMSON LEFT THE MEETING AT THIS POINT.

IT WAS AGREED THAT THE PUBLIC AND PRESS SHOULD BE EXCLUDED DURING CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM IN ORDER TO AVOID THE DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION WHICH IS EXEMPT IN TERMS OF SCHEDULE 7A TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 1973.

337. CRIEFF PARK VILLAGE RIGHT OF WAY

There was submitted a report by the Depute Director (Environment) (11/312) outlining; (1) issues of public access through Park Village, Crieff; (2) continued difficulties since the assertion of the right of way in January 2010; and (3) options to uphold access to the route and the potential costs which could be incurred.

Resolved:

- (i) That the pedestrian right of way Turretbank Road to Macrosty Park via Park Village was obstructed, be noted.
- (ii) Instruct the Head of Legal Services and the Director of Environment Services to take such reasonable steps, as outlined in report 11/312, to establish the status of the route and uphold access rights along it.

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