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ADDITIONAL CIRCULATION



To: All Members of the Council

Town House,
ABERDEEN, 12 August 2011

COUNCIL MEETING

The undernoted items are circulated in connection with the meeting of the **COUNCIL** to be held here in the Town House on **WEDNESDAY, 17 AUGUST 2011 at 10.30am.**

JANE G. MACEACHRAN
HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

BUSINESS

QUESTIONS

8(a) Councillor Allan (Pages 1 - 2)

- (1) Due to the full time Youth Worker complement being reduced to four for the whole city, can I be advised of the programme for youth work in Torry?

8(b) Councillor Young (Pages 3 - 6)

- (3) To ask the Chief Executive if it is normal for third parties who currently do not own, lease or have any pecuniary property rights over a public asset such as Union Terrace Gardens to actively promote, encourage architectural design briefs on an asset they currently do not own, lease or have any pecuniary right over?

- (5) To ask the Leader of the Council to provide Council with the total financial cost to the Council from May 2007 until May 2011 of employing consultants regardless of capacity of employment giving a breakdown in terms of each year over the last 4 years.
- (6) To ask the Leader of the Council to provide Council with the total financial cost to the Council from May 2007 until May 2011 of employing agency staff regardless of capacity of employment giving a breakdown in terms of each year over the last 4 years.

BUSINESS THE COUNCIL MAY WISH TO CONSIDER IN PRIVATE

- 10(b) Approval to Implement Priority Based Budgeting Recommendation (New LT8) to Implement an Electronic Monitoring System for Care at Home Services - Report by Director of Social Care and Wellbeing (Pages 7 - 12)

Website Address: www.aberdeencity.gov.uk

Should you require any further information about this agenda, please contact Martyn Orchard, tel. (52)3097 or email morchard@aberdeencity.gov.uk

QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL

Councillor Allan to the Chief Executive

- (1) Due to the full time Youth Worker complement being reduced to four for the whole city, can I be advised of the programme for youth work in Torry?

Answer:-

The work to implement the decision to reduce the communities' team budget by £1.4 m in 2011/12 is underway. The staffing budget available for staff, including Community Learning & Development, Youth Workers, Community Training and Economic Development and Neighbourhood Community Planning Staff has been reduced by approximately 67%.

A new management and operational structure is developed and the job matching process almost complete. The team has completed approximately 150 matching interviews during June 2011, for posts within the new structure.

Officers are working to manage the transformation of the service and to support the transition to leased community centres. Within the new structure a member of staff has been appointed to the new post of Development Manager for Young People. This post holder will have a team of four youth development officers, a small team of community learning youth workers and a small budget for session staff. The team will support the delivery of youth work across the city, including providing support for leased centre committees who want to commission youth work in their areas.

The transition process is underway between those staff leaving and those, staff taking up the new posts and reviewing how services will be delivered. A meeting is scheduled on 25 August 2011 to finalise the plans for the delivery of youth work across the city, including in the Torry area. The available resources will be used to target priority areas which will include Torry.

The programme at Tullos has stopped as normal, over the summer break. It is likely that this will continue, but as part of the achievement programme with schools. The work of the Torry Youth project will operate with limited funds which will require to be targeted. The facilities at Torry Youth project will continue to be available for use.

Officers will work with community centre management to facilitate their support for the delivery of youth work in their area. The city wide plan for youth work is being finalised during August.

Councillor Allan has indicated that she is not satisfied with the above response, and wants more detailed information on a number of issues which could be elicited via a supplementary question. These issues include clarification on the meeting to be held on 25th August, the need for additional information relating to older youths and specific issues relating to Torry in light of recent events.

QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL

Councillor Young

- (3) To ask the Chief Executive if it is normal for third parties who currently do not own, lease or have any pecuniary property rights over a public asset such as Union Terrace Gardens to actively promote, encourage architectural design briefs on an asset they currently do not own, lease or have any pecuniary right over?

Answer:-

No. Any party does so at their own financial risk. However, the Council by virtue of their decision of May 2010 and those of subsequent meetings, have noted and encouraged the course of action undertaken by the City Gardens Trust.

- (5) To ask the Leader of the Council to provide Council with the total financial cost to the Council from May 2007 until May 2011 of employing consultants regardless of capacity of employment giving a break down in terms of each year over the last 4 years.

Answer below.

- (6) To ask the Leader of the Council to provide Council with the total financial cost to the Council from May 2007 until May 2011 of employing agency staff regardless of capacity of employment giving a breakdown in terms of each year over the last 4 years.

Answer:-

Cost of Employing Consultants and Agency Staff

Following Councillor Young's questions requesting the cost of employing consultants (regardless of capacity of employment) and agency staff a review of the Council's financial ledger was undertaken to identify the financial cost.

1. The cost of employing consultants is shown in the table below by financial year. This is also shown in the context of the Council's total gross budget annually and showing the level of spend as a percentage of total budget:

| | 2007/08 | 2008/09 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 |
|---------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000* |
| Gross Budget | 640,318 | 659,188 | 689,554 | 672,313 | 688,006 |
| Consultants Fees | 1,140 | 2,016 | 2,736 | 1,317 | 151 |
| Fees as % of Budget | 0.32% | 0.31% | 0.39% | 0.20% | 0.02% |

* Shows year to date expenditure against full year budget

- This shows that over the period covered the Council has spent £7.4 million from a total gross budget of £3,349 million or 0.24% of the total spend for the period (less than a quarter of 1%). These costs have been incurred to assist the Council in improving service delivery, reducing expenditure levels for future years (spend to save initiatives) and to deliver new projects (often to meet new statutory requirements).

2. The cost of employing agency staff is shown in the table below by financial year along with the total staffing budget along with the percentage of total staffing costs that agency costs represent:

| | 2007/08 | 2008/09 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 |
|----------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000* |
| Gross Budget | 640,318 | 659,188 | 689,554 | 672,313 | 688,006 |
| Agency Costs | 8,911 | 8,164 | 7,889 | 7,695 | 901 |
| Costs as % of Budget | 1.39% | 1.24% | 1.14% | 1.14% | 0.13% |

* Shows year to date expenditure against full year budget

- This shows that over the period covered the Council has spent £33.6 million from a total gross budget of £3,349 million or 1% of the total spend for the period.

- The types of posts that the Council has used agency staff for tend to be traditional trades (joiners, electricians, plumbers, etc.), vehicle drivers, social care workers, and other seasonal type work (such as grounds maintenance staff). The reason for relying on agency staff will be due to a number of factors such as difficulty in recruitment and Council policy to specifically utilise agency staff for seasonal or fixed term contract work. All costs were budgeted for or met from existing budgets and resulted in the Council meeting its legal obligations within the annually set budget. That is, the Council did not exceed the total staffing budget for any of the financial years.

- The level of spend on agency staff has fallen year on year. This has been due to a number of factors, such as the Council moving to reduce the level of agency staff it employs and the economic downturn means that more people are now seeking full time employment allowing the Council to fill posts that it previously has had difficulties recruiting into.

- It should also be noted that in certain instances it is more economically advantageous for the Council to employ agency staff rather than employ staff directly.

Councillor Young has indicated he is not satisfied with the above responses.

In relation to Question 3, Councillor Young has stated that he requires more information in relation to the City Garden Trust as it is not mentioned in the

minute of May 2010, and also how the project stands in relation to the Local Plan.

In relation to Questions 5 and 6, Councillor Young has stated that he requires additional detail from the respondent and added that the use of statistics within the answer could be interpreted as a means of trying to deflect away from the questions that had been asked.

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