

2025

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

Town House,  
ABERDEEN, 26th June, 2002

MINUTE OF MEETING OF ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

S e d e r u n t :

Lord Provost MARGARET SMITH, Chairperson  
Councillor LEONARD IRONSIDE, Vice-Chairperson

COUNCILLORS

GEORGE ADAM  
YVONNE ALLAN  
JANETTA ANDERSON  
SCOTT CASSIE  
RONALD CLARK  
DAVID CLYNE  
IRENE CORMACK  
KATHARINE DEAN  
JOHN DEMPSEY  
MATTHEW DUNCAN  
DAVID FALCONER  
STEWART GORDON  
GORDON GRAHAM  
MARJORIE GRAHAM  
EDWARD HARRIS  
RAYMOND HUTCHEON  
MAUREEN IRONS  
MURIEL JAFFREY  
JAMES LAMOND  
JUNE LAMOND

GORDON LESLIE  
PAMELA MacDONALD  
ALLAN McINTOSH  
ALLAN MACLEAN  
DAVID MAITLAND  
ALAN MILNE  
RAMSAY MILNE  
CHARLES PIRIE  
JOHN PORTER  
JOHN REYNOLDS  
BRIAN RUTHERFORD  
KAREN SHIRRON  
KEVIN STEWART  
MARIANNE STEWART  
JURGEN THOMANECK  
GEORGE URQUHART  
RONALD WEBSTER  
JILLIAN WISELY  
JAMES WYNESS and  
IAN YUILL

Lord Provost MARGARET SMITH, in the Chair

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## **BURGESSES**

1. The persons aforementioned were admitted into the presence of the Council and passed as Burgesses of Guild in respect of their respective Acts of Admission in the Guild Burgess Book:-

LEO GODINI, Restaurateur, Aberdeen  
DOUGLAS ROSS HARPER, Consultant Surgeon, Aberdeen  
GEORGE ALEXANDER MAIR, Managing Director, Aberdeen  
DR. THOMAS MYLES SUTHERLAND REID, Consultant Microbiologist,  
Aberdeen  
JACQUELINE SELWAY, Business Tourism Manager, Aberdeen  
PAUL RUSSELL WILLIAMS, Diving Safety Consultant, Aberdeen.

## **ANDREW LEWIS, DEAN OF GUILD**

2. The Lord Provost welcomed to the meeting the new Dean of Guild, Mr. Andrew Lewis, a businessman in Aberdeen, who was currently the President of Aberdeen Chamber of Commerce. The Lord Provost then outlined the contribution Mr. Lewis and his family had made to Aberdeen City and explained that she looked forward to Mr. Lewis's contribution as Dean of Guild for the next four years.

In response, the Dean of Guild thanked the Lord Provost for her kind remarks and explained that he felt very honoured to hold the position of Dean of Guild and outlined that his grandfather, Sir Andrew Lewis, had been Lord Provost for four years between 1925 and 1929. He said he was looking forward to establishing a working relationship with the Council and playing his part in making Aberdeen City a dynamic place to live, work and invest in.

## **MINUTE OF MEETING OF ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL OF 1<sup>ST</sup> MAY, 2002**

3. The Council had before it the Minute of their Meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> May, 2002.

**The Council resolved:-**  
to approve the Minute.

## **PAMPHLET OF MINUTES**

4. The Council had under consideration a Pamphlet of Standing Committee Minutes of the Council for the period 4th March to 4th June, 2002.

The Council heard Councillor Harris, the Convener of the Environment and Infrastructure Committee propose that the Council suspend Standing Order 22 in order to amend the decision of the Environment and Infrastructure Committee of 21<sup>st</sup> May, 2002 (Article 25, pages 1818 to 1820) in order to approve the advertisement of a less extensive traffic calming scheme with mandatory 20mph speed limits in the Gordon Place/Broadfold Drive area, Bridge of Don, without further delay and to agree that the Environment and Infrastructure Committee be used as the forum for considering objections at their meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> September, 2002.

### **The Council resolved:-**

- (i) to agree to suspend Standing Order 22;
- (ii) to approve the proposal by the Convener of the Environment and Infrastructure Committee; and
- (iii) to otherwise note the Minutes.

## **MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP TASK GROUP OF 25<sup>TH</sup> AND 26<sup>TH</sup> APRIL AND 7<sup>TH</sup> JUNE, 2002**

5. The Council had before it for consideration the Minutes of Meetings of the Strategic Partnership Task Group of 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> April and 7<sup>th</sup> June, 2002.

### **The Council resolved:-**

- (i) to note that a report detailing the final evaluation of companies involved in the Strategic Partnership process was to be considered at a later stage in the meeting (Article 46 to this Minute); and
- (ii) to otherwise approve the Minutes.

## **MINUTES OF MEETING OF ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT TASK GROUP (COMMITTEE STRUCTURE) OF 31<sup>ST</sup> MAY, 2002**

6. The Council had before it for consideration the Minute of Meeting of the Organisational Development Task Group (Committee Structure) of 31<sup>st</sup> May, 2002.

In relation to Article 2 to the Minute (Review of Standing Order 17) wherein the Corporate Director for Legal and Democratic Services was requested to undertake a

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survey of all elected members on the proposition that all meetings of the Council commence at 10.00am (but not Standing Committees which would continue to commence at 2.00pm), the Council had before it a note which detailed the responses received and listed various comments made by elected members on this issue.

**The Council resolved:-**

- (i) to agree that the tabled information relating to the timing of Council meetings be referred to the next meeting of the Organisational Development Task Group (Committee Structure) for consideration; and
- (ii) to otherwise approve the Minute.

**MATTER OF URGENCY**

**The Lord Provost indicated that she had in terms of Section 50(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 directed that the following item of business be considered as a matter of urgency so that the Council could consider the discussions of the Guildry and Mortifications Funds Board.**

**MINUTE OF MEETING OF GUILDRY AND MORTIFICATIONS FUNDS BOARD OF 21<sup>ST</sup> JUNE, 2002**

7. The Council had before it for consideration the Minute of Meeting of the Guildry and Mortification Funds Board of 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2002.

**The Council resolved:-**

- (i) to note that the specific applications for financial assistance from Guildry Funds was to be considered at a later stage in the meeting (Article 47 to this Minute); and
- (ii) to otherwise note the Minute.

**MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S STRATEGIC POLICY PLANNING AND REVIEW GROUP OF 18<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 26<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY AND 25<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 2002.**

8. The Council had before it for its information the Minutes of Meetings of the Children and Young People's Strategic Policy Planning and Review Group of 18<sup>th</sup> January, 26<sup>th</sup> February and 25<sup>th</sup> March, 2002.

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**The Council resolved:-**

- (i) to agree that the Minutes of this Group be submitted to the Policy and Strategy Committee in future; and
- (ii) to otherwise note the Minutes.

**PLANNING COMMITTEE - 16<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 2002**

**9. Chapel of Stoneywood, Bucksburn**

With reference to Article 1(B) of the Minute of Meeting of the Planning Committee of 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2002, which had been referred to them for consideration by three members of that Committee, the Council had before them for consideration (i) the application (AO/1826) by Aberdeen City Council in respect of proposals to develop a site at Chapel of Stoneywood, Bucksburn, for use as a Park-and-Ride facility with capacity for 1,000 cars and involving a waiting facility building, substantial roadworks including a new roundabout on the A96 Aberdeen to Inverness Trunk Road and landscaping; (ii) the report thereon by the Corporate Director for City Development more particularly described in said Article; and (iii) the resolution of the Planning Committee that the application be refused for the reason that the proposals, if implemented, would represent inappropriate development on this particular green belt site where the nature of the proposed use would have a seriously detrimental impact on the surrounding rural environment.

Councillor Clark moved, seconded by Councillor Cassie:-

That the resolution of the Planning Committee be affirmed.

Councillor Irons moved as an amendment, seconded by Councillor Rutherford:-

That consideration of the application be deferred and it be remitted to appropriate Planning and Roads officials to re-examine the detailed proposals for the landscaping, layout and the lighting of the facility with a view to restricting to a minimum, the impact which the development would have on the landscaped setting of the City and on the amenity of the area generally and to report further.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (17) - Councillors Cassie, Clark, Cormack, Dean, Duncan, Falconer, Gordon, Marjorie Graham, Hutcheon, Jaffrey, Leslie, Porter, Reynolds, Shirron, Kevin Stewart, Thomanek and Yuill; for the amendment (25) - Lord Provost Smith; Vice-Chairperson Ironside; and Councillors Adam, Allan, Anderson, Clyne, Dempsey, Gordon Graham, Harris, Irons, James Lamond, June Lamond, MacDonald, McIntosh, MacLean, Maitland, Allan Milne, Ramsay Milne, Pirie, Rutherford, Marianne Stewart, Urquhart, Webster, Wisely and Wyness.

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**The Council resolved:-**  
to adopt the amendment.

**Vice-Chairperson Ironside and Councillor Ramsay Milne, having declared an interest in the application referred to in the following Article withdrew from the meeting prior to the Council's deliberations thereon.**

#### **PLANNING COMMITTEE - 16<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 2002**

##### **10. Cornhill Hospital Site, Ashgrove Road, Aberdeen - Learning Disability Unit**

With reference to Article 3 of the Minute of Meeting of the Planning Committee of 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2002, which had been referred to them for consideration by three members of that Committee, the Council had before them for consideration (i) the application (A2/0272) for planning permission to erect a learning disability unit on a site within the grounds of Cornhill Hospital at Ashgrove Road, Aberdeen, as a key element of Grampian Primary Care NHS Trust's overall Learning Disability Strategy which advocated the development of local facilities promoting independent living supported by a wide range of agencies; (ii) the report thereon by the Corporate Director for City Development more particularly described in said Article recommending that the application be approved subject to the condition specified therein; and (iii) the resolution of the Planning Committee that the application be deferred and it be remitted to the Assistant Director (Implementation) - City Development Services (a) in view of the importance of the trees located within the application site which are protected and form part of a designated District Wildlife Site, to obtain from the applicants full details of the proposed tree management and landscaping works to include a phasing programme; and (b) to seek clarification from the applicants on the exact uses to which the proposed Unit would be put, including an indication of the range of services to be provided there.

The Council also had before it written advice from the Corporate Director for Legal and Democratic Services which explained that there had been a considerable volume of correspondence from parents and others objecting to the planning application on the grounds, amongst others, that the site was unsuitable for the purpose to which the applicant had intimated it will be used. The written advice further explained that the correspondence related to a previous proposal to close Woodlands Hospital and to comments made by the Secretary of State, the former Grampian Health Board and others, concerning the proposals and although these were substantial and real concerns which would require to be considered in relation to any proposal to relocate individuals from Woodlands, they were not, however, proper planning considerations

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in relation to the development of the site at Cornhill. The written advice further advised that elected members would be aware that the matter before them today was the detail of a planning application for which planning considerations only could be taken into account and that in the view of the Corporate Director for Legal and Democratic Services that whilst the objectors raised issues of major concern to them, they were matters which related to the provision of the service by Grampian Primary Care NHS Trust and how those services may be affected by the removal of the service to the location specified in the planning application. The written advice explained that whilst those concerns could quite properly be raised with NHS Grampian and indeed with the Council in other Committees and forums, they were not relevant to the Council when it was acting as planning authority. The written advice concluded by explaining that the Corporate Director for Legal and Democratic Services intended to circulate the papers received to elected members in order that they can be considered in any appropriate context.

**The Council resolved:-**

to defer consideration of this matter to a later stage in the meeting (Article 43 to this Minute) to determine whether the clarification sought in terms of the resolution of the Planning Committee was now available to be placed before the Council.

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S ANNUAL REPORT 2001/2002**

11. The Council had before them for consideration a report by the Chief Executive which introduced the annual progress report of the Council.

The report explained that the Council had agreed to receive annual progress reports as part of the Council's planning performance and reporting process approved in October, 1998. The report explained that the details contained in the annual report formed part of the Council's public reporting system and would be made widely available throughout the City.

Specifically the report made reference to the World Summit on Sustainable Development which is taking place in Johannesburg, South Africa, between 26<sup>th</sup> August and 4th September, 2002. The report explained that the Scottish Executive had decided to support a civil delegation from Scotland and in recognition of the Council's work on sustainable development both in Aberdeen and across Scotland, the Council's Environmental Strategy Co-ordinator, Belinda Miller, had been offered an invitation to attend the Summit.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Council -

- (a) consider the content of the paper and note progress;

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- (b) approve the acceptance of the Scottish Executive's invitation for Belinda Miller, Environmental Strategy Co-ordinator, Office of Chief Executive to attend the World Summit on Sustainable Development being held in Johannesburg, South Africa on 26<sup>th</sup> August to 4th September, 2002; and
- (c) to raise any other matters as deemed necessary.

**The Council resolved:-**

- (i) to request that the Chief Executive provide information to all members on the decision regarding concessionary travel and whether off-peak travel will include a restricted evening time;
- (ii) to request that the Chief Executive discuss with BEAR issues relating to the replanting of verges on the A90 (Anderson Drive) and the breakdown of traffic lights on North Anderson Drive; and
- (iii) to otherwise approve the recommendations contained in the report (A copy of which forms Appendix A to this Minute).

**MATTER OF URGENCY**

**The Lord Provost indicated that she had in terms of Section 50(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 directed that the following item of business be considered as a matter of urgency as the relevance of the annual report would decline should its publication be delayed.**

**ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT**

**12.** The Council had before it (1) a report by the Chief Executive which advised members of the development of an Annual Performance Report for the Council which was to be published this year and in subsequent years; and (2) a copy of the Annual Performance Report for the Council.

Vice-Chairperson Ironside spoke to the report outlining the major developments, projects and advertisements of the Council which are detailed in the report.

**The Council resolved:-**

- (i) to thank all staff involved in the publication of the report and to record their appreciation for the contribution of all staff towards providing the Council's services throughout the year; and
- (ii) to approve the publication of the Council's Annual Performance Report.



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## **COUNCIL DIARY**

**13.** With reference to Article 21 of the Minute of Meeting of the Council of 27<sup>th</sup> June, 2001, the Council had before it a report by the Corporate Director for Legal and Democratic Services which presented a draft Council diary for the period 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2003.

The report advised (a) that following the Local Government Elections in May, 2003, the statutory Council meeting had been scheduled for 14<sup>th</sup> May, 2003, at which it would be anticipated that members would be appointed to Committees; (b) that in order to enable the papers to be collated and distributed to appropriate members it was necessary for the ordinary cycle of meetings to commence at least seven days after the Council meeting; and (c) that this will result in a particularly busy week commencing 26<sup>th</sup> May, 2003, in order to ensure that any items from Committees which have either resources or policy/strategy implications can be submitted to those Committees.

### **The report recommended:-**

that the Council approve the attached diary subject to any amendments agreed at the meeting.

### **The Council resolved:-**

- (i) to approve the diary meantime and instruct the Corporate Director for Legal and Democratic Services to investigate ways of reducing the number of Committees the week beginning 26<sup>th</sup> May, 2003, following the Local Government Election; and
- (ii) instruct the Corporate Director for Legal and Democratic Services to consider moving the Appeals Committee on 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 2003 to a more suitable date.

## **MATTER OF URGENCY**

**The Lord Provost indicated that she had in terms of Section 50(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 directed that the following item of business be considered as a matter of urgency as the draft accounts have to be submitted to all Council Members and Audit Scotland by 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2002.**

## **DRAFT ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2001/2002**

**14.** The Council had before it (1) a report by the Corporate Director for Finance and ICT which explained the background to the preparation of the Council's draft Annual Accounts 2001/2002 which are to be submitted to Audit Scotland by 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2002

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as required by statute; and (2) a copy of the Council's draft Annual Accounts 2001/2002.

The report explained that the Council was required by statute to annually present a set of draft accounts to Audit Scotland by 30<sup>th</sup> June and that Elected Members should also receive a copy of these draft accounts by this due date. The report provided information on the General Fund and CSD reserves; the Housing Revenue Account; Capital Expenditure; the Common Good budget; and the CCT defined activities relating to CSD.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Council -

- (a) accept and meantime note the draft accounts as presented which will be submitted to Audit Scotland by 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2002 (the audited accounts will be presented to the Standards and Scrutiny Committee, along with the Auditor's report and will be placed before Council in due course);
- (b) note that there was a better than budget position on the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and Common Good;
- (c) note that, with the exception of a minor deficit for Other Catering, the CSD had met the required financial rate of return for all of its defined activities; and
- (d) note that capital expenditure out-turn results were within Scottish Executive tolerance limits.

Councillor James Lamond, as Convener of the Standards and Scrutiny Committee commended the employees of the Council who had contributed, despite a very difficult and restricted budget, to reaching a position whereby the Council had properly managed its budget to the extent that a surplus was recorded.

**The Council resolved:-**

- (i) to thank the staff of Finance and ICT and all other staff involved in preparing the accounts and to concur with the remarks of Councillor James Lamond; and
- (ii) to approve the recommendations contained in the report.

**NEW COMMUNITY SCHOOLS UPDATE**

**15.** With reference to Article 12 of the Minute of Meeting of the Policy and Strategy Committee of 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2002, the Council had before it a report by the Director of Education which provided an update on the submission of the detailed bid to the Scottish Executive for the roll-out of New Community Schools.

The report advised (a) that the Policy and Strategy Committee at their meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2002, approved the outline proposals for the extension of the New

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Community Schools approach across the City and subsequently the proposals were submitted to the Scottish Executive Education Department (a copy of the detailed proposals submitted to the Scottish Executive formed the appendix to the report); (b) that in tandem with the New Community Schools initiative a proposal was developed for the Changing Children's Services Fund and these proposals were reported to the Children and Young People's Strategic Policy Planning and Review Group on 25<sup>th</sup> March, 2002; (c) that the detailed proposals were based on the premise that the Council will receive full funding for the Education Action Plan schools - Torry and Linksfield Academies; (d) that notification from the Scottish Executive that the funding programme was to end on 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2002, was received after the Council had set its budget for 2002/2003; (e) that the Chief Executive and the Assistant Director of Education (Services to the Council) had met with the Depute Minister for Education and Young People on 24<sup>th</sup> May, 2002 to discuss this and other funding issues which had been followed by a meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> May, 2002 when the Convener of the Education and Leisure Committee and the Directors of Education and Finance and ICT met the Minister for Education and Young People to discuss the funding issues and state Aberdeen's position and that the outcome of these discussions was still awaited; and (f) that the outcome may have an impact on the funding available for the extension of the New Community Schools approach as approximately £300,000 is committed to staffing and programmes funded through the Education Action Plan.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Council -

- (a) notes that a detailed bid for the extension of the New Community Schools approach was submitted to the Scottish Executive in April, 2002 and that confirmation of the funding is awaited;
- (b) notes that discussions are to take place on the future of the Education Action Plan Project; and
- (c) note that the Children and Young People's Strategic Policy Planning and Review Group has agreed the joint planning proposals to utilise the funds on a joint basis to develop a single system for children, young people and their families.

**The Council resolved:-**

- (i) to agree that the report be submitted to the next Education and Leisure Committee on 3<sup>rd</sup> September, 2002 for information;
- (ii) to agree that any additional correspondence received from the Scottish Executive in relation to the New Community Schools funding be submitted to the Education and Leisure Committee on 3<sup>rd</sup> September, 2002; and
- (iii) to otherwise approve the recommendations contained in the report.

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## **FOR ABERDEEN'S CHILDREN - CHANGING CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

**16.** The Council had before it a joint report by the Directors of Education and Housing which updated members on the proposals to develop Children's Services in Aberdeen via the Changing Children's Services Fund and asked that the Council endorse the details submitted to the Scottish Executive in April, 2002.

The report provided full details on the proposal submitted to the Scottish Executive.

### **The report recommended:-**

that the Council -

- (a) endorses the proposal document (a copy of which formed appendix 1 to the report), which was submitted to the Scottish Executive in April, 2002; and
- (b) agrees that the Children and Young People's Strategic Policy Planning and Review Group will oversee the Changing Children's Services process over the next two years and will remit significant matters to relevant Committees of the Council as appropriate.

### **The Council resolved:-**

to approve the recommendations contained in the report.

## **NORTH EAST HOUSING PLANNING ALLIANCE (NEHPA) - NEW PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT**

**17.** The Council had before it a report by the Director of Housing which advised on proposals for a new partnership agreement for the North East Housing Planning Alliance (NEHPA) .

The report explained (a) that NEHPA was officially launched on 27<sup>th</sup> April, 1998 with the original partners being Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Scottish Homes, Local Housing Associations and a private sector developer; (b) that since its inception, NEHPA had expanded its membership to include the Moray Council, NHS Grampian, Scottish Enterprise Grampian and Homes for Scotland; (c) that over the last few months partners have been taking stock of the alliance and have consulted on a new partnership agreement which seeks to establish a Board of the constituent bodies to oversee and provide strategic direction, establish priorities and set targets for the alliance (a copy of the partnership agreement formed the appendix to the report); (d) that the Board will be supported by an Executive Committee comprising representatives from the constituent bodies with the executive being responsible to the Board for:- reviewing the Alliance's strategic objectives; establishing and recommending priorities to the Board; setting targets and reporting progress on these; ensuring effective communications with the Board and through the Board to the wider

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community; and establishing and keeping under review the supporting structure (sub-groups) necessary to achieve the Alliance's objectives; (e) that the partnership agreement was still the subject of ongoing discussion particularly in relation to Homes for Scotland; and (f) that it was proposed that the Directors of Community Services and City Development Services be authorised to complete the discussions and agree this on behalf of the Council.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Council -

- (a) agree to the partnership agreement and the continued involvement of the Council in NEHPA;
- (b) agree to the nomination of two elected members to serve on the Board of NEHPA; and
- (c) authorise the Directors of Community Services and City Development Services be authorised to complete discussions on the final version of the partnership agreement when it is prepared.

**The Council resolved:-**

- (i) to appoint Councillor Maitland and one Opposition Group Member to the Board of NEHPA; and
- (ii) to otherwise approve the recommendations contained in the report.

**MATTER OF URGENCY**

**The Lord Provost indicated that she had in terms of Section 50(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 directed that the following item of business be considered as a matter of urgency as an early decision on the matter was required to progress the issues involved.**

**URBAN REALM - UNION STREET PEDESTRIANISATION**

**18.** With reference to Article 9 of the Minute of Meeting of the Policy and Strategy Committee of 12<sup>th</sup> June, 2001, the Council had before it a report by the Corporate Director for City Development which provided information on grant funding available from the Scottish Executive to progress the projects within the Urban Realm initiative and of the outcomes of the public consultation and feedback from the Urban Realm Exhibition.

The report advised (a) that the Policy and Strategy Committee at its meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> June, 2001, resolve to endorse the vision and aims of the Urban Realm Strategy and

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requested a further update summarising the public response to the Urban Realm Exhibition; (b) that the Exhibition entitled City Features - Urban Lives ran from 4 February to 24 February, 2002; (c) that fifteen thousand people visited the Exhibition and their comments were gathered through detailed questionnaires and verbal feedback to staff in attendance; (d) that within the Urban Realm Exhibition were proposals for seven strategic projects for the City centre, one of which was the part pedestrianisation of Union Street and that almost two-thirds of the people who responded to the Exhibition agreed that the improvement, regeneration and pedestrianisation proposed for Union Terrace Gardens, Castlegate and Union Street respectively should be seen as priorities; (e) that detailed reports on the output from the extensive public consultation and feedback from respondents along with officers deliberations were considered by the Aberdeen City Centre Partnership at its meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 2002, with the report recommending:- that the pedestrianisation of Union Street was considered as the key project and highest priority; that the other projects would become more viable and would be easier to implement and realise following a clear commitment in relation to the Union Street elements; and that the momentum gained through the public consultation process should be maintained and the project moved forward at this time; (f) that the Aberdeen City Centre Partnership approved:- that Union Street pedestrianisation was the key urban realm project and that the partners would support early actions towards its delivery; and that this decision be conveyed to Aberdeen City Council; (g) that as part of round four of the Public Transport Fund the Council submitted a bid for borrowing consent from the preparation pool for the Urban Realm Project and at that time were informed that they had been unsuccessful, however, the then Minister for Enterprise, Transport and Life Long Learning, Wendy Alexander, MSP visited Aberdeen on 19<sup>th</sup> March, 2002 and indicated that she was prepared to provide £600,000 of grant expenditure to permit the Council to progress the detailed traffic evaluation of the Urban Realm Project and that discussions had been progressing with the Scottish Executive on the conditions associated with the grant and the timing of the award and it was assessed that a sum of £300,000 in this financial year was required; (h) that it was considered important that the Council now maintain the momentum gained and the good publicity generated in relation to the Urban Realm Exhibition and as a result, a provisional programme and resource analysis was currently under development to detail the works that would be required to take the project forward, however, it was already clear that a considerable effort will be required to define the project and assess the different effects of the existing transport network; (i) that this can be done using the PARAMICS model that had already been purchased and developed, thereafter, there will be a need to promote the necessary legislation, which will require significant levels of public consultation; (j) that there were also differing views on what form the pedestrianisation should take but from the viewpoint of progressing the traffic implications it is essential that an early decision be taken on the extent of the scheme; (k) that appropriate resources will require to be assigned to carry out the assessment work with some of the works being suitable for a consultancy commissions; (l) that the condition of receiving grant monies from the Scottish Executive to take the project forward as an

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integrated transport scheme is that the Council require to work within the Scottish Executive's assessment framework; and (m) given the timescales for assessment, public consultation, engaging stakeholders and undertaking the legal procedures it is impractical to have a scheme on the ground to meet the target dates within the Local Plan and the Local Transport Strategy, however, first estimates would indicate that it should be possible to introduce an experimental scheme in early 2005.

**The Council resolved:-**

- (i) to endorse in principle the development of proposals for the pedestrianisation of Union Street as the key element in the Urban Realm Project; and
- (ii) to instruct the Corporate Director for City Development to progress the necessary assessment and consultation work for this key scheme with other partner bodies and to report back on a regular basis to the relevant Committees on progress.

**FEASIBILITY STUDY ON HOUSING OPTIONS - FINAL REPORT**

**19.** With reference to Article 8 of the Minute of Meeting of the Policy and Strategy Committee of 17<sup>th</sup> June, 2002, the Council had before it a report by the Chief Executive referred simpliciter from the Committee. The report presented the main findings of the consultants' Feasibility Study on Housing Options and the outcome of the Tenant Communication and Consultation Survey for consideration in relation to the possible transfer of the Council's housing stock.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Council consider the two main housing options, namely, Single Stock Transfer and Retention Plus (as summarised in Deloitte & Touche's Feasibility Study on Options for the Future of Council Housing which was attached as appendix to the report), in light of the outcome of the tenant consultation, (as summarised in appendix 2 to the report), and the conclusions contained within the Chief Executive's report.

Councillor Harris moved, seconded by Councillor June Lamond:-

- “(1) that the Council move to enhanced retention;
- (2) that the Council ballot tenants on the two options;
- (3) that the Council explain to the tenants that the setting of rents is an annual matter for the Council to consider;
- (4) that the Council thank the City Housing Options Working Group for their work and disband the Group; and
- (5) that the Council establish a new Group to implement the proposals.

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**At this juncture and in view of proposal (2) in the motion Councillor Yuill declared an interest, withdrew from the meeting and took no part in the Council's deliberations thereon.**

Councillor Kevin Stewart moved as an amendment, seconded by Councillor Jaffrey:-  
"That the Council approve the option of enhanced retention and in view of the outcomes of the Tenant Communication and Consultation Survey, take no action in regard to balloting tenants on the options."

On a division, there voted:-

For the motion (37) - Lord Provost Smith; Vice-Chairperson Ironside; and Councillors Adam, Allan, Anderson, Cassie, Clark, Clyne, Cormack, Dean, Dempsey, Duncan, Falconer, Gordon, Gordon Graham, Marjorie Graham, Harris, Hutcheon, Irons, James Lamond, June Lamond, Leslie, MacDonald, McIntosh, MacLean, Maitland, Allan Milne, Ramsay Milne, Pirie, Porter, Reynolds, Rutherford, Marianne Stewart, Thomanek, Urquhart, Webster and Wyness.

For the amendment (3) - Councillors Jaffrey, Shirron and Kevin Stewart.

Absent from the division (2) - Councillors Wisely and Yuill.

**The Council resolved:-**

- (i) to adopt the motion;
- (ii) to agree that information detailing the two options contained in the report be provided to tenants in clear language together with an indication of possible rent increases; and
- (iii) to thank all the tenants' representatives and their advisers, Union representatives and key staff involved in the process.

**COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER - 19/20/21 REGENT QUAY**

**20.** With reference to Article 40 of the Minute of Meeting of the Resources Management Committee of 4<sup>th</sup> June, 2002, the Council had before them for consideration (1) a report by the Corporate Director for Legal and Democratic Services which submitted for approval the draft of a Compulsory Purchase Order relating to the semi-derelict subjects 19/20/21 Regent Quay, Aberdeen, which were required to be purchased in pursuance of the Council City-Wide Programme of securing improvements to below tolerable standard housing; and (2) the recommendation of the Resources Management Committee that the Aberdeen City Council (19/20/21 Regent Quay, Aberdeen) Compulsory Purchase Order 2002 be made as drafted and that the Corporate



Director for Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to implement required statutory procedures in that regard.

The draft Order is reproduced as Appendix B to this Minute.

**The Council resolved:-**

to make the Aberdeen City Council (19/20/21 Regent Quay, Aberdeen) Compulsory Purchase Order 2002.

**MATTER OF URGENCY**

**The Lord Provost indicated that she had in terms of Section 50(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 directed that the following item of business be considered as a matter of urgency to ensure that the Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre Board could be notified of the Council's decision as soon as possible.**

**ABERDEEN EXHIBITION AND CONFERENCE CENTRE - BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**21.** The Council had before it a report by the Corporate Director for City Development which provided information on an invitation from the Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre to co-opt the Corporate Director for City Development on to the Board.

The report advised that in view of the establishment of the new City Development Service through *aberdeen futures* and the significance of the Aberdeen Exhibition Conference Centre in economic development terms, it is considered appropriate that the Corporate Director for City Development take up the invitation to join the Board.

**The Council resolved:-**

to authorise the Corporate Director for City Development to accept co-option on to the Board of Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre.

**CASTLEGATE ARTS LIMITED - COUNCIL REPRESENTATION**

**22.** The Council had before it a letter from Castlegate Arts Limited inviting the Council to nominate elected members to serve on the Board of the Organisation.

**The Council resolved:-**

to appoint Councillors Cassie and Urquhart to the Board of Castlegate Arts Limited.

**IMPROVING SCHOOLS - DELIVERY OF QUALITY SUPPORT SERVICES**

**23.** With reference to (1) Article 9 of the Minute of Meeting of the Education and Leisure Committee of 23<sup>rd</sup> November, 1999; and (2) Article 18 of the Minute of Meeting of the Resources Management Committee of 12<sup>th</sup> September, 2001, the Council had before it a report by the Director of Education which (a) provided the conclusions of the work measurement exercise within the Review of Support Employees in Schools with reference to Administrative, Senior Clerical, Clerical and Reception workloads in Nursery, Primary, Special and Secondary Schools; and (b) identified the number of hours and posts required to carry out the workloads and the associated financial implications.

The report advised (a) on the outcomes of a vigorous work measurement programme throughout Aberdeen City's schools which was completed in June, 2001, which was followed by analysis, extrapolation and the calculation of specific workload requirements in each school; (b) that the work measurement programme not only identified the workload requirements but also provided an alternative and more accurate formula for calculating school workloads on a yearly basis and in a much more school-specific manner; (c) that the cost implications of implementing this exercise in full were very significant, however, the actual increase in staffing requirements at individual school level were realistic particularly against the backdrop of the developments and changes in workloads and skills which have taken place in the last eleven years; (d) that further work was required to determine whether and to what extent modifications might be made to the cost estimate by identifying areas of work which could be subjected to efficiency improvements or seen to be considered as non-core elements of workloads; and (e) that the quality and rigour of the exercise is likely to be unparalleled throughout Scotland and the conclusions and recommendations will, if adopted, provide a much needed resource in Aberdeen City schools.

**The report recommended:-**

- (a) to note the findings in the report; and
- (b) to instruct the Directors of Education, Finance and ICT and Personnel to report to the next Resources Management Committee with a detailed action plan with specific timescales to:-
  - (1) address the additional resource requirements, subject to further work being carried out to determine through process improvement and task analysis, whether and to what extent any modifications might be made to the costs;
  - (2) develop a strategy to finance the resource requirement (it is recognised that given the significant budget implications, it may be appropriate to do this on a phased basis); and

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- (3) ensure that the workload projections appropriately reflect the impact that the following will have on school staff and support structures:- A Teaching Profession for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (McCrone), the strategic partnership, *aberdeen futures*, the modernising agenda and New Community Schools.

**The Council resolved:-**

to approve the recommendations contained in the report.

**MATTER OF URGENCY**

**The Lord Provost indicated that she had in terms of Section 50(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 directed that the following item of business be considered as a matter of urgency so that the Council's Standing Orders could be amended accordingly.**

**Councillor Yuill declared a non-pecuniary interest in the following Article and indicated that on the advice of the Corporate Director for Legal and Democratic Services to the effect that the interest was remote and not substantial, therefore, it was not necessary for him to withdraw from the discussion.**

**STANDING ORDERS PART V - CONTRACTS ETC.**

**24.** With reference to Article 5 of the Minute of Meeting of the Organisational Development Task Group (Committee Structure) of 31<sup>st</sup> May, 2002, the Council had before it a report by the Corporate Director for Legal and Democratic Services which advised on the need to update the Council's Standing Orders in relation to contracts.

The report explained (a) that the Standing Orders had to be amended in relation to the purchase of goods and services and the commissioning of works in order to ensure fair and transparent purchasing and at the same time secure best value; (b) that it was also necessary to ensure Standing Orders correspond with best practice in the light of developing European roles on procurement generally; and (c) on amendments to specific Standing Orders in relation to the financial threshold; price versus quality; the role of the Commissioning Officer; social care contracts; construction contracts, and DSOs etc.

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**The Council resolved:-**

- (i) to reduce the financial threshold which triggers the requirements for a competitive procurement from the current level in the existing Standing Orders £50,000 to £30,000;
- (ii) to approve the proposed draft Standing Order 71(6)(iii) whereby officers would have delegated authority to assess and accept the most economically advantageous tender without reference back to Committee if the contract is within the budget approved and to suggest that the officers exercising such delegation advise the Resources Management Committee of decisions taken in terms of the Standing Order;
- (iii) approve the concept of designating Chief Officers as “the Commissioning Officer” within the part of the Standing Orders relating to contracts;
- (iv) approve the amendments to Standing Orders in regard to social care contracts as detailed in the report;
- (v) to note that the Standing Orders as currently drafted still make provision to accord with the relevant legislation in regard to DSOs etc. and to note that there may be a need to make some additional amendments at a later date to take account of any further legislative change; and
- (vi) in all other respects to approve the revisions to Standing Orders Part A - Contracts etc. Number 68 to 89 and the additional Part B Standing Orders relating to Social Care Contracts numbers 90 to 93.

**MATTER OF URGENCY**

**The Lord Provost indicated that she had in terms of Section 50(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 directed that the following item of business be considered as a matter of urgency so that a decision could be taken on the provision of the project over the summer period.**

**ABERDEEN CITY STREET WORK PROJECT**

**25.** With reference to Article 5 of the Minute of Meeting of the Children and Young People’s Strategic Policy Planning and Review Group of 17<sup>th</sup> June, 2002, the Council had before it (a) the report which had been before the Review Group in relation to the proposal to establish the City-Wide Street Work Project to support and actively engage with young people in communities; and (b) additional information from the Chief Executive on the project and which presented three proposals for the future structure of the City-Wide Street Work Project.

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The Children and Young People's Strategic Policy Planning and Review Group at its meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> June, 2002, had resolved:-

- (i) to circulate the reports simpliciter to all the agencies represented on the Group and to the wider network of agencies and ask them to consider it and pass on any information relating to whether they undertake work directly or indirectly in the area of street work so as to gain a comprehensive view of what is happening in the City;
- (ii) to ask the agencies to also identify potential additional resources or link similar initiatives that could contribute to the Street Work Project;
- (iii) noted the work to date to develop the Street Work Project;
- (iv) to approve in principle the aims and objectives, proposed management structure and criteria for selecting the priority areas; and
- (v) to recommend to the Council that they delegate powers to the Community Development Section, Office of Chief Executive in consultation with the elected members and the other agencies represented on the Group to approve such sums required for the projects over the summer period within the approved overall budget.

**The Council resolved:-**

- (i) to approve Proposal 1 set out in the additional paper circulated by the Chief Executive, that is that the Community Learning and Development Section manage the day to day work of the project and that the delivery of the project would be through the Community Learning Development Officer (Children and Young People) and through Community Learning in each area of the city;
- (ii) to indicate that the priority areas are not to be seen as exclusive, and that officers should seek the views of Elected Members on their wishes for the development of the project throughout the City; and
- (iii) in all other respects to approve the recommendations of the Review Group.

**MATTER OF URGENCY**

**The Lord Provost indicated that she had in terms of Section 50(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 directed that the following item of business be considered as a matter of urgency so that Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre Limited could be notified of the Council's decision at the earliest opportunity.**

**At this point in the meeting, Councillor James Lamond sought advice from the Corporate Director for Legal and Democratic Services concerning any potential conflict of interest in considering the following item of business having regard to his appointment by the Council as a Board Member of the Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre.**

**The Corporate Director for Legal and Democratic Services explained that any Elected Member (or Officer of the Council) who was a Board Member of the organisation should declare an interest, however, the interest would not make it necessary for any Member (or Officer of the Council) to withdraw from the discussion.**

**As a result, the following Members (and Officers of the Council) declared an interest in the following item of business and stayed to take part in the Council's deliberations thereon:- Councillors Clark, Clyne, James Lamond, Ramsay Milne and Porter, and the Corporate Directors for Finance and ICT and City Development and Director of Neighbourhood Services - Central.**

#### **ABERDEEN EXHIBITION AND CONFERENCE CENTRE : ACC SHAREHOLDING**

**26.** The Council had before it a report by the Corporate Director for Legal and Democratic Services which sought approval of a phased increase in the Council's shareholding in Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Limited, to reflect its financial commitment to the Company.

The report advised (a) that previously, both Grampian Regional Council and Aberdeen City Council have paid considerably more into Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre Limited than is represented by the Council's shareholding of seventy-one per cent and while it is hoped that, following redevelopment of the Centre, the Company will in time break even without deficit funding, it is anticipated that this will take some time; (b) that with a view to creating a more equitable pattern of shareholding in the Company it has been proposed that the Council should seek to convert its deficit funding into an equivalent value of share capital over four years that should take the Council's holding in the Company to approximately ninety per cent; (c) that at the end of the four year period the position could be reviewed, with the possibility of the arrangement continuing if further deficit funding were required; (d) that it is envisaged that there would be an annual application for the relevant allotment of shares, however, it is not envisaged that the Council would be bound to apply for the shares if, for any reason, it did not appear prudent to do so; (e) that Spearhead Exhibitions have a twenty-six per cent holding in the Company at present, inevitably this would be diluted if the capitalisation proposal were to be pursued and, as a result, Spearhead's position was canvassed, but it is not thought likely that they will be in a position to offer an alternative that can keep the Company in existence without a deficit funding commitment from the Council such as exists at present; (f) that the financial risks associated with the proposal had been considered and are not thought to be significant and indeed potentially could give the Council a return on money which it is already spending; and (g) that an alternative to the capitalisation proposal outlined above would be to attach some form of preferential rights

to the Council's shares and whilst this has its attractions from the point of view of formalising the Council's position, it would require further negotiation to define the Council's rights and adjustments to the Company's Articles of Association.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Council -

agree that Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre Limited be requested to convert the Council's deficit funding of the Company over the current financial year and the next three financial years into share capital to be allotted to the Council on request.

**The Council resolved:-**

to approve the recommendation contained in the report.

**MOTIONS**

**27.** Councillor Clyne, pursuant to notice, moved:-

"That this Council request the Scottish Executive to introduce legislation whereby they would assume responsibility for issuing concessionary parking permits to motorists with disabilities, and require the display of a recent photograph of the permit holder thereon."

**The Council resolved:-**

- (i) to remit the subject matter of the motion to the Environment and Infrastructure Committee; and
- (ii) to instruct the Corporate Director for Legal and Democratic Services to submit a report which details the approved procedure for the submission of motions to include details on how elected members consult with relevant Departments on the content of their proposed motions prior to the subject matter being considered by the Lord Provost for inclusion on the Council agenda.

**28.** Councillor Thomanek, pursuant to notice, moved:-

"That the Department of Legal and Democratic Services is requested as a matter of the utmost urgency to examine the interpretation by the Chartered Institute of Housing in Scotland of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 as provided in the Housing (Scotland) Bill briefing of July 2001, page 6, paragraph 6, Right to Buy, and hold discussions with the Housing Department as to their application of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, Section 49."

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**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to note that the motion was currently being progressed between Councillor Thomanek and the Corporate Director for Legal and Democratic Services; and
- (ii) to instruct the Corporate Director for Legal and Democratic Services to continue dialogue with Councillor Thomanek on the subject matter in consultation with the Housing Department.

**29.** Councillor Ramsay Milne, pursuant to notice, moved:-

“That the appropriate Committee identifies a site in the Mastrick area on which to locate a surfaced football pitch which is protected by high fencing to stop balls causing a nuisance to members of the public and investigate ways and means of funding the provision of such a development at an early date.”

The Council remitted the subject matter of the motion to the Community Services Committee.

**30.** Councillor Jaffrey, pursuant to notice, moved:-

“Ask the appropriate officials to research the level of Pipe Band activity within the City and determine how best to support, sustain and develop the current level of activity.”

**The Committee resolved:-**

to agree the terms of the motion and to instruct the Corporate Director for Finance and ICT and the Director of Arts and Recreation to submit a report on the implications of the motion to a future meeting of the Resources Management Committee.

**31.** Councillor Gordon Graham, pursuant to notice, moved:-

“That it be referred to the appropriate Committee that consultation is held between relevant parties to consider ways of involving people on Community Councils from the age of 16.”

The Council also had before it a report by the Office of Chief Executive which provided information on the subject matter contained in the motion.



**The Committee resolved:-**

to remit the subject matter of the motion and the report to the Resources Management Committee.

**32. Councillor Clyne, pursuant to notice, moved:-**

- “(a) that the appropriate Committee instructs officials to enter into talks with Firstbus to change the evening route of the Faulds Gate bus so that it includes Ferryhill and Crown Street;
- (b) that officials meet with the residents in the Leggart area to discuss ways as to how a bus service can be provided.”

The Council remitted the subject matter of the motion to the Environment and Infrastructure Committee.

**33. Councillor Ramsay Milne, pursuant to notice, moved:-**

“That the appropriate Committee find ways and means, in conjunction with the users, staff working directly for the Project and the local member to enable the facility known as “The Box” (Mastrick Youth Café) in Greenfern Road, Mastrick, to be utilised for a greater period of time per week, moving towards seven day usage.”

The Council remitted the subject matter of the motion to the Education and Leisure Committee.

**34. Councillor Kevin Stewart, pursuant to notice, moved:-**

“That the Director of Education be instructed to find the resources from the Repairs Budget to re-surface the car park of Bucksburn Primary School.”

The Council remitted the subject matter of the motion to the Resources Management Committee.

**35.** Councillor Kevin Stewart, pursuant to notice, moved:-

“That this Council notes that work carried out on the parking bays at Auchmill Terrace last year when double lines were put down was not as specified in the report presented to the Environment and Infrastructure Committee; recognises that the fences that were erected do little to protect residents’ cars from acts of vandalism; and calls upon Council officials to investigate other types of fencing to alleviate the situation so that this problem can be resolved promptly.”

The Council remitted the subject matter of the motion to the Environment and Infrastructure Committee.

**36.** Councillor Porter, pursuant to notice, moved:-

“Given the unacceptable and overtly anti-social behaviour emanating from the abuse of the facilities afforded by the Victoria Park toilets in their present form, consideration be now given to their closure and replacement with modern functional facilities.”

The Council remitted the subject matter of the motion to the Environment and Infrastructure Committee.

**37.** Councillor Marianne Stewart, pursuant to notice, moved:-

“That the Scottish Parliament be requested to amend the provisions of the Education (Scotland) Act in relation to school transport, in order that primary pupils who travel more than two miles to their zoned school are entitled to free school transport; and that the necessary funding be provided to local authorities to support this initiative.

In addition we note that the two mile limit was established in 1980, and would suggest that it may also be appropriate, at this time, to examine whether that is still the appropriate distance, given the percentage increase in traffic year on year since 1980.”

**The Council resolved:-**

- (i) to adopt the terms of the motion; and
- (ii) to instruct the relevant officials to undertake the action contained therein.

**38. Councillor Shirron, pursuant to notice, moved:-**

“That this Council writes to the Justice Minister calling on him to provide Grampian Police with a fairer share of the funding cake and ask him to take into account that the Force also has to deal with the policing of Royal residences and offshore installations.”

**The Council resolved:-**

- (i) to adopt the motion with the following addendum (a) that the Council notes that Grampian Joint Police Board and the three local authorities represented on the Board which includes all political parties and local MSPs have consistently fought for more funding for Grampian Police; and (b) that the Council continue to support Grampian Joint Police Board's on-going campaign to obtain more funding; and
- (ii) to instruct the Corporate Director for Legal and Democratic Services to undertake the action contained therein.

**39. Councillor Shirron, pursuant to notice, moved:-**

“That this Council supports Tricia Marwick MSP's Private Members Bill, which calls for the reform of the voting system for Local Government.”

The Council remitted the subject matter of the motion to the Policy and Strategy Committee.

**40. Councillor Cormack, pursuant to notice, moved:-**

“That this Council adds to the response made by the Planning Committee at its meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> March, 2002, to the Scottish Executive's consultation document “Getting Involved in Planning” the following submission:-

That where industrial or warehouse developments are proposed adjacent to residential areas, discretion should be given to planning authorities to require (or carry out) more extensive neighbour notification of planning applications than planning legislation currently allows.”

The Council remitted the subject matter of the motion to the Planning Committee.

**41. Councillor Clark, pursuant to notice, moved:-**

“That this Council seeks independent advice regarding the position of a member of this Council who may be appointed to the Board of a Company which has a majority of Elected Members on that Board, and who is also a member of the Licensing Board in relation to whether there is a conflict of interest which would prohibit the Member from serving on both bodies.”

The Council remitted the subject matter of the motion to the Resources Management Committee.

**MATTER OF URGENCY**

**The Lord Provost indicated that she had in terms of Section 50(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 directed that the following item of business be considered as a matter of urgency so that the Council could consider the details of the motion and make a decision on the terms contained therein.**

**42. Councillor Hutcheon, pursuant to notice, moved:-**

“That the City Council fund the cost of hiring a venue at the Bridge of Don to enable the local community to hold the public meeting they desire to discuss the Modified Finalised Local Plan”.

Councillor Hutcheon moved, seconded by Councillor Leslie:-  
That the terms of the motion be approved.

Vice-Chairperson Ironside moved as an amendment, seconded by Councillor Thomanek:-  
That no action be taken.

On a division, there voted:-

For the motion (16) - Councillors Anderson, Cassie, Clark, Cormack, Dean, Duncan, Falconer, Hutcheon, Jaffrey, Leslie, MacDonald, Porter, Reynolds, Shirron, Kevin Stewart and Yuill.

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For the amendment (25) - Lord Provost Smith, Vice-Chairperson Ironside; and Councillors Adam, Allan, Clyne, Dempsey, Gordon, Gordon Graham, Marjorie Graham, Harris, Irons, James Lamond, June Lamond, McIntosh, MacLean, Maitland, Allan Milne, Ramsay Milne, Pirie, Rutherford, Marianne Stewart, Thomanek, Urquhart, Webster and Wyness.

Absent from the division (1) - Councillor Wisely.

**The Council resolved:-**  
to adopt the amendment.

#### **PLANNING COMMITTEE - 16<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 2002**

#### **43. Cornhill Hospital Site, Ashgrove Road, Aberdeen - Learning Disability Unit**

With reference to Article 10 to this Minute, the Council resumed consideration of the application for planning permission (A2/0272) referred to therein.

In this connection the Council had before them (1) a letter dated 14<sup>th</sup> June, 2002 from George Watt & Stewart, Chartered Architects and Planning Consultants concerning Tree Management, (2) a letter dated 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2002 from Gerry Donald, NHS Grampian also concerning Tree Management, and (3) a briefing note sent to all Members of Council prepared by the Head of Physical Development providing some information on the issues relating to moving services from Woodlands and Ladysbridge Hospitals.

#### **The Council resolved:-**

- (i) to approve the application subject to (a) the conditions contained in the report by the Corporate Director for City Development except that condition 10 be reworded to read:-
  - That no trees, other than those lying within the footprint of the proposed buildings, shall be removed or have works carried out to them pursuant to this planning permission; and
  - (b) that all Councillors receive clarification from NHS Grampian on the exact uses to which the proposed Unit would be put, including an indication of the range of services to be provided there; and
- (ii) to note the advice from the Corporate Director for Legal and Democratic Services.

**MATTER OF URGENCY**

**The Lord Provost indicated that she had in terms of Section 50(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 directed that the following item of business be considered as a matter of urgency so that the Council could take an early decision on the matter in order to progress the initiative.**

**ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF FUNDING CAPITAL PROJECTS**

**44.** With reference to Article 27 of the Minute of Meeting of the Policy and Strategy Committee of 27<sup>th</sup> November, 2001, the Council had before it a report by the Corporate Director for Finance and ICT which advised that an offer of funding of £150,000 had been made by the Scottish Executive for the purpose of producing an outline business case for a public private partnership (PPP)/private finance initiative (PFI) project for education properties.

The report advised (a) that the Scottish Executive organise competitive bidding for funding for PPP/PFI projects for education properties; (b) that outline business cases were to be submitted either for December 2001 or September 2002 and as a result the Council registered its interest in bidding in the September 2002 round subject to funding being made available; (c) that the outcome of the December 2001 bids which were announced yesterday revealed that all fifteen Councils who submitted bids had been successful; (d) that the majority of Councils who submitted their outline business cases had submitted PPP projects which transfer the building and operation of the schools to a special-purpose vehicle that normally comprises a builder, financial institution and a facilities manager, however, one variant bid from Argyll and Bute Council was supported by the Scottish Executive; (e) that the bid from Argyll and Bute involved a not for profit distributing company which in turn would contract with a builder, financial institution etc. and this would permit community representation on the Board of the Company which would not pay out shareholder dividends; and (f) that in relation to bids for the September 2002 round, the Scottish Executive had now indicated that it will accept outline business cases up to the end of December, 2002, and had granted funding to prepare these of up to £150,000.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Council consider the following three options:-

- (a) to accept the funding of up to £150,000 and work up an outline business case for education properties by December, 2002, following the pattern developed by Argyll and Bute Council (if this option is agreed, approval is sought for the secondment of staff and appointment of consultants as appropriate);
- (b) as for (1) above but following the pattern of traditional PPP/PFI projects; and

- (c) to reject the offer of funding and not prepare an outline business case for a PPP/PFI project for education properties.

**The Council resolved:-**

to accept the funding of up to £150,000 and work up an outline business case for education properties by December, 2002, following the pattern developed by Argyll & Bute Council and to approve the secondment of staff and appointment of consultants as appropriate.

**Before proceeding, the Council 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 consideration of the remaining items of the business to avoid disclosure of exempt information as defined in the following paragraphs of Schedule 7(A) to the Act, namely:- Article 45 - paragraph 1; Article 46 - paragraphs 8 and 10; Article 47 - paragraph 6; and Article 48 - paragraph 6. Representatives of the press and public who were in attendance thereupon withdrew and the Council proceeded to consider the items in question.**

**APPROVAL OF EXTERNAL FUNDING POST**

**45.** The Council had before it a report by the Chief Executive which sought approval of the post of External Funding Support Officer.

The report advised that there were significant opportunities presented by a vast range of funding bodies by which the Council and the City could maximise their inward revenue stream and while there had been notable successes in securing funding from external sources it must be noted that the general and justified view on the uptake of the Council and the City on these funding opportunities was that it could be much improved.

The report explained as a result, that the budget set for 2002/2003 highlighted the requirement that a post be established with a remit to fulfil the role of supporting and driving the approach of the Council to securing external funding.

**The Council resolved:-**

to approve the post of External Funding Support Officer within the Office of Chief Executive at a grade of AP5.

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## **STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP PROJECT - FINAL EVALUATION**

**46.** With reference to Article 44 of the Minute of Meeting of the Council of 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2001, the Council had before it a report by the Corporate Director for Personnel and Organisational Development which provided (a) a restatement of the need for a strategic partner to ensure that the Council can quickly deliver the *aberdeen futures* vision; (b) an overview of the procurement process that had been followed to identify the right partner for the Council; (c) details of the final evaluation process; (d) an explanation of the role of a strategic partner within the context of *aberdeen futures*, (e) an indication of the implications for the Council of appointing a strategic partner, and (f) an outline of the approach for the next stage of the process.

### **The report recommended:-**

that the Council -

- (a) approve the recommended preferred supplier as detailed in the report subject to the appropriate Parent Company guarantees;
- (b) proceed to negotiate a framework agreement with the preferred supplier;
- (c) approve the establishment of a programme office;
- (d) commence the start-up phase of work subject to contractual agreement;
- (e) agree that the results of the change programme be reported to a future meeting of the Council for approval;
- (f) disband the Strategic Partnership Task Group and that a similar Board be constituted for the purposes of the start-up phase; and
- (g) approve the approach for the next stage of the process as detailed in the report.

### **The Council resolved:-**

to approve the recommendations contained in the report.

## **MATTER OF URGENCY**

The Lord Provost indicated that she had in terms of Section 50(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 directed that the following item of business be considered as a matter of urgency so that the Council could approve the recommendations of the Guildry and Mortifications Funds Board.

## **GUILDRY AND MORTIFICATIONS FUNDS BOARD**

**47.** With reference to Article 4 of the Minute of Meeting of the Guildry and Mortifications Funds Board of 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2002, the Council had before it (a) the



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recommendations of the Guildry and Mortifications Funds Board in relation to applications for financial assistance from the Guildry Funds and the recommendation submitted on behalf of the Burgesses; and (b) a report by the Chief Executive which provided further details on the applications which had been submitted to the Board on 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2002. (A copy of the Minute of the Meeting of the Guildry and Mortifications Funds Board of 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2002 was noted by the Council at Article 7 to this Minute).

The Guildry and Mortifications Funds Board had recommended to the Council (a) that three of the aforementioned applications be approved subject to the conditions set out in the report; and (b) that in future years the application documentation includes a requirement that each candidate be currently resident in Aberdeen and be able to demonstrate a commitment to developing his or her career in the City.

**The Council resolved:-**

to approve the recommendations of the Guildry and Mortifications Fund Board.

**MATTER OF URGENCY**

**The Lord Provost indicated that she had in terms of Section 50(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 directed that the following item of business be considered as a matter of urgency so that the Council could consider the issues at the earliest opportunity.**

**SUPPORT FOR INDUSTRY**

**48.** The Council had before it a report by the Corporate Director for City Development which provided details of an offer of support to a preferred bidder and management buy-out of an Aberdeen Company.

**The Council resolved:-**

- (i) to defer consideration of the matter, pending further information to clarify issues raised by elected members at the meeting and pending further discussions with all parties concerned including Scottish Enterprise Grampian;
- (ii) to indicate that the cost of the proposed support is too high and to ask the Director for Finance and ICT to contact the Scottish Executive to confirm that additional capital consent would be provided to meet the cost of any decision to purchase premises; and
- (iii) to authorise the Chief Executive to make a press statement expressing the Council's support for the Company and to indicate negotiations are continuing.

**- MARGARET SMITH, Lord Provost.**

**APPENDIX A**

# **ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2002**

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**DOUGLAS PATERSON, CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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**ABERDEEN  
CITY COUNCIL**

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## **MAIN CONSIDERATION**

### **0. Operating Environment**

#### **0.1 External Environment**

0.1.1 The External Environment at **Global level has been dominated by insecurity** and social, financial and military terms. This was perhaps demonstrated most graphically and tragically for all concerned in the terrorist attacks on New Year on September 11, but Africa, the Middle East and Asia has also seen significant military action and all countries have seen angry disturbances. People around the world are seeing their own and their families lives ruined by this. The confidence in financial markets, already on a downturn since 1999 was hit by those events, especially September 11. **Aberdeen and the Council have not escaped the impact** of these events.

0.1.2 At a national level we have done relatively well over the last year especially if we compare our experience to that of the people caught up in the troubles described above. The main challenge has been that of **ongoing change in society** at large and in our case within the Public Sector. Beyond the wide number of initiatives coming through in all areas of service delivery we have also seen the publication of the Local Government Bill, the Bill on Enhancing Democracy and other **initiatives with broad impact** such as the first steps towards neighbourhood budgeting. Businesses within Aberdeen are exposed to the moves in the international trade with changes to the fiscal regime.

#### **0.2 Internal Environment**

0.2.1 The Internal Environment has seen the continuation on a steady **course of change set by the Administration and the Council**, originally in 1995 and restated in 1999. The changes reflect the fact that Aberdeen City Council has accurately predicted and made provision for the broad changes taking place in Society and also reflected in Government Policy.

0.2.2 The unstable international situation has led to a whole new set of scenarios having to be prepared for jointly with Grampian Police through our **Emergency Planning process** and Unit.

0.2.3 As one might predict the reaction to such thorough joint change will be, and are mixed, within the Council but the ultimate test is that they are going ahead, they are commanding support and ultimately the people of Aberdeen are seeing and will continue to see **better, more joined up service delivery** by Aberdeen City

Council and its Partners, particularly other parts of the public sector and also including the private, voluntary and independent sectors.

## 1. Inclusion and Sustainability

### 1.1 Inclusion and Sustainability

1.1.1 The principles of Social **Inclusion and Sustainability are at the core of *aberdeen* futures**, the Community Planning process and consequently they are at the core of the Council's work also. Actions which achieve social Inclusion and sustainability are highlighted throughout this report in areas such as Health, Drugs, Strengthening Local Democracy, Neighbourhood Area Planning and Communities of Interest.

1.1.2 Over the past year work has been ongoing within the Council on completing and implementing Community Action Plans and Action Plans for the Communities of Interest such as:-

- Mastrick Community Action Plan;
- Cummings Park Community Action Plan
- Rosemount Square Community Action Plan;
- Powis Community Action Plan;
- Froghall Community Action Plan;
- Racial Equality Action Plan; and
- Womans' Equality Action Plan 1 year review.

These have **focussed Social Inclusion and Sustainability activity where it is required**. The detail of the actions delivered or planned are included with the body of this report.

1.1.3 The Council's Corporate Plan has also been revised to reflect the importance of Social Inclusion as a City Challenge, and the drafting of the Social Inclusion and Sustainable Development crosscutting Challenge in the Community Plan has been completed. Work is continuing to create **social inclusion and sustainability indicators** to allow improvements to be measured and monitored.

1.1.4 The Minister for Education and Young People (Cathy Jamieson) confirmed while the Parliament was in Aberdeen, **£1.7m for the roll out of New Communities Schools** in Aberdeen over the next 2 years. The next steps will be to develop detailed plans for St Machar, Torry and Northfield Associated School Groups in 2002/2003 and across the remainder of the City in the following years. These proposals firmly place the development of New Communities Schools within the

context of *aberdeenfutures* and link them to the Changing Children's Services Fund.

## 1.2 Communities of Interest

### Children

- 1.2.1 The **Children's Services Information Service (CSIS)**, one of a network of services in Scotland, has been operational in Aberdeen for just over two years. The service offers information through a website, e-mail and by telephone. With the changes in registration and inspection in Scotland and the establishment of the Scottish Commission the service has been developed as the only place where parents and professionals can access comprehensive information about services for children 0-16 in Aberdeen. During the year the service has expanded to include robust information for the audit and planning of children's services; all registered pre-school education and childcare; unregistered provision of parent and toddler groups; special needs contact information; counselling; mediation services; family support agencies and information about childcare training.
- 1.2.2 **'Scotland's Children' Report** sets out the government imperative to **eradicate child poverty, raise attainment and develop better integrated service** in order to meet children and young people's needs. The Action Plan sets out the approach that local authorities and partners will have to take in order to deliver services to children and young people. The Council and its partners are taking forward the recommendations of the Plan and overseeing the strategic planning of services for children and young people in the City.
- 1.2.3 Additional funds made available through the Changing Children's Service and New Community Schools initiatives have **provided resources to support a dynamic change process** to enable the Council and its partners to develop integrated services for children and young people. Discussion are ongoing regarding funding for the Education Action Plan.
- 1.2.4 The **Aberdeen Childcare Partnership** is a multi-agency group, set up by the City Council in 1999, to work collaboratively to promote, support and develop affordable, accessible, quality pre-school education and childcare services for children and young people aged 0-14 years in line with parent demand. Developments include: -
- A major boost for the expansion and development of flexible **wrap-around out of school care** through two successful Consortium Bid applications to the New Opportunities Fund. The funding, totalling £318,219, will create **824 new childcare places in the City**. This will enable many more parents

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the opportunity to return to work and education. This highly important development has exceeded the Childcare Partnership's expansion targets to create 100 new places in all groups every year between now and 2004;

- Childcare providers in all the City's 12 designated priority areas will be now **able to access additional funding** from the New Opportunities Fund following an announcement that additional postcode sectors covering pockets of deprivation have become eligible for 3 year funding;
- **Forty three new childminders** have been registered to provide flexible childcare;
- The Pre-School Education Team, in conjunction with Partner Providers, met its target to provide **nursery places for all 3-5 year olds in the City** whose parents wished places;
- The Partnership has welcomed additional funding from the Scottish Executive for **Workforce Expansion and Development**. The 3-year package is aimed to attract people into the early years out of school care and playwork sector, ensure all workers are appropriately qualified or are registered for a qualification by 2004 and to ensure existing staff in the sector have access to appropriate professional development opportunities.
- Following a feasibility study undertaken last year, a **Childcare Company has been established**. The Company will develop a relief pool of staff available across all childcare sectors and set up PAYE and accountancy services for those organisations who wish to access them; and
- One key issue for the Partnership has been in **identifying accommodation**. This is particularly so for the private sector. There is steep competition in the City for any available premises from building firms seeking to develop residential properties.

1.2.5 Childcare is a major access and equality issue. There are a variety of situations when the council provides resources for or supports childcare arrangements to allow people to attend meetings, conferences etc., which are part of the Council's commitment to strengthening local democracy and consulting widely. The Council also has a **responsibility for ensuring the standard of care is adequate**. A small team developed guidance for staff responsible for enabling and agreeing childcare support.

1.2.6 A national working party has been established by the Scottish Executive to look into various issues around school meals including the social inclusion aspects. Authorities were asked to review their arrangements for **free school meals** and



a cross-service working group is looking at this and in particular the way that uptake of free school meals entitlement can be increased by more publicity, easier access, etc. The roll-out of the Accord Card has already started to address some of these issues in Aberdeen and will play a significant part in the drive to increase the uptake of free school meals.

### Youth

- 1.2.7 A **Youth Strategy Group** has been re-established to review the Youth Strategy and to oversee and co-ordinate the development of services for young people. A major achievement has been to secure the political commitment and resources for the development of a City wide **Detached Street Work Project**. Issues that the Committee have raised with the Council or have been consulted on have included: youth crime, mental health and wellbeing; binge drinking; equality issues including rights to public space, access to sports and leisure facilities; drugs and homelessness. The committee has also advised the Lord Provost Charitable Trust on the allocation of funding on the theme of Active Citizenship. A member of the Youth Action Committee and an Elected Member represented the Council at the celebration of ten years of European Youth Charter in Krakow, Poland.
- 1.2.8 Aberdeen **hosted the second Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) AGM** in August 2001. This was a significant achievement for the members of the Youth Action Committee, the local Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament and City. The event attracted over 100 young people from all over Scotland to the city and demonstrated the Council's commitment to involving young people meaningfully in the democratic decision making processes. Local MSYP's have been involved in developing a number of SYP documents including Pointing the Way Forward and the Scottish Youth Parliament Guidelines. They have consulted through schools and area forums with other young people on emerging issues and in doing so have built up a repertoire of effective consultation methods. National elections for the Scottish Youth Parliament took place in February. The Youth Action Committee facilitated the local election process. Six young people have been elected as constituency representatives and four as individual members.
- 1.2.9 The evaluation of the **first mentoring scheme was completed and a second programme developed** this year. Six pairs of Councillors and young people have met. Each pairing have taken distinctly different approaches to the way they learn from each other. The scheme has been particularly successful when young people have been paired with their local councillor and they have interests and issues in common that they can pursue and which have resulted in tangible outcomes.
- 1.2.10 **Cyberyouths.com the web-site for young people** developed through the Listen Young People Speaking Project has continued to have a high level of

use. The development of the site as a consultation tool has been included as one aspect the successful ESF Demos project. The objectives are to: develop the website to consult, involve and inform young people on issues that affect their lives; provide ways for young people to engage with others in the city to undertake their representative roles; and to open up opportunities for young people to connect with others in European and twin city partners.

### Ethnic Minorities

1.2.11 Work with NHS Grampian has resulted in a joint research project on the **health needs of minority ethnic communities** in Aberdeen being carried out by Grampian Racial Equality Council. The findings provide useful demographic data for planning purposes and have initiated more detailed research into the specific health needs of initially the Chinese and Bangladeshi communities. The **Elderly Chinese Housing Project** at Linksvie has been developed through work with Communities Scotland. The project was successful in obtaining an Ethnic Minority Grant Scheme award to develop a lunch club with the support of Age Concern. Other minority ethnic communities have expressed interest in such a project. A joint project is underway with Housing, Community Development and Communities Scotland to carry out a **housing needs assessment for minority ethnic communities** which should ensure that their specific housing needs are taken into consideration in the development of local housing strategies. Work with Aberdeen Council for Voluntary Organisations has strengthened community development work within the emerging minority ethnic voluntary sector. Aberdeen City Council has been working towards developing an infrastructure and has supported minority ethnic community groups and associations through management committee representation, capacity building and a community development approach. Two major Community Fund Grants have been awarded as a result, to Multi-Ethnic Aberdeen Limited and the International Centre and smaller awards have been made to the Aberdeen Interpreters Group, The Chinese Women's Association and The Elderly Chinese Association. The **Council continues to fund Grampian Racial Equality Council** to ensure that there is a racial discrimination complainant aid service in the City and to work together to develop a City Wide Racial Equality Strategy. A number of projects are underway to take forward the mainstreaming agenda such as the Aberdeen Childcare Partnership 'Sure Start' programme which gives the parents of minority ethnic children an opportunity to engage more actively in the issues which affect the lives of their children. The **Chinese Homecare project** which has trained Chinese speaking people as home carers. The childcare project which aims to train people from Chinese and Bangladeshi communities in childcare.

1.2.12 **The Racial Equality Action Plan** was launched at a high profile meeting of the Ethnic Minority Forum on the 29 April 2002. The Race Equality Action Plan contains **specific measurable targets** and desired outcomes which will

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contribute to the development of a Race Equality Scheme for Aberdeen City Council, as required under the new specific duties of the **Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000**. A presentation took place by the CRE on the 14 June 2002 for all key council officers to assist them in ensuring that their respective services meet the requirements of the legislation. Officers from partner organisations will also be in attendance to ensure that racial equality issues can be developed cohesively as part of the city-wide racial equality strategy and *aberdeen futures*.

- 1.2.13 The inaugural meeting of the Aberdeen City Council's **Minority Ethnic Staff Network** was held on May 1, 2002. The Group is one of the Council's initiatives to meet the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and to foster good working relations with staff from minority ethnic background. The network seeks to bring together all Aberdeen Council's staff from minority ethnic background on a regular basis. **Aberdeen Racists Incidents Partnership (ARIP)** was launched in January 2002. Discussions are currently taking place to develop a training programme for partner organisations, which would incorporate guidance on reporting and recording racist incidents and an anti-racism approach. Aberdeen City Council Public **Interpreting and Translation Service** has now been in operation for six years and the number of requests for service continues to rise, currently some 350 per year. 60 interpreters are registered with the Council speaking some 40 languages. The Aberdeen Interpreters Group, which attracted public funding, hopes to have 20 interpreters trained in the Diploma in Public Service Interpreting by June 2003. The Council has been a member of the Scottish **Asylum Seekers Consortium** and is currently in the process of developing a contingency plan for the settlement and integration of refugees and asylum seekers in Aberdeen should it be required.

### Travellers

- 1.2.14 A Clinterty Travellers Site Inter-agency Group was established in June 2001 to develop an Action Plan to address the needs identified by Travelling People. A Fun Day was held in August to launch the **extension and improvements at the site** and to encourage Travellers to use the official site. Two **Planning for Real exercises** have taken place to consult with this traditionally hard to reach group, to ensure Travellers are involved in setting the priority actions. Women Travellers have been supported to lead workshops on raising awareness of discrimination at two high profile City events.

### Women

- 1.2.15 The 7<sup>th</sup> **Aberdeen Women's Festival** was held from 8<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> March. The Council supported over 30 women's and community groups to organise over 60 events in the Women's Festival. The Festival Keynote Day was an important

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opportunity to update women in the city on progress in implementing the Women's Equality Action Plan, "Aberdeen – a woman's place?" which was launched in April 2001 and promote interest in the Women's Consultative Forum, currently being established. The Council concluded a **best value review of the services provided by Aberdeen Women's Centre** and agreed to continue to support the Centre to maintain provision of a women-only meeting space in the city centre. Discussions are taking place with the Centre on new proposals to take forward development work linking to the Women's Equality Action Plan. Further funding of **£50,000** was received from the Scottish Executive, Domestic Abuse Service Development Fund **to continue the Domestic Abuse Project in 2002 –03**. The Council is the lead agency in the multi-agency partnership overseeing this project.

#### Lesbians, Gays, Bi-Sexuals and Transgender (LGBT)

- 1.2.16 The **LGBT Strategy was launched** in October 2001. The LGBT Strategy was launched in October 2001. Aberdeen is the first Local Authority in Scotland to launch such a strategy. The Council is supporting the development of the community led LGBT Forum which had its first meeting in November and meets monthly. One of the functions of the Forum is to monitor the implementation of the Action Plan. The Council has hosted a meeting of Beyond Barriers, the recently established Scotland wide LGBT organisation.

#### Disability Equality

- 1.2.17 The Council continues to prepare for the final stage of the **Disability Discrimination Act in 2004** – access to goods, facilities and services. Key Council buildings have been audited and frontline staff are in the process of receiving training in disability awareness and customer care. Category A recommendations from the Access Audit are about to be implemented. A corporate budget is now held for the purchase of British Sign Language (BSL) for deaf and hard of hearing people accessing all Council services. **Deaf Awareness Training** has been added to the Council's Training Directories. **Grampian Accessible Information** Task Force (GAIT) a Partnership comprising Aberdeen City Council, Grampian Health Board, Aberdeenshire Council and other organisations within the Grampian region, have put together Guidelines for Producing Accessible Information.

#### Older People

- 1.2.18 The Council has appointed Councillor David Clyne to be our **Champion for Older People** and consultation work is currently being carried out to identify Older People's issues and how services for Older People can be improved in the future. A series of focus groups and interviews will take place in June &

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July, links have been made to the Older Peoples Forum established for the Joint Futures initiative, and a Planning for Real event is scheduled for August.

Voluntary Sector Strategy

- 1.2.19 The Voluntary Sector Liaison Group are currently overseeing the **review of the Voluntary Sector Policy**. In its scrutiny role the group provide the formal mechanism for the voluntary sector to raise issues with the Council. Major issues considered have included support in kind from the Council with a particular focus on access to accommodation and funding to the sector. A major achievement has been the **completion of the Corporate Funding Pack**. [Available on the website]

Equal Opportunities

- 1.2.20 The Council selected the women's campaign group "Enough is Enough" to receive the **Equal Opportunities Award for 2001**. Equality grants totalling £16,000 were provided to 20 local organisations for projects promoting equal opportunities. These included multi-cultural events, training and capacity building for voluntary organisations and funding for publicity materials to raise awareness of equalities issues.

1.3 Neighbourhood Related Work (Communities of Place)

Seaton

- 1.3.1 **Seaton Taking Action for Regeneration (STAR)** which is the community representation and fundraising arm of Seaton area regeneration, are awaiting receipt of the first £3,000 of the £11,000 secured from Comic Relief for the development of a '**chill out room**'. The funding comes in two stages, the first being to develop a business plan and the second £8,000 to equip the room. STAR has also applied to the Community Fund for funding to re-establish a newsletter in the area. Funding has also been awarded from the local 'Bill and Betty Tough Fund' to produce the **display signs in School Road**, saying; 'Seaton loves its free-range children'. The signs are an attempt to slow down the traffic in School Road. The Seaton Partnership and its Working Groups are being reviewed. Questionnaires have been distributed to all partners on the effectiveness of the Partnership. The Working Groups are providing information on whether the issues identified in the '**Planning for Real**' initiatives held during 2001 have been met and what further resources are required to meet outstanding issues.

Powis/Froghall

- 1.3.2 Powis/Froghall Key Contacts Group are seeking permission from the owner of the shops on Bedford Road for the **graffiti to be cleared** and some 'art work' undertaken. Funding for this work was given to Powis Community Council from the Council's Risk Management Working Group. A Working Group from the Key Contacts Group has, for most of the year, been planning the **Powis/Froghall Gala** for 2 June 2002. The Gala is entitled the "Winds of Change" Community Gala to reflect area regeneration. Local children designed kites and the best design will be come the logo for Powis and Froghall area regeneration in the same way that STAR has the yellow star as their logo for Seaton regeneration.

Rosemount Square

- 1.3.3 Rosemount Square Tenants Action Group was supported to organise an event in March to prioritise the issues raised by them in the 'Planning for Real' exercise held in 2001. Part of the follow up work has been the production of a **video documenting the prioritised issues**, involving local children and a model of Rosemount Square. Work with Council services to produce a response to the issues raised in the community video is underway, to be produced in the same format and included in the video. The video will then be used as an evaluation and monitoring tool for local residents and the Council.

Northfield

- 1.3.4 The Council is **working with young people in the community** to establish a meeting place, "The Field", for them in the vacant Byron Square Police Station and both a business plan and constitution for "The Field" have been produced. Work is continuing to identify sources of funding and volunteers for "The Field". The Youth Management Committee is currently considering the content of the constitution. It is hoped to present the business plan to other potential sponsors in the near future. Work to have the unsafe, hazardous **garage block on Deansloch Crescent demolished** is progressing. An on-site meeting has taken place with Council officers and a report was submitted to Community Services Committee in May 2002. A working group comprising Northfield Area Forum, residents, Elected Members, Community Education and external agencies is being supported to plan a **Northfield Gala Day** in October 2002. Plans are well underway for what should be a very successful community event. Support has been given to the community Spring Clean event in and around Byron Square and Bramble Brae School as part of Aberdeen's Civic Pride campaign 'It's Our City'. Over 100 residents took part in the event. The **Travelling Art Gallery** visited Byron Square. This was a very successful event with well over 100 people visiting the gallery and was the best

attended in the city. As a 'spin-off', Northfield Arts Group provided a display in Duthie Park for Her Majesty The Queen's Jubilee visit.

### Cummings Park

- 1.3.5 Cummings Park Community Centre management and staff continue to be supported to identify their training needs and make better use of the facilities available in the Centre including the implementation of **Computer Classes** by Aberdeen College in the Centre. They are currently applying for charitable status. Work continues on setting up a **Credit Union** in the Cummings Park community area. A working group comprising Cllr Gordon Graham, Council Departments, Grampian Police, Community Centre Staff, a local soccer team and Grampian Housing Association is drawing up plans to **regenerate the site of the old Cummings Park School** and surrounding areas, and improve facilities at the Community Centre. The Council continues to support, train and advise the newly constituted Cummings Park Community Forum.

### Mastrick

- 1.3.6 Work is almost complete on the environmental and community safety **improvements to Mastrick Shopping Centre**. This includes improved lighting in and around the centre; new benches; removal of broken paving, cobbles and cassies and replacing them with coloured paving; decorating shop shutters with artwork; and, improvements to car parking and HGV turning areas behind the shops. Anecdotal feedback from residents, shopkeepers and Grampian Police has been extremely positive and encouraging. Further remedial work is required. There have been a number of **youth nuisance/youth disturbance incidents** throughout the community and staff are working with residents, Grampian Police and relevant Council Departments to try to resolve these issues. Summary Community Action Plans for each of the three areas are in the final stages of production and will soon be ready for to residents in the community areas.

### Torry

- 1.3.7 Building work for the **Torry Neighbourhood Centre**, a partnership approach between Grampian Primary Care NHS Trust as the lead partner, and the City Council and Grampian Police starts on site this month for completion in the spring of next year. This will involve the community and the voluntary sector in developing better ways of delivering a range of services to people in Torry. A multi-agency steering group has been formed to develop a **Youth Café in Torry**. An Executive Group will lead the project, involving young people and their parents and drawing on the skills and expertise of participants from the voluntary and business sectors. The Church of Scotland is leading a joint

steering group which has developed an imaginative brief for the **regeneration of an area of the riverside** adjacent to the Fisheries Research Station (FRS) in Torry. The proposals present the development of an Aquarium, Conference facilities, new laboratories, offices for government and voluntary organisations, and housing and community faculties on a campus around the present site of the old Torry Research Station and the present FRS. A detailed brief is being worked up for the end of June. Direct investment by the City Council's Housing Service is leading to the physical and environmental **improvement of the cottages at Balnagask Circle** to be more like the traditional cottages, which involves the creation of a new roof to the house and porch, and improvements to security. Colour introduces a vibrant element in the finished houses. To help address the concerns surrounding **empty properties** in the private sector, the City Council's Housing Service has worked with Grampian Housing Association and Communities Scotland to refurbish empty tenements in Walker Road to be let under the model of lead tenancy. Work by a number of agencies based in Torry has led to increased **interest in Neighbourhood Watch**. There is also more interest being shown in organising this year's **Torry St. Fittick's Fayre** which will be held on Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> August. This event was held last year for the first time in 500 years and attracted over 1500 people. Quite separately, through work started by Grampian Fire Brigade, a fireworks night event was held in the Bay of Nigg, which attracted over 1000 people last November. Money raised through sponsorship by the Aberdeen Lions helped to pay for the distribution of "Tacade", a lifeskills booklet, to the local primary schools.

#### Bridge of Don

- 1.3.8 The recent agreement by the Council to accept a **Management Plan for East Woodcroft** is a real milestone. A **cycle route has been agreed** in the last few weeks linking part of the Bridge of Don community with the National cycle route. The new route will link an existing route north of Braehead Way via Westfield Park and on to Saint Machar Drive passing Bridge of Don Academy and Scotstown School. There will be a spur going to Balgownie School. One of the most important events in the year in terms of health has been the **development of a Health Needs Assessment for Bridge of Don**. This will set the future for establishing health facilities for the modern community. This plan will be ready for public consultation soon. Finally the **opening of the final phase of The Jesmond Centre** last autumn brings sport and cultural facilities to the local population and delivers further action on the plan for the Bridge of Don.

#### Great Northern Social Inclusion Partnership (GNP)

- 1.3.9 The GNP made significant progress in the development and implementation of its thematic strategies and action plans. **Action delivered** in the area over the last year includes:



- i. **Community Participation:-** The Partnership continues to emphasise community participation in decision-making and the Scottish Executive's Empowering Communities fund has greatly facilitated this during the year. These new resources have enabled the GNP to provide IT facilities in the homes of all its community partners and provide additional staff resources to support community involvement and capacity building. A part-time media officer will work with communities to deal with the media, promote the communities in a positive light and get information out across the communities of the GNP and the wider city.
- ii. **Exit Strategy:-** The partnership is committed to mainstreaming the work of the GNP, which will require partners, including the Council, to consider an investment programme between 2003-2006 to sustain the key successes in the GNP once the Social Inclusion funding ceases. Early meetings have been established with partners to agree how this programme can be developed and resourced by participating partners.

1.3.10 Examples of activities which have been delivered this year include:-

- Work with young people at risk of drugs use/misuse in Fersands and Middlefield;
- 'Baby Think It Over', a continuing initiative tackling teenage pregnancy, has been delivered in a range of community and mainstream education settings and is being developed to be delivered in schools across the City;
- Training has been provided for community and youth work staff to raise awareness of and try out resources and methods of addressing priority health issues of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sexual health and mental health;
- The Healthy Roots project has been officially launched. The project aims to create a managed green space within Middlefield for community use to grow healthy food; improve wildlife and increase biodiversity; and promote recycling. A business plan is being produced;
- St Machar Parent Support Project has secured input from child psychologists;
- Extension of Common Bond of St Machar Credit Union to include Middlefield and increasing the number of savers;

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- Continued expansion of quality childcare and youth services across the GNP, including early morning clubs, nursery and crèche provision, after school clubs, youth advice and information services and Active events;
- Development of an innovative men's health group by the Tillydrone Community Group;
- Drugs Action has successfully extended its counselling services into the GNP communities;
- NHS Grampian has carried out a Needs Assessment in Middlefield to determine community need for access to pharmacy services. The area currently has no local pharmacy;
- 3D computer models of community facilities and areas in Fersands/Printfield are being developed, to improve consultation with the community and potential funders;
- Upgrading of at least 96 door entry systems in the Fersands/Printfield area in consultation with service users, the Housing Service and Grampian Police;
- Extension and refurbishment of the Middlefield Community Health Initiative (The Healthy Hoose), including provision of weekly GP sessions and pharmacy services;
- Ongoing community food and health initiatives including the Tillydrone Early Morning and Middlefield Breakfast Clubs and 5 food co-ops.

1.3.11 Through the *Great Northern Community Pathfinder* the following have also been achieved during the year:-

- The production and distribution of local service directories for every household within Tillydrone, Printfield and Fersands;
- The development of a resource and information pack for new residents. These 'Welcome Packs' are distributed through the local housing offices;
- The Station House Media Unit has supported local residents to develop community magazines within Middlefield and Tillydrone and to explore issues of local concern through video e.g. Fersands Safety First film;

- The integration of two community organisations, Pathways and GNCE, to form the possible basis for the development of resident managed neighbourhood service provision within the GNP communities.

1.3.12 Funding for the Pathfinder ceased in March 2002 and the final monitoring returns are currently being prepared for submission to the Scottish Executive.

#### 1.4 Sustainability

1.4.1 The **Green City Fun Day and Sale at Aberdeen Beach** was held on the 8 June. Despite the poor weather, we estimate over **2,000 people attended** the day. Over 1,000 home compost bins and 4,000 energy saving light bulbs were sold on the day. The main aim of the day was achieved, which was to raise awareness of our local environment and the need to ensure it is protected for future generations. Sponsorship was kindly provided by Halliburton, Scottish Enterprise Grampian, BP, Scottish Hydro Electric as well as in kind support from The Robert Gordon University and the BA - communicating science.

1.4.2 Lewis Macdonald MSP, Deputy Minister for Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning, launched the **North of Scotland Sustainability Awareness Campaign** on the 8 June at the Green City Fun Day. The theme for this summer is Health and the Environment and it will be promoted across the whole of the North of Scotland.

1.4.3 The Environment and Infrastructure Committee approved the first **State of the Environment Report for Aberdeen**, on the 21 May. This has been achieved as part of the Community Plan process including officers from various services and from Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Environment Protection Agency and Aberdeen Friends of the Earth. The Scottish Executive has also recently produced its first Sustainability Indicators and the Council's State of Environment Report mirrors many of their indicators.

1.4.4 In February 2001 the Council approved a **Sustainable Purchasing Policy**. In November 2001 an implementation plan for the policy was approved. A cross service Sustainable Purchasing Policy Group has been established and work is now underway on the agreed three specific projects printer toner cartridges, paper and timber. A trial of refillable printer toner cartridges is underway and is proving successful. In terms of Paper the Group have visited the Don Paper Mills and are considering the most appropriate and acceptable source of paper for photocopying and printing within the Council. A strategy and guide on Sustainable Purchasing will be submitted to Policy and Strategy Committee after the summer recess.

- 1.4.5 The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) outlined to the Council the importance of Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) approved **timber for both social and environmental reasons**. The Council was asked to nominate one project it is carrying out this year, in which they can use FSC approved timber. Technical Services have identified a project involving replacement doors in Council housing, in which they can use FSC approved timber. This project will now be carried out this year and extended to other wood items used by the Council.
- 1.4.6 The Aberdeen City Environmental Forum is working to provide environmental input to the non-environmental challenges from the Community Plan thus ensuring **greater cross cutting** across the sectors. The aim is these challenges on environmental matters that they may not have considered before –. The first meeting, on the 22 May, considered the Housing Strategy and the Forum have asked if they can attend Housing Strategy Forum meetings in the future. The Forum are examining ways in which the City can celebrate or join in with the World Summit on Sustainable Development.
- 1.4.7 The **World Summit on Sustainable Development**, taking place in Johannesburg between 26 August and 4 September 2002 will bring together tens of thousands of participants. It will focus the world's attention and direct action toward meeting difficult challenges, including improving people's lives and conserving our natural resources in a world that is growing in population, with ever-increasing demands for food, water, shelter, sanitation, energy, health services and economic security. The Scottish Executive have decided to support a civil delegation from Scotland. In **recognition of Aberdeen City Council's work on sustainable development both in Aberdeen and across Scotland**, the Scottish Executive has offered a place to Aberdeen's Environmental Strategy Co-ordinator, Belinda Miller from the Office of the Chief Executive. Work will be carried out by the Co-ordinator in the next few months to ensure that the views of all Scottish local authorities are taken to the Summit when it takes place.
- 1.4.8 Aberdeen City Council, with Aberdeen Forward, Aberdeen Friends of the Earth and the Aberdeen City Environmental Forum are currently developing a **Sustainable Communities project**. This would involve recruiting 100 households in Dyce and Torry (50 in each community) and then to mentor them to **tackle waste energy and transport issues**. The project would run for 2 years. The co-ordinator for the Fresh Futures Lottery Fund (Communities Fund) has indicated that they will help the group prepare a funding bid for the project.
- 1.4.9 The Council considered a **Climate Change Action Plan** in June 2002. It contains many actions that can be achieved by the Council to reduce its own emissions and to help educate the community and industry to do the same. It

also outlines some of the measures we would have to take if the recent predictions on weather changes occur in the next century.

- 1.4.10 Aberdeen City Council has a commitment to ensure that **Sustainable Development and Social Inclusion are made central to policy formulation** and our activities. The Council was one of the first in Scotland to introduce an appraisal system. For almost past 18 months, the Environment and Infrastructure, and Community Services Committees have included a Sustainability and Social Inclusion Appraisals statement and assessment. Over this summer the scheme will be refined and changed to allow better scrutiny for sustainable development and social inclusion in Committee reports and in other services decisions.

## 2. Planning

### 2.1 Community Planning

- 2.1.1 The **City's first Community Plan was launched** in November 2001 with partners signing up to joint actions to meet the targets. Each Challenge will be taken forward by an existing or newly formed forum and the Council have agreed appropriate links to its committee structure and identified a lead Director for each Challenge area.
- 2.1.2 Our Community Planning partnership organised two very successful afternoon seminars at the end of April, focussing on the fourteen challenges on the 29<sup>th</sup> and the continuous improvement agenda on the 30<sup>th</sup>. Andy Kerr, **The Minister for Finance and Public Services visited the seminar** on the 30<sup>th</sup> and took part in some of the small group discussions on finance and performance management. The seminars proved to be very informative and has led to joint work being developed across the public sector around finance/property, human resources, Best Value and ICT.
- 2.1.3 In May 2002 the first joint meeting took place between Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Community Planning partnerships. Sponsored by Shell, the meeting helped to identify **issues of common ground** and it was agreed to have further joint meetings.
- 2.1.4 The work of the Communities Working Group on Community Planning and subsequent Civic Forum Steering Group has resulted in the **successful launch of the Civic Forum** which aims to bring together all the communities in the city and sends representatives to The Aberdeen City Alliance.

- 2.1.5 The **Aberdeen City Alliance** was launched on **June 18<sup>th</sup>** with a press launch/lunch. After lunch, the first meeting of The Aberdeen City Alliance took place, a historic event for the City.
- 2.1.6 We are currently finalising the detail for the **Challenge Forums** and will be confirming lead roles after agreement with The Aberdeen City Alliance.
- 2.1.7 Draft legislation (**The Local Government Bill**) is currently making its way through the Scottish Parliament, with a view to the Bill becoming law in the spring of 2003. A significant section of the Bill relates to Community Planning, with **a duty of Community Planning being placed on Local Authorities**, the NHS, Scottish Enterprise and Communities Scotland. Local Authorities in addition will be given the role of facilitation.
- 2.1.8 A section of the Bill relates to the financial arrangements, supporting the development of community planning mechanisms to deliver action on the ground across partner organisations.
- 2.1.9 As part of the Community Planning Taskforce involved in the drafting of the legislation, the Chief Executive is Chair of the Group that has drafted the accompanying Guidance which is currently being prepared as part of the legislation.

## 2.2 Corporate Planning

- 2.2.1 The work on the **Corporate Plan** this year has been focused on ensuring, the completeness of the Corporate Plan as a **support to the new structure for the delivery of Services** and starting to **identify targets** for the Corporate Plan to enable evaluation of its achievements.
- 2.2.2 The **next full review** of the Corporate Strategy will be **during June 2003**, to reflect the outcome of the election.
- 2.2.3 In the interim period attention is focused on the use of the Corporate Strategy and its links to other relevant documents, e.g. Community Plan, Service Plans, to ensure consistency of direction and action and the development of specific aspects of the overall plan, e.g. setting of clear targets.

## 2.3 Service Planning

- 2.3.1 In the past year work in relation to Service Plans has been to identify the changes that the new structure will require in the existing format and content of Service Plans.

- 2.3.2 For the financial year 2001/02 moves were made to break the existing mould of Departmental Service Plans and to move to Service Plans which more closely reflected both the committee structure and to start the process **of integrating service delivery to reflect the new structure for service delivery**, e.g. Community Services Service Plan.
- 2.3.3 Building from this work consideration has been given as to how that change is further developed to fully support and direct the creation and operation of Service Plan in the new structure.
- 2.3.4 This work is now completing and **will be rolled out to all Services over the summer period**, in preparation for the service planning activity which will result in the presentation of revised Service Plans to the relevant committees in the first cycle of the calendar year.
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## **Delivery of Services to Achieve Inclusion and Sustainability**

### **3. Shelter**

#### **3.1 Housing Improvements**

- 3.1.1 The Council is committed to sustaining the availability of affordable quality homes for rent within the City and has demonstrated this aim through the delivery of another innovative **Housing Capital Improvements programme**. During 2001/2002 the Council undertook approximately £20.4 million worth of improvements and upgrades to tenants' homes. In particular, the Council was able to improve the comfort and security of tenants' homes through the introduction of the following new and innovative programmes:
- The continued improvement of the energy efficiency level of tenants' homes, resulting in a total reduction over 4 years of 41% (target = 30% reduction over 10 years) which has already exceeded the target;
  - The preparation of a refurbished house in Balnagask as a model for future area refurbishment;
  - The continuation of a programme of upgrading for digital television to tenants currently with communal television systems - in the near future this will enable tenants to access on-line Council services;
  - The completion of the 1<sup>st</sup> phase and commencement of further phases of area refurbishment of flatted properties in Alexander/Formartine Road as part of a wider area regeneration partnership;

- The continuation of the construction of the next generation of Sheltered Housing at Kingswood; and
- Completion of the comprehensive refurbishment of the second last block in the Buchan's development, Balnagask.

### 3.2 Housing Options Feasibility Study

3.2.1 To fulfil our commitment to affordable quality homes for rent within the City, we have been undertaking an inclusive **review of current and future housing needs and requirements**.

3.2.2 The NHP initiative has two main objectives:-

- To **attract additional funding** for council house improvements and repairs whilst maintaining low rents; and
- To **give tenants a greater say** in the management of their homes and how they are provided by encouraging community involvement and community ownership.

3.2.3 This long-term study has been very thorough, demonstrating the complexity of this issue, the Council's commitment to involve and consult all the key stakeholders in the process, and not to be rushed into a decision which will have significant consequences for the Council and future generations. The main consultants, Deloitte & Touche presented a draft version of the Final Report, to the Council at the end of June 2000 for internal consideration. This report stated that there is not the same financial pressure on the Council to transfer any of its housing stock, as there may be on other authorities. However, since then the Council has commissioned more in depth surveys of the stock condition which reveal that in the near future the **requirement for investment in the council housing stock** will exceed the resources available from affordable rents. The alternative to stock transfer would then be to increase rents by more than inflation plus 1% year on year for the next 30 years and make year on year savings of £500,000 for the next ten years. The outcome of a comprehensive **communications and consultation exercise** on the final report was due to be presented to the Council for a decision on 26 June 2002.

### 3.3 Housing Repairs

3.3.1 One of the outcomes of the Housing Options Feasibility Study was the estimated **costs for maintaining the council housing stock** over the next 30 years and the implications this has for a rent setting policy. In their report on the audit of the City Council's accounts for 1996/97, the Accounts Commission warned that:



*“Any failure to invest adequately in routine maintenance will lead to the value of the property being diminished and result in the need for further expenditure in the long term, while the quality of life for tenants will be affected.”*

Over the past years the City Council has been battling against cutbacks on borrowing consent to improve the condition of its Council houses by increasing the amount of rent transferred to capital expenditure. Despite the additional investment for replacing fixtures and fittings, and for maintaining the fabric of the buildings, and despite the continuing high level of council house sales, the **revenue expenditure on day to day repairs has significantly increased** over the same period, whereas revenue funded planned maintenance has remained static. These trends have a direct affect on rents and the quality of service to tenants. The Council is therefore undertaking a **review of the Housing repairs service** with a view to improving service delivery and tenant satisfaction and to frame strategies for planned maintenance, improvement and repairs within the context of a single investment strategy for the financial year 2002/03 and future years.

- 3.3.2 To ensure the final outcomes of the review are customer focused, **a focus group of tenants has been established** to measure the gap between customer perceptions and staff expectations in order to determine which priorities for improvement will be the most effective.

### 3.4 North East Housing Partnership Alliance (NEHPA)

- 3.4.1 Work is ongoing on the development of a new partnership agreement for NEHPA. The new partnership agreement aims to further cement the development of NEHPA by creating a board involving elected members and non-executive members from other organisations. Over the last year the Moray Council has also become part of NEHPA.

### 3.5 Tenant Participation

- 3.5.1 We have taken steps to further **develop tenant participation** in aspects of housing management. We have reviewed the staffing requirements, with 3 Tenant Participation Officers now in post (an additional 2). The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 includes a number of significant duties to produce a strategy for tenant participation, a registration process for tenant organisations and consultation with all tenants on the housing service where there is a significant change to service proposed including any rent increases.

### 3.6 Empty Houses (Voids)

- 3.6.1 The Council continues to take steps to address the issue of empty Council properties and its performance in terms of the reletting of these properties. A Working Group of officers is undertaking a **service review** and an action plan has been produced and agreed by the Community Services Committee. Issues are to be addressed under four main headings:-

- Void Management arrangements and responsibilities;
- Allocation policy and procedures;
- Marketing of Low Demand property; and
- Alternative provision.

Items from the Project Plan have been prioritised and will be progressed corporately by relevant Departments within the Council and through appropriate partner organisations and agencies.

- 3.6.2 In particular, a strategic review of long term empty homes has revealed that there are **pockets of stock which due to market and demographic trends, are now surplus to requirements and which are in need of renewal and regeneration**. The Council has approved a new category of void property, which, after consultation with the community, will enable the Council to remove these properties from the HRA and develop partnership initiatives to enable Community Regeneration.

### 3.7 Allocations

- 3.7.1 The Council's Scheme of **Allocation Policy is being reviewed** by a Working Group of Councillors. The Review is important in the context of the implementation of the Aberdeen Combined Housing List through the Council's involvement in the Homechoice partnership and changes introduced from the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. The impact of Allocation policies on the problems of low demand and the changing characteristics of the Council's waiting list needs to be considered whilst the role of housing provision in tackling the broader Social Inclusion agenda also requires to be addressed through the review.

### 3.8 Anti-Social Behaviour

- 3.8.1 Significant steps have been taken to **tackle the problem of anti-social behaviour** in the City. To date the Council has been successful in obtaining 23 Anti-Social Behaviour Orders. Protocols have been developed with the Police, Procurator Fiscal and Sheriff Clerks Office to co-ordinate the response to complaints and ensure **more speedy progress of cases** through the legal

system in relation to obtaining orders or prosecuting breaches of Orders. Effective operational liaison continues to be developed with, for example, trainee Police Officers working alongside Council staff when responding to calls regarding alleged anti-social behaviour via the Council's Tenants Helpline service.

### 3.9 Houses in Multiple Occupation

- 3.9.1 Since the new regime for the **licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation** was introduced in October 2000 only 6 applications have been received and in all cases the licences have been issued. The criterion at present stands at 5 persons or more, not being members of the same family, sharing accommodation (the standard from the previous scheme), and work is currently being carried out on a programme of re-licensing renewal applications carried over from the previous scheme. The Council is also actively dealing with licensing properties owned by the Local Authority. It is suspected that when the standard is reduced to 4 persons sharing accommodation (from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2002) the number of applications will increase considerably.

### 3.10 Council House Sales

- 3.10.1 We have processed the sale of some **603 Council houses** this year. However we need to review and improve the performance in completing sale process.

### 3.11 Kingswood Sheltered Housing

- 3.11.1 **Kingswood Sheltered Housing** incorporates major facilities for the provision of flats for the elderly. It also has Very Sheltered status, due to the Social Work care input to the warden system. The development, now at an advanced stage, has been designed to give the occupants the provision of '**Housing for Life**', in that the apartments are sized and readily adaptable for varying needs. This permits residents a level of care within their own homes, which to date, has only been available within permanent care facilities. The **development is due for completion towards the end of 2002.**

### 3.12 Private Sector Grants

- 3.12.1 **Investment in private housing is essential** for the repair and maintenance of this sector of the housing stock. The Council's grant scheme is **an important element** of this investment, as it **acts as an incentive**, especially within **tenement properties** where there would be **little or no progress were it not for the Council's commitment** to the use of its statutory powers to secure the improvement and repair of these properties. Around **£1.764 million was awarded in 2001/02 by the Council's private sector grant unit.** This

expenditure on grants is made up of **mandatory** work, such as repair notices and improvement orders and **discretionary work, including** adaptations for disabled, lead pipe renewal, care & repair. Additional expenditure was made in other areas such as Home Energy, Affordable Warmth, Compulsory Purchase Orders.

3.12.2 The relatively new **Affordable Warmth Scheme** which is funded by the Council & Scottish Homes (Communities Scotland) is a resounding success and Aberdeen Care & Repair who administer the scheme advise that they are struggling to cope with demand as resources are limited. It is anticipated that the project will eventually become **self-financing** whenever income from loan repayments is sufficient to meet demand from new applicants **for loans to install central heating**.

3.12.3 **The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001**, among other things, **proposes radical changes to the grant system**. The main issue is the likely introduction of a centrally prescribed income test together with the potential for 100% grants in appropriate cases. The new system also proposes to widen the scope of works eligible for grant e.g. replacement of unsafe electrical wiring, installation of smoke detectors, provision of central heating and works to improve the energy efficiency of a house. The Scottish Executive has issued a **consultation document** and a draft response has been prepared.

### 3.13 Housing (Scotland) Act 2001

3.13.1 The new **Housing (Scotland) Act 2001** has a major impact on the way we **work** as it brings with it changes in the legislative framework in the following areas:

- Tenancies  
The Act introduced the new Scottish Secure Tenancy which covers all social landlords from 30 September 2002. This introduces a number of significant changes of Council tenants. A new tenancy agreement is being consulted on and the Council is being requested by the Scottish Executive to sign all existing tenants to the new agreement by March 2004;
- Homelessness, housing lists and allocations;
- Tenant participation;
- Regulation framework for local authorities  
The Act gives Scottish Ministers the power to inspect and regulate the housing management and homelessness functions of local authorities.

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These powers are administered through Communities Scotland and can ultimately lead to the Scottish Executive appointing a special manager to run the local authority housing service;

- Strategic role of local authorities in relation to housing  
The act requires local authorities to make a comprehensive assessment of housing needs and conditions, and to produce strategies to tackle the housing problems in their areas. The City Council has been working with the Scottish Executive, Communities Scotland and other local authorities as a pilot authority for the preparation of a local housing strategy (LHS). A draft LHS has been produced and submitted in April 2002. The Council continues to work on the strategy and has commenced a consultative stage with a view to the finalised strategy being submitted by March 2003. The Aberdeen Housing Strategy Forum has been established to oversee the development of the LHS and the pursuit of the action plan contained in it. The Aberdeen Housing Strategy Forum and LHS will be the main means of the Council implementing the HOMES challenges identified in the Community Plan.

### 3.14 Supporting People

- 3.14.1 The Supporting People programme which becomes effective on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2003 will provide **housing support services to vulnerable people**, to enable that person to maintain their accommodation, either in public or private sector accommodation – including Owner Occupiers. Supporting People will **bring together a number of existing sources of funding** into one “pot” which will be transferred to the local authority to administer, this will be set against local priorities. All local authorities are required to produce a Supporting People Strategic Plan and the group which will assist in the development of this is about to be constituted. The draft of this plan should be produced by October 2002. A needs assessment is currently being undertaken and this will inform the Supporting People Strategic Plan as well as information held on current services and levels of occupancy in these existing services. Work is underway in developing an interim contract which will be issued to all providers of a housing support services who currently receive funding to be transferred into the Supporting People “pot”.

## 4. **Safety and Security**

### 4.1 Trading Standards

- 4.1.1 Aberdeen City Council has been awarded the **Quality Mark Scotland** certifying that Aberdeen City, Trading Standards Service meets the requirements of the Consumer Support Networks Quality Mark Scotland General Help Standard

with Casework. The **Consumer Support Network** within Aberdeen was launched and the Certificate presented by the Lord Provost on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2002 in the Town House.

4.1.2 Training on the **Regulation of Investigatory Procedures** (Scotland) Act has been carried out on a corporate basis by two Trading Standards Officers in conjunction with Legal Services. The training was provided to officers who authorise or are involved in covert surveillance. It is essential that correct procedures are followed in authorising surveillance activities and the **Council is subject to audit by appointed commissioners.**

4.1.3 The Department of Trade and Industry has produced a **National Performance Framework for Trading Standards** aimed at ensuring that Trading Standards Services throughout the UK are able to develop a modern service working towards national and local priorities in a coherent way. Work has started in development of a Service Delivery Plan, Delivery Standards and Information Return for Aberdeen City Trading Standards Service as required by the Framework document.

#### 4.2 Community Safety Partnership

4.2.1 The Partnership has been successful in accessing over £500,000 of funding to reduce crime from the Scottish Executive over the next 3 years. A detailed Community Safety Audit has recently been completed and is being used as the basis for establishing a comprehensive Action Plan to jointly tackle community safety priorities.

4.2.2 Agencies in the city have been invited to apply for funding for crime reduction activities with initial decisions being taken on June 28<sup>th</sup>. The Action Plan section on Crime Reduction highlights the following priorities:

- reducing housebreaking (includes commercial premises)
- reducing auto crime,
- reducing drug related crime and its impact on community safety (this includes alcohol related crime),
- reducing malicious damage (e.g. vandalism)
- anti-social behaviour,
- racist incidents,
- domestic abuse,
- fear of crime and community involvement,
- partnership support.

- 4.2.3 Other areas to be covered in the Action Plan include Fire Safety – including wilful fire-raising and hoax/inappropriate emergency calls, Reducing Avoidable Accidents, and Diversion from drugs and alcohol misuse.

#### 4.3 Vandalism

- 4.3.1 Work on vandalism is ongoing to **reduce the incidences and costs of vandalism** in the City, including work with partner organisations, including:-

- **Summer Holiday Youth Diversion Projects**

Following the success of last summer's streetplay project in Tillydrone and other diversion initiatives in Northfield and Mastrick, a further **£20,000 is being made available**. Three projects have been supported in the Tillydrone and Middlefield areas.

- ❑ Middlefield Community Project for streetplay over the 7 weeks summer holidays for 5-14 year olds in both upper and lower Middlefield Area.
- ❑ Fersands & Fountain Community Project: Evening play sessions in Fersands for 5/12 year olds for 2 evenings per week
- ❑ Tillydrone community Group Streetplay project for 5-16 year olds not taking part in other youth activity.

Similar projects will be supported in other potential hotspots in the City, including **Northfield** and **Mastrick**.

- 4.3.2 The Council is supporting the **Grampian Police anti-vandalism strategy** to be launched as a pilot in the Queen Street Command Area. This will introduce a **Vandalism Hotline** where callers can leave information on individuals responsible for vandalism for follow up by their Community Beat Officer, and will allow people to leave information anonymously if preferred. This hotline will be promoted through the local media and by high-profile posters displayed on buses in the city and in public places. The posters promote the message – “Its your community, Its Your Shops, its Your Responsibility ... if you know them, shop them”, and was launched in June with the involvement of Councillor Ironside. Support for this initiative ties in with the City's **Civic Pride** campaign.

#### 4.4 East Tullos Partnership

- 4.4.1 The Grampian Police Local Authority Liaison Officer, based in Community Development Section is co-ordinating a conference in June to bring together businesses in East Tullos to **improve the safety and security of the area** and work on environmental improvements. Local Councillors are involved.

#### 4.5 Home Safety

4.5.1 Work continues through the Aberdeen Home Safety Committee which relates directly to the Council's target to **reduce home accidents**. Membership of the Committee is City wide, and is open to organisations, agencies, businesses and individuals that have an interest in promoting home accident prevention. Examples of projects undertaken are given below:

- Aberdeen Home Safety Trophy Competition  
An award made for the positive contributions made by organisations by the **promotion of home accident prevention** within their workforces. The winner of this trophy becomes the Aberdeen Home Safety Committee's nominee in Category 3 of the Scottish Accident Prevention Council Annual Awards.
- Scottish Accident Prevention Annual Awards  
As winner of the 2001 Aberdeen Home Safety Trophy **Schlumberger** was nominated by the Aberdeen Home Safety Committee for a Scottish Accident Prevention Award in the Commercial Organisations Category. **Grampian Fire Brigade's Community Fire Safety Education Unit** was nominated for the Education Category, and the **Grampian's Safe Team Steering Group Magazine** for the Professional Category. The Committee is pleased to announce that all three nominees won their respective Categories. A presentation ceremony took place on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2002 in Aberdeen.
- DTI Modernisation Funding bid  
A second attempt to attract funding for a multi-language **home safety video resource facility** has been submitted. The judges did accept the bid for further scrutiny, but unfortunately the bid was unsuccessful. There were almost 400 bids from all over the UK. 32 were successful, only one of which was from Scotland. Further information about the Modernisation Funding can be accessed through the DTI's web site under Home Safety Network.
- Communities of Interest  
It has been noted that since our first bid for Modernisation Funding, which indicated the need for falls prevention information for older people in minority ethnic languages, that the DTI has added to their English and Welsh copies and have included copies in Chinese, Gujarati, Punjabi, and Urdu. Copies are also now available in Braille. Copies of the Chinese edition of '**Avoiding slips, trips, and broken hips**' will be distributed at the next meeting with the Aberdeen Chinese Elders Association. Grampian Racial Equality Council have also been advised about the materials,



- "24/7" Seminar

In conjunction with the Scottish Home Safety Officers Group, the Aberdeen Home Safety Committee is planning to hold a one day Seminar on Wednesday October 9<sup>th</sup> 2002 in the Town House, Aberdeen. **The aim is to interest employers to develop a holistic safety culture and thus reduce absences from work** due to home accidents occurring to employees or their families. Planning and preparation for this event is well under way. A variety of displays will be on show including one from the Department of Trade and Industry's on **Carbon Monoxide Awareness**. Application forms for the seminar are currently being sent out to targeted employers.

4.5.2 A seminar on the subject of **Experiential Learning**, organised by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, took place in the City Chambers, Edinburgh in February 2002. The event was so well subscribed that a second one was held in Glasgow on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May 2002. Karen Fitzgerald again spoke on the subject of "Teachers as Safety Role Models," a subject which is included for teachers accompanying their pupils to Grampian's Safe Team. This event was also well attended. Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents staff from England were in attendance, and it has been suggested that a similar event is run south of the border.

#### 4.6 Safe Routes to Schools

4.6.1 A joint approach is being taken to develop **school travel plans that will support 'Safe Routes to Schools'**. Walking to school increases healthy activity for children and also reduces traffic congestion and pollution. A survey has been undertaken of all schools, the results of which will inform the next stages of this programme. A number of schools will be invited to pilot school travel plans in the coming year. This forms part of both the environmental and the transport strategies.

## 5. **Health**

### 5.1 Aberdeen's Healthy Living Network

5.1.1 The New Opportunities Fund has awarded almost **£1 million to fund a five-year health improvement programme in Aberdeen**. The successful bid led by the City Council involved 22 partners based in the city. The Network Partners have been working together for over two years to develop the programme. They are now taking the first steps to implement Aberdeen's Healthy Living Network 's three priority programmes: cash in your pocket, parenting support and lifeskills development. The successful bid will enable a

community development approach to health improvement to be taken forward in Aberdeen.

5.2 Developing Aberdeen City Council as a Public Health Organisation: Building Public Health Capacity

5.2.1 In 2001-2002 COSLA led the development of a **pilot training programme for local authority officers**. Three local authorities, including Aberdeen City Council, piloted this modular programme. The evaluation of this programme is currently being finalised and the Health Education Board for Scotland is developing a tool kit for local authorities based on these pilot modules and the findings of the evaluation. Over twenty Aberdeen City Council officers from a diverse range of services, all with a policy or service development role, participated in the pilot training programme. Their experience will shape the national training programme COSLA is developing.

5.2.2 The Scottish Executive has identified pump-priming funds to facilitate the **development of local joint health improvement** plans and to build the capacity of local authorities to develop their public health role. The Scottish Executive has agreed to over funding of £45,000 over three years to Aberdeen City Council and NHS Grampian. A proposed programme for building Aberdeen City Council's Public Health Capacity is to be considered by Policy and Strategy Committee in June 2002.

5.3 Health Development Areas

5.3.1 Two significant areas being progressed to take forward the health improvement agenda in Aberdeen City are the development of:-

a) **Aberdeen Futures Joint Health Improvement Plan 2002-3**

b) **Aberdeen Futures Health and Social Care Forum**

5.3.2 Discussions with the relevant Community Planning Partners have taken place. The City Alliance are currently giving consideration to these developments which should lead to better **integrated planning systems and services for health** improvement.

5.4 Drug Strategy

5.4.1 A feature of this year's work has been the introduction of the **additional Drug Strategy funding** provided by the Scottish Executive. As a result we have had the establishment of a community based rehabilitation service (to support drug users following treatment), drug testing and treatment orders (to give offenders

access to treatment as an alternative to custody), and we have **achieved 100% delivery of drug education programmes** in all of the city's primary and secondary schools.

- 5.4.2 The funding is also **supporting pilot projects for children who are vulnerable** due to their own or others drug misuse and youth drug diversion projects. These developments are matched by others within the Drug Action Team (DAT) partnership, in particular the growth of the Integrated Drug Service (to co-ordinate the delivery of support and treatment to drug users).
- 5.4.3 During the course of the year the chair of the DAT passed from the Council (Cllr Yvonne Allan) to NHS Grampian and our Community Development section took on employment of the DAT's Drug Development Officer and Drug Information Officer.
- 5.4.4 The **drug problem continues to be a very serious issue** with the city experiencing high levels of intravenous drug use compared to the Scotland average.
- 5.4.5 Although the funding available from the Executive has been welcome, it is still not in line with the level of need in the City, as the prevalence rates in particular are not accurately reflected in the method of calculating resource allocation throughout Scotland. Consequently the **new services being developed are not keeping pace with demand**. The DAT partnership will be highlighting this in the coming year.

## 5.5 Healthy Eating

- 5.5.1 The Council, in partnership with Grampian Health Care Trust, has produced a **recipe book for all Primary Schools**. The recipes comply with current nutritional guidelines set by the DFEE in England and Wales and which can easily be altered to meet any new guidelines the Scottish Executive may introduce. A review of the catering service was finalised making some major recommendations for the improvement of the catering service in Council facilities.

## 5.6 New Opportunities Fund

- 5.6.1 New Opportunities Fund third round funding initiatives include – reduction in Coronary Heart Disease, Stroke and Cancer; Transforming Communities (Environment and Lifestyle); Community Drugs Rehabilitation; Childcare and a Small Grants Scheme for local community health, education and environmental projects. We will be encouraging all potential bidders to ensure that any

initiatives deliver agreed community plan outcomes. A support pack is being prepared.

## 6. Care

### 6.1 General

- 6.1.1 This has been another significant and challenging year in social services. Major developments in Community Care, Child Care and Criminal Justice have been achieved and the Service received **positive reports** from both the **Social Work Services Inspectorate** following their annual inspection and from the auditors carrying out the **Performance Management and Planning Audit (PMP II)** which ranged across the entire Social Work provision.

### 6.2 Community Care

- 6.2.1 This service has been re-shaping itself in line with the Modernising Community Care agenda and in preparation for Joint Futures in which a **much closer alignment with Health Care** will deliver a more coherent and unified service to older citizens in the first instance. Key to progressing this has been the development of the Grampian Wide Partnership Forum for Health and Social Care. This is the mechanism developed locally to enable arrangements for the joint resourcing and management of the community care services in the North East. This is designed to:-

- strengthen locality working
- remove barriers within an individual's journey of care
- provide a more consistent, integrated service
- create shared assessment and single points of access.

- 6.2.2 The development of the Joint Future approach dovetails well with the aims and objectives of *aberdeen futures* although the amount of work required to take forward both, simultaneously cannot be underestimated.

- 6.2.3 Plans have also had to be made for the **introduction of free personal care** and the impact this will make on our older citizens will be enormously beneficial. It is worth indicating the extremely short time scales allowed for preparation. The Scottish Executive announcement of the intention to implement free personal care came on 24 September 2001 and the provision will come into effect on July 1 2002. To achieve this target date having carried out all the necessary re-assessments of those receiving care and put in place the complex financial arrangements and systems required will be a major achievement.

Added to the substantial changes already referred to relative to both *aberdeen futures* and Joint Futures the measure of this achievement is clear.

- 6.2.4 A further significant target in this year was the conclusion of the **re-structuring of the Sheltered Housing Service**. This is one of the major services provided by the Council to the benefit of our older and more frail citizens. The modernisation and rationalisation of this provision has taken time and to see it finalised in this year was important.

### 6.3 Child Care

- 6.3.1 A whole series of developments in our childcare provision were taken forward this year. Among the **major decisions and achievements** were.

- The redesignation of Kincorth, Gilbert Road and Netherhills as medium/long term units.
- The redesignation of Seaview/Danestone as a short term reception unit linked to our Outreach Service.
- The relocation of Airyhall and its formulation as a 'core and cluster' unit linked to supported accommodation.
- An investment in foster care to secure more foster carers.
- Establishing of specialist foster care and respite foster care schemes for children who are challenging and who have complex care needs.
- Approval in principle to establish a Payment for Skills Scheme for foster carers (budgetary constraints have not allowed progress on this to date).
- Expanded Family Centre services for families with young children.
- Proposals to enhance the educational attainment of looked after children.
- The piloting of joint Social Work/Education initiatives for children in and out of school.
- Development of a joint approach with Education with regard to S.E.B.D. provision (Social, Emotional and Behavioural difficulties).
- Joint work with Health to develop cross-cutting services for children with mental health problems.

- Further work with Barnardo's on residential care for young children and linked family support.
- 6.3.2 As can be seen from the above the integration agenda across Social Work, Education and Health in regard to the care of children has moved to centre stage. As with Community Care, this joint, **multi-agency focus on the needs of the individual** accords with the principles and priorities of *aberdeen futures*.
- 6.3.3 Towards the end of last year there were **451 children being looked** after by the Council of whom 75 were in residential care and 376 in the community. The responsibility of the Council to these children as a Corporate Parent is amongst the most significant and onerous of all the Councils duties. Given that background the continuing difficulties of both recruiting new staff and retaining our experienced staff presents a major challenge to the Authority.
- 6.3.4 **Recruitment difficulties in Social Services** is not limited to Child Care nor to Aberdeen but is a national problem which is now beginning to be recognised and addressed as such; and Aberdeen is involved in that National response. There is however a local dimension and the Authority is responding locally to that as well as participating fully in the national debate. In the last full year for which final figures are available the turnover rate for childcare staff was 23% in Fieldwork Teams and 33% in Residential Child Care. Recruiting new staff to child care is also becoming more difficult with adverts attracting poor or even no responses. In this year a whole series of measures was put in place to positively address both sides of this issue.

#### Recruitment

- Publicity material was improved and developed.
- Attendance at Open Days and Recruitment events was targeted as a priority.
- A two year Post Qualification training package is being investigated.
- Student placements have been prioritised (a good placement experience for a student is an invaluable recruitment aid).
- The possibility of secondment opportunities and bursaries for staff are being explored.

#### Retention

- The option of a staff transfer scheme to permit greater flexibility for staff and career development is being developed.
- A close look at the level of admin tasks associated with some jobs is being undertaken to ensure that staff are deployed to best effect.
- The possibility of enhanced remuneration needs to be examined closely. It is a fact that other authorities are offering financial inducements both to attract and retain child care staff. While they do this and we do not our

ability to compete in this market is compromised. It is not an easy or comfortable area to explore in relation to the care of children but it remains our responsibility to look at all options to ensure the safety, care and welfare of our most vulnerable citizens.

- The support to front line staff group continues to meet and liaise with the Social Work Management directly over issues of concern to the front line staff.

#### 6.4 Criminal Justice

- 6.4.1 A great deal of work in Criminal Justice this year has been directed towards the **development of the new Northern Partnership arrangements** developed out of the Scottish Executive's 'Tough Options'.
- 6.4.2 The Joint Committee for Criminal Justice Services operates across Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Moray and Highland and will be responsible for one Northern Partnership Plan and one Northern Partnership Criminal Justice Budget. This new Plan has been prepared during the year and a cross Council benchmarking exercise was undertaken to identify the staffing arrangements necessary to develop a **common approach across the four areas** and a mechanism to deal with the apportioning of Criminal Justice costs. Although driven from the Scottish Executive who fund directly almost all Criminal Justice Services it is again gratifying to see a joined-up strategic approach being taken which accords well with other current developments.
- 6.4.3 One initiative of particular relevance in this year was the **establishment of the Drug Treatment and Testing Order Project (DTTO)** now operating from premises in the Gallowgate. The model being used is that previously developed in the pilot schemes in Glasgow and Fife whereby Criminal Justice staff, addictions staff and clinical staff seconded from NHS Grampian work together as a multi-agency team. The project offers a **realistic alternative to custody** for those who wish to address their drug abusing and are prepared to co-operate with the team. Given the growing problems in this area in Aberdeen, this project is a particularly welcome development and addressing the problem of drugs in a practical multi-agency way must be seen as a positive attempt to move from concern to action across the services.

### 7. **Learning**

#### 7.1 National Debate on Education

- 7.1.1 Cathy Jamieson, MSP, the Minister for Education and Young People, **launched the National Debate for Education** in March 2002. It will run until 12 July

2002. People in Aberdeen have been actively taking part in the debate already. Schools were sent information packs about the debate, and organised their own events. Secondary school students had a chance to participate on 30 May when the Scottish Parliament was in Aberdeen. Representative groups of S1–S3 students made presentations on the theme of ‘How can we make education better?’. Elected members were invited to this event at Linksfield Academy.

## 7.2 National Priorities in Education

7.2.1 The 5 National Priorities are a key part of the new School Improvement Framework introduced through the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc., Act 2000. There is now a legal requirement for the Education Authority and all schools to produce, on an annual basis, Development Plans and progress reports that take account of the National priorities and local authority improvement objectives for education. The Education Service and Authority have to **set appropriate targets related to the National Priorities** within the context of other comparable schools and benchmarking. These will be a mix of performance measures and quality indicators which will come from a variety of sources – statistical data collection, HMIE inspections and SQA attainment data. The quality indicators come from the new edition of How Good is Our School? (HGIOS) published in January 2002. Schools will self-evaluate across the full set of 33 quality indicators and HMIE will apply them in school inspections from August this year. Particular attention will be paid to performance in relation to each of the National Priorities and how schools are addressing these areas.

7.2.2 The funding for national priorities has been continued for another 2 years until 31 March 2004. The **total allocated is £6,932,671** and includes both Core and Special Programmes (New Community Schools and School of Music).

## 7.3 Developments in Special Needs Sector

7.3.1 Progress on implementing **Pupil Support Centres** in Primary and Secondary Schools is moving forward on target. Currently, a multi-disciplinary group continues to work on the detail of the organisational structure of a Pupil Support Service which will be City-wide and will attempt to cater for pupil needs within and outwith school.

7.3.2 A new **improvement plan for Inclusion** funded by The Scottish Executive is being finalised by the Education Service. Proposed developments include:

- expansion of Special Educational Needs Bases to meet growing demand for places; expansion of our service to children affected by autism;
- support for pre-school children with disabilities;



- teacher and building developments to meet the needs of pupils with disabilities on mainstream sites; and
- building changes in preparation for Disability Discrimination legislation.

7.3.3 A joint bid from the Council and the Voluntary Sector has been made for funding from the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Innovation Grants Programme to **expand our service to pupils and young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties**. Building on the success of the work done by the Student Counsellor at Northfield Academy, the project aims to assist with the early detection of mental health issues, prevent disruptive behaviour by intervening at an early stage and preventing exclusion. Funding from Excellence funds for "Alternatives to Exclusion" is to be made available to Associated School Groups to develop innovative projects to **promote positive behaviour** in Primary Schools.

#### 7.4 Pre-School

7.4.1 Progress on the **universal provision of pre-school education** is on target. At the end of May a very successful one day conference was held in the Town House for all partner providers in the City. Early feedback is very positive. The issue of funding for deferred entry places has been discussed with Ministers.

#### 7.5 Amalgamation of St Machar/Linkfield Academies

7.5.1 The Scottish Executive has formally **approved the merger** plans. A joint school board has been meeting and has surveyed parents on issues like school name, motto and uniform. These meetings have been attended by local members and are going very well. Staffing, timetable and property issues are on target and a number of planning days have been allocated to deal with practical issues. A number of joint parents' evenings; open evenings for the combined school; and integrating/ welcoming activities for pupils have been organised. **Progress on the merger is generally reported as good**. The Director of Neighbourhood Services (Central Area) is finalising a report on the short and longer term use of the Linkfield Campus.

#### 7.6 A Teaching Profession for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

7.6.1 A Teaching Profession for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, otherwise known as the **McCrone agreement is being implemented in Aberdeen City Council**. A project manager has been seconded to lead and co-ordinate all aspects of implementation and working groups have been established to draw up detailed proposals for negotiation with teachers and trade unions via the local negotiating committee for teachers. These Working Group comprise head teachers of all sectors, education services officials and trade union colleagues.

The Authority has managed to identify trainee opportunities for its allocated **new probationer teachers** for session 2002/3. Schools and probationer teachers will be notified at the beginning of June. Existing probationer teachers who still need to complete their required number of days to achieve full registration are concerned that opportunities for teaching assignments will be reduced. The Authority therefore is exploring possible ways of enabling them to complete their days for full registration. There are ongoing concerns about Aberdeen's funding position to fully implement the scheme.

#### 7.7 Early Intervention

- 7.7.1 We have continued to **support staff development in the early stages of pupils learning**, offering a range of highly effective literacy and numeracy courses as well as the promotion of partnership with parents. Performance Indicators in Primary Schools (PIPS) data is used to target Early Intervention support in the early stages of primary school. PIPS testing has been introduced to pupils in P5, facilitating **increased tracking of pupil progress**. The Early Intervention Website has been developed, where staff development materials, recommended websites, publications and other relevant early intervention information can be located and downloaded.

#### 7.8 Classroom Assistants

- 7.8.1 There are now have 136.95 Full Time Equivalent classroom assistants working in Aberdeen City schools. 159 people are now employed, working from 12.5 to 25 hours per week. All primary schools have at least one Full Time Equivalent classroom assistant funded by Excellence Fund and we have **exceeded the national target of an adult/pupil ratio** of 1:15 with the current ratio at 1:13.69.

#### 7.9 Quality Management in Education

- 7.9.1 The Education Authority's (EA's) self-evaluation report has been completed. The EA's **Standard and Quality report has been published** and distributed to schools and interested parties. External evaluation by an Associate Assessor from another EA has been completed. The feedback received was very good on performance monitoring and continuous improvement, good on strategic management of the service and operational management and fair on consultation, communication and resource and financial management. Findings have been shared with Heads of Establishment and Central Education staff. A mini investigation by Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education has also taken place and we are awaiting feedback.

## 7.10 Curriculum Development

- 7.10.1 The first draft of **Guidelines for Curriculum Development** has been completed and was distributed for consultation early in June 2002. These guidelines will be issued to senior managers in all secondary schools and provide advice and guidance to assist them in planning the implementation of improvements in the curriculum for S1 to S6 and possible structures for its delivery.
- 7.10.2 **Links with Further and Higher Education** are also developing. Secondary Schools are increasing the breadth of their course choice in S5 and S6 by collaborating with Aberdeen College. The College will be co-operating with the Authority in running twilight classes in three subjects at Advanced Higher level in session 2002-2003.
- 7.10.3 The Authority has joined the **Scholar Forum** developed by Heriot Watt University. This provides all secondary schools with access to on-line support for the delivery of an increasing number of subjects at Higher and Advanced Higher levels.
- 7.10.4 Negotiations are continuing with Key Opportunities at **Aberdeen University to establish a Unit to work with Aberdeen schools** in enhancing curricular provision in S5 and S6.

## 7.11 Curriculum Support Team Reports

### 5-14 Curriculum Support

- 7.11.1 The 5-14 Strategic Plan provides a framework for the Council and its schools to continue the implementation of the 5-14 curriculum working within the Council's aims and operating principles. To support this the Education Service has, as part of this plan, deployed a **5-14 Curriculum Support Team (C.S.Team)**. The benefits of this new structure will bring support, advice and experience directly into the classroom and in turn allow the transfer of good practice throughout Aberdeen City schools. The C.S.Team will be able to achieve this through the experiences gained by visits to schools, other Authorities, and the continuous evaluation of newly acquired resource materials. The new standardised 5-14 reporting format is now in use and is being completed across all our Primary schools. Accompanying the reporting format is a practical guide for parents to facilitate the understanding of the new format.

Mathematics 5-14

- 7.11.2 The major areas of focus in mathematics this session have reflected the issues arising from the publication of Standards and Quality in Primary Schools: Mathematics 1998 – 2001(HMIE) and the Assessment of Achievement Programme: Sixth Survey of Mathematics, 2000 (SEED). In-service **training and in class support teaching** have been provided in the areas of problem solving, mental agility and decimals, fractions and percentages. Interactive direct teaching methods are being encouraged and developed, allowing all **pupils to be actively involved in their learning** and to discuss and share their understanding.

Language 5-14

- 7.11.3 The main area of focus within English Language 5-14 this session has been writing. Several well attended Staff Development courses were organised and these have assisted throughout the City in the development of 5-14 programmes incorporating continuity and **progression in the areas of personal, imaginative and functional writing**. Within Modern Languages, recent times have seen the publication of the report "Citizens of a Multilingual World" and the revised "Modern Language 5-14 Guidelines."

Environmental Studies 5-14

- 7.11.4 Due to the Revised Environmental Studies (ES) 5-14 Guidelines, various **schools are being supported with the development of their Environmental Studies programme**. An Environmental Studies working party is putting together a support package, which will cover P1-S2. This will help with continuity and progression from the primary to the secondary sector. Staff development programmes for session 2002-03 have been organised and will be co-ordinated by the CST.

Expressive Arts 5-14

- 7.11.5 A CD-ROM that will support the critical and evaluation strands of 5-14 in the Expressive Arts is being produced and should be available to schools in the latter part of the year. Bridge of Don Academy and Scotstown Primary are conducting a pilot project on the **transfer from primary to secondary in Art and Design**. This will then be implemented across the Associated School Group (ASG). Physical Education has a number of initiatives currently underway. The **TOP programme** assists Scotland's primary schools and community organisations to support children in increasing their physical activity and skill levels and to encourage their involvement in Sports. This will be phased into our schools over a three-year period and should be in all our

schools by 2004. A Physical Activity Task force has been established and the recommendations from this group should be published in June 2002. An **Active Primary School Co-ordinator** has been appointed and is working with the Kincorth ASG.

#### Curriculum Resources and Information Service (CRIS)

- 7.11.6 The Curriculum Resources and Information Service (CRIS) organised a 6<sup>th</sup> year studies one day **Creative Writing Conference** in September 2001, with a follow up half day in October. 70 pupils and teachers took part, and five renowned authors offered sessions on writing plays, poetry and prose. After the success of the event, another Conference is planned for September 2002. CRIS funded **20 author sessions for pupils** in primary, special and secondary schools across the City in the last year. 40 science kits were refurbished and made available to all schools. The Nursery Collections have been expanded to 115 boxes, with the addition of three new titles this year. Private nursery partners may also borrow these attractive multi-media resources. CRIS's rolling programme of updating resource kits is continuing with the primary 4-5 sector, taking account of the revised 5-14 guidelines. The programme of INSET for secondary school Library Resource Centre Co-ordinators has focused this year on New Opportunities Fund (NoF) ICT training, **helping special needs pupils with reading and information skills** for all ability levels. NoF training for all secondary school library staff was completed during June.

#### Higher Still

- 7.11.7 The implementation of **Higher Still has continued successfully**. Courses are being offered at all levels across the City. A large amount of in-service training is and has been provided, meaning that the opportunity exists for staff to continue to ensure that they are prepared for the new National Qualifications. PT Networks are continuing to produce pupil materials for the new course, and these are shared with other authorities via the Inter-Authority Collaborative Network.

#### Core Skills

- 7.11.8 Core Skills, comprising of Literacy, Numeracy, Problem Solving, Working with Others and Information and Communication Technology, will provide a focus of work for the **National Qualifications Development** Officer over the coming session, with an audit of school provision taking place, and a Core Skills manual being developed.

## 7.12 Community Education

- 7.12.1 The Adult Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan received a positive evaluation from the Scottish Executive and is in the process of being implemented. **Four new Community Learning posts** have been established to undertake work. A summary version of the plan and a promotional leaflet explaining the initiative is to be distributed to partner agencies. The Scottish Executive has announced funding details for Pathfinders projects which include **funding an STUC Adult Literacy Co-ordinator**. Aberdeen's Action plan includes significant links to workplace and trade union education.
- 7.12.2 The **Community Education review is nearing completion** following the restructuring of professional staff and renaming the service - Community Learning and Development. Part time Adult Education Coordinators and part time youth worker budgets will be redistributed according to the Needs Index, clerical resources will be subject to a review exercise.
- 7.12.3 At a national level the production, by HMIE, of the Quality Framework document "**How Good Is Our Community Learning and Development**" represents a significant milestone in linking Quality Assurance, self evaluation and the inspection process. Of further significance nationally is a major **review of Training for Community Learning and Development**. The review is currently subject to consultation and will affect pre-entry training in addition to requirements for Continuing Professional Development in the field. A planning group is currently working on arrangements for a **Community Learning Conference in Aberdeen**, scheduled for Autumn 2002. It is hoped that Margaret Curran MSP (Minister for Social Justice) will be in a position to attend and make a significant announcement on the outcome of the training review consultation. The conference will bring together national developments with examples of local development. The **Community Learning Plans for the Torry and the East Aberdeen Areas** are progressing and effective links to the relevant Community action plans are being made as part of a wider process of bringing planning frameworks together.

## 7.13 Outdoor Education Service

- 7.13.1 The Outdoor Education Service continues to provide and develop work with **alternative curricular activities** including:-
- Rock climbing and abseiling and rockwall;
  - Mountain hill and coastal walking;
  - Orienteering and wayfaring;
  - Team-tasks and problem solving activities;
  - Trail cycling and mountain biking ;

- Gorge walking and scrambling;
- Kayaking and canoeing;
- White water rafting;
- Improvised rafting;
- Sailing;
- Windsurfing;
- Alpine and Nordic skiing;
- Snowboarding;
- Sledging;
- Camping and Expeditions.

Most of the special schools and Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties centres make use of the service. The Council is striving to provide an enhanced service in this area of work in the future with the New Opportunities Fund providing significant resources and revenue.

#### 7.14 Library Based Learning

7.14.1 A **review of the Library & Information Service** was completed last year with an excellent response of over 400 individual comments. The main outcomes of the review were:-

- the recognition of the important role of libraries at a community level;
- the re-affirmation of the Council's commitment to the provision of a high quality public library service in Aberdeen;
- the approval of a framework for the future delivery of public library services in the City; and
- the advocacy of the Library Plan as a tool for the Library Service as it seeks strategic partners and potential partnership funding.

7.14.2 The Public Library Network roll-out began with a **Learning Centre opened in December 2001 in the Central Childrens Library**, work is in hand to upgrade the network connections and in preparation for the installation of PCs in other libraries and Central Departments. As part of this, staff have been involved in training to use PCs and support users, and the first step has included staff undertaking training towards the European Computer Driving Licence. To date 21 staff have completed and passed the syllabus, and are to be congratulated for their commitment.

7.14.3 **Internet services in the Central Library have been improved** with the launch of an express service. A membership scheme was introduced in January 2002, including the option to book to use an Internet-enabled PC.

7.14.4 A number of **Learning Centre developments have taken place in partnership with Aberdeen College:-**

- On 23 October 2001 **Cults Library & Open Learning Centre was officially re-opened** by Councillor Jurgen Thomanek and Rae Angus, Principal of Aberdeen College. During the day almost 400 visitors and invited guests took part in a number of events including computer taster sessions, competitions and children's storytimes provided by Library and College staff. During the proceedings Education Minister Nicol Stephen announced approval, in principle, for £50,000 worth of funding towards upgrading the Learning Centre.
- Since opening in May, library use has steadily increased and the **Learning Centre is now the busiest Library-based Learning Centre in the North East**. As well as free Internet access, users can also undertake Aberdeen College courses such as the European Computer Driving Licence either during library opening hours or at tutor-led classes when the Library is closed. The College has identified that the quality of support from and welcoming approach of the staff have been major factors in this. **22 different classes have been run** since June last year.
- **At Tillydrone there are now 100 registered Internet users** with Aberdeen College running two computer classes, with two more to start after Easter. Community Education, the College and the Library & Information Service are working together here, as in Cults and the Central Library to ensure that access is promoted and supported appropriately. **The PCs are also heavily used by youngsters** after school both for homework and such sites as Cartoon Network. Children's issues have increased since the PCs were installed.
- In the Central Library, the **College Learning Centre has been in operation since January** and is fully used for tutor-led classes, and also for public Internet use.
- At Tillydrone a **Lending Laptops Project** in partnership with Scottish Enterprise Grampian and the Great Northern Partnership Pathways was launched in early 2002 for an initial year's pilot. The aim is to develop a learning structure to engage in low skilled/low waged people back into education and learning, identified as being unable to access learning by other means. Around 10-12 families or individuals will be able to borrow laptops and take part in computer-based training and on-line learning. Timescales and targets will be set with monitoring, review and support provided by Pathways.



7.14.5 A week-long series of author visits, children's activities and talks from various bodies including Aberdeen Ranger Service and Aberdeen Archaeology Service was held from 5-9 November as part of **Tillydrone Library's 10<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebrations**.

7.14.6 **Literature development work with adults** included:

- Work with **book groups**, including authors Agnes Short and Sheena Blackhall at the Kincorth Group, which meets in the Community Education Centre. Our Central Lending Librarian supports this group and the groups at the Henry Rae Centre and Smithfield Community School.
- The Central Library was a venue for the **Word Festival** with authors Matthew Fitt, Colin Quinn and Kenneth Steven reading from their work on 17 May 2001.
- Authors Andrew Greig and Brian McCabe read from their latest **poetry and short story collections** on Tuesday, 20 November at the Central Library.
- On Tuesday 11 December 2001 there was a **Poetry Workshop with John Glenday** when he visited the Poetry Group that meets weekly in the Central Library.
- A **series of "How to" sessions were organised** by Library & Information Services and the Events Section of the Arts & Recreation Department on 6, 13, 20 and 27 March: How to write a thriller; a historical fiction; a short story; a poem. Writers Bill Kirton, Agnes Short and Kenneth Steven revealed the secrets of their craft to a group of interested over 50s specially invited for the series. Attendances for each session have been between 18 and 23 and the enthusiasm and appreciation self-evident. Future events are being considered.
- **World Book Day was celebrated on 14 March 2002**, by an evening reading in the Central Library, with writers Isla Dewar and Susie Maguire.

7.14.7 Work focussed on **younger readers** included:

- A **Community Schools Library project in May and June**, with class visits to local libraries from Tullos, Smithfield, Donbank and Sunnybank Primary Schools. The pupils involved took part in stories and related craft activities. Further sessions are planned.
- Over the Summer holiday period the City's libraries ran a **Summer Reading Club**. There were also 34 different events in libraries, with participation by staff from the Maritime Museum, Arts Development Team and the

assistance from the British Red Cross, Grampian Police and the Zoology Laboratory at the University of Aberdeen.

- **Children's Book Week in October** with author visits and visits by primary school children.
- Libraries included as venues for the Lemon Tree's "**Participate**" **community outreach project**.
- During "**One World Week**" (22-27 October 2001) **storytelling from other cultures** to coincide with **National Tell-A Story Day** on 26 October 2001, and other activities on 27 October 2001.
- **Children's Author visits** included: Scoular Anderson on 23 October, 2001, Keith Brumpton on 1 November, 2001, Catherine McPhail on 5 November, 2001, Nick Hesketh on 8 November, 2001.
- Involvement in the **Storytelling Festival** in early 2002.

## 8. Culture

### 8.1 Museums and Galleries

- 8.1.1 The year proved to be **very successful in terms of visitor numbers at the Gallery and Museums** with visitor figures up some 18% at the Maritime Museum while the Pompeii Exhibition at the Gallery broke all records. Other particularly successful shows included *French Connections* for which a major sponsorship was secured; *Manhattan to Marrakech* which featured works from Marguerite McBey's major bequest to the Gallery and *Dubka and Dupatta* on which staff worked with members of Aberdeen's Pakistani Women's Group.
- 8.1.2 The year saw the completion of the **Japanese Loan Exhibition** and a number of acquisitions were made for the collections including a silver bowl by Graham Stewart to mark the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Friends of Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums, gifts from the Contemporary Arts Society and purchases for the Macdonald Bequest.
- 8.1.3 The year also saw the completion of a successful **joint exhibition project with the Norwegian Petroleum Museum** – *Women in Oil* and a joint project with students at Gray's School of Art leading to an exhibition at RGU – *The Secret Meaning of Things*. Other projects in the year included education activities *How we See Things* and *The Sennachie* and a collaborative project with the Rogaland Kunstmuseum in Stavanger. Archaeological highlights included the

securing of HLF funding for a project examining the environment of medieval Aberdeen, the publication of *Aberdeen: an in-depth view of the City's past* and the first excavation of Tillydrone Motte. Staff at the Maritime Museum completed a further SCRAN project during the year, while a new computer system was installed to improve collections management. **New Opportunities Funding was secured to enable internet access** to the collections and a digital imaging suite was established at the Gallery.

- 8.1.4 **Arts Development continued to offer a wide range of projects and activities** across the City and at City Moves the year saw the appointment of a full-time Dance Development Officer, two sell-out Community Shows at the Lemon Tree and over 500 local people of all ages and abilities making use each week of the workshops organised by the project.

## 8.2 Performing Arts Venues

- 8.2.1 A decision was made in June 2001 to move the operation of His Majesty's Theatre, the Music Hall and Aberdeen Box Office to an arms length organisation. A Transitional Board was recruited in the Autumn of 2001 and a new **non-profit company – Aberdeen Performing Arts – is being established** with the intention that this organisation will take over the operation of the venues on 1 June 2003.
- 8.2.2 The project to **extend and redevelop His Majesty's Theatre** was successful in attracting £2m of funding from the Scottish Arts Council Capital Lottery Fund and a further £375,000 from Scottish Enterprise Grampian. It is hoped that **work on the building will begin in the Spring of 2003** subject to planning consent. The theatre will then close for a period in 2004 and will be ready to open in late 2004 or early 2005. The redeveloped building will have new facilities for rehearsals and education work and the extension will have a box office, restaurant, coffee shop and bars. The theatre will be fully accessible for customers, staff and performers. His Majesty's Theatre presented **over 300 performances during the course of the year**, enjoyed by more than 216,000 customers. Theatre Club membership increased during the year to over 5,500 members. Highlights of the year at HMT included visits from the Touring Consortium's production of *Hobson's Choice*, Dundee Rep with *The Seagull*, Scottish Ballet's *The Snowman* and Lisa Milne's solo concert presented by the City Council in honour of Lisa's achievements in the world of opera.
- 8.2.3 The Music Hall presented a **record number of performances in 2001/02** with over 200 performances and a 59% increase in income for in-house promotions. The Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Scottish Chamber Orchestra and BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra all had residencies in the Music Hall over the

Winter/Spring season and performed to enthusiastic audiences. The partnership with these orchestras has seen a steady increase in audiences for classical music in the City in recent years.

### 8.3 Libraries

8.3.1 The photo exhibition, "Far wis ye fin the siren blew?" on **Aberdeen during the Second World War** was shown in Linksfield, Torry and Central Libraries. Aberdeen Camera Club's exhibition was displayed (3-15 September 2001) in the Central Library.

8.3.2 Torry Library has hosted the **Torry Oral History Group**, Reminiscences Project. This has now culminated in the recently published booklet, "Torry Times".

8.3.3 Events in the Central Library include:-

- The **Saltire Society held an open meeting** on 18 September 2001 in the Central Library to hear Dr Colin Milton on the Greig-Duncan folksong collection.
- On **National Poetry Day** (4 October 2001), W.N. Herbert, David Kinloch and Anne MacLeod invited the audience to celebrate the power of poems and poetry.

8.3.4 During the year:-

- A **unique volume** from the Local Studies Department of the Central Library has been **loaned to Marischal College Museum** for three months. The volume in question is the original log-book of the '*Ho-Sho Maru*' for its maiden voyage to Nagasaki in 1868. It featured in an exhibition on Thomas Blake Glover.
- A former recipient of the 'Aberdeen Woman of the Year Award' (1988), **Joyce Everill died on Monday 5 November**. Joyce gave regular readings of her local verse to organisations throughout the City. Two collections of her poems were published by the Council – 'Granny's Button Box: Poems and Memories' (1989) and 'Mair Buttins@ (1996).
- The value of the City's local newspaper collection has been shown with the **Council represented at a Newsplan Scotland meeting in Edinburgh** to discuss progression on their National Funding Programme. Only one Aberdeen newspaper title is involved at this stage; the 'Aberdeen Chronicle' (early 19<sup>th</sup> century). The local newspaper store at Woodside Library was

closed to the public on 1 September on the grounds of health & safety and the conservation and preservation of the folio newspaper volumes.

- Staff provided **research assistance** from August onwards, to the Department of Trade and Industry and local Members of Parliament, concerning the so-called Cod Wars saga.

#### 8.4 Arts Education in Schools

- 8.4.1 "Enchanted" **Aberdeen's Storytelling and Theatre Festival** 2002 was a great success. The Festival has quickly become Scotland's largest arts festival for children, young people and their families, running for over 6 weeks, with events from Monday through to Saturday, including training events open to the public in the evenings. "Enchanted" provided **152 theatre and storytelling events** throughout the Festival and over 25 outreach workshops throughout the city as part of the Festival programme. Attendance at the festival events was over 9000. With over 750 pupils participating in the outreach workshops.
- 8.4.2 With an award of just over £98,000 for three years of Summer School arts programmes, the Arts Education Unit launched **BUZZ!!** Aberdeen's Summer School Arts programme for 2002, at the beginning of June. **BUZZ!!** will offer a diverse arts portfolio of summer courses that cater for 3 – 18 year olds, of all abilities, city-wide. The Arts Education Unit, as well as programming a number of the summer schools on offer has also commissioned other cultural partners to contribute to the programme. Partner organisations include Lemon Tree, Peacock Visual Arts, Whitespace, Citymoves Station House, Aberdeen Art Gallery, and The Belmont.
- 8.4.3 As part of the Scottish Parliament visit to Aberdeen the Arts Education Unit in partnership with Scottish Arts Council have organised a **National Arts Education Network event** as part of the outreach programme for Aberdeen City Music School. The event offered a significant opportunity to showcase arts provision in Aberdeen as well as raise key issues affecting future funding, thinking, and development of the sector. The issues of the day will also be fed into the National Debate on Education.
- 8.4.4 Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Youth Theatre (AAYT) continues to go from strength to strength offering **drama and youth theatre provision** of a very high calibre across the City, for 8 – 18 year olds, targeting areas of social exclusion, and other areas of Aberdeen hitherto neglected in terms of arts provision. From July 2002, AAYT enters into its final year of SAC Lottery Funding. A review will be undertaken in the autumn to advise Aberdeen City Council on the way forward for this service. Social Inclusion Partnership Funding and New Opportunities Funding have already been cited as future funding sources.

AAYT is part of the discussions within Scottish Arts Council as the need for a national youth theatre strategy is addressed. There may be possibilities of project funding from SAC for established Youth Theatres across Scotland.

## 9. Sports and Leisure

### 9.1 Sports Development

- 9.1.1 Through **aberdeen***utures* Community Planning exercise a group called the Active Aberdeen has been formed to better **co-ordinate and plan sports opportunities and development** in the City. Its work has culminated in the draft of the Active Aberdeen Strategy on which the public will be given the opportunity to comment on. The Partnership includes Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeen Sports Council, Aberdeen Football Club, Aberdeen University, Aberdeen College, Grampian Institute of Sport.
- 9.1.2 The **Grampian Institute of Sport completed its first year** with 33 athletes from Grampian in receipt of its programmes. Further sports of judo and slalom canoeing have been added, and the athletes are achieving success.
- 9.1.3 This year there was much closer working that ever before within the Council on sports development. Through funding from sportscotland Aberdeen City has been able to produce the "TOPS" programme to both primary schools and to community groups. This consists of bags of useful **sports equipment and explanation cards for games and skills practices**. It is an integrated programme and this has benefits for progressions.

### 9.2 Netball

- 9.2.1 The highlight for netball was the introduction of a programme called "**Bounce Back to Netball**" to encourage former players back. This has had an excellent response to the extent that we will continue with it next year.

### 9.3 Tennis

- 9.3.1 This year a number of our **tennis volunteers and coaches received national recognition** with Kris Soutar winning the Tennis Scotland Coach of the Year Award and Andrew Haw won the sportscotland Young Leader. Andrew Milne was a member of the Tennis Scotland Team of the Year and Louise Fleming and Alan Ross won the Scottish Under 10 Robinson's Tournament which gave them a trip to Wimbledon to see Tim Henman.

#### 9.4 Golf

9.4.1 We launched the **Paul Lawrie Junior Golf Development Programme** and in the first year we had 490 children aged 9-10 taking up the offer of a free introductory golf lesson and of that group 263 came back for a series of 4 lessons. Paul Lawrie himself launched the scheme at Hazlehead Golf Course, he attended one of the lessons and we also had a prize draw and six of the children were invited to Meldrum House to meet him. This programme was supported by substantial sponsorship from the Craig Group and a matching grant from Sportsmatch. Also Paul's sponsors Calloway and Nike donated clubs and golf balls for us to give to the participants.

9.4.2 For some years there has been little investment in maintenance of the City Golf Courses. With great help from the resident clubs we have **introduced a Golf Course Improvement Plan** and this ties in with an increase in the number of season tickets sold. We now have a five years programme of course improvements at all five of the municipal courses which has been approved by the golf clubs.

#### 9.5 Football

9.5.1 In girls football, Amanda Gilbert and Kirsten Lawrence were selected for the **Scottish Under 19 squad** and Sharon Scott and Rebecca Morrice gained their first international caps at under 17 level.

#### 9.6 Swimming

9.6.1 The City of Aberdeen Swim Team (COAST) has had yet another very successful year with **six swimmers being selected for National teams**. Andy Jamieson was also selected to represent Scotland in the 1500m Freestyle event at this year's Commonwealth games. COAST finished **top team in Scotland** for the second year running and for the third time in four years and represented Scotland in the National finals at Crystal Palace on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2002.

#### 9.7 Athletics

9.7.1 Once again **Baker Hughes sponsored the 10K** and associated fun runs at the Beach in June. The weather was fine with approximately 2,000 athletes participating.

#### 9.8 Events

9.8.1 In general our **events programme was a great success**. The Highland Games was enhanced by falconry displays, a mini highland game for children and extensions to the crafts areas. These developments were popular with the spectators. This year we introduced the Clash of the Titans/World's Strongest Man to Hazlehead Park on the day after the Highland Games. The two-day combination worked well with the marquees and infrastructure already in place and a more formal partnership is planned for this year.

9.9 Bowling

9.9.1 Unfortunately there was a slight decrease in the entries to the Bowling Tournament but it was still a very successful tournament with **competitors from across Scotland**. As usual the finals were fierce, in particular the Junior Final gave us great encouragement for the future of bowling.

9.10 Fireworks

9.10.1 This year was out **most successful fireworks display ever** with a spectacular display at the Bridge of Don attended by many thousands of people. In fact its success resulted in very difficult traffic conditions in the surrounding area despite advice broadcast on Grampian TV and Northsound suggesting people took the park and ride bus or left in plenty of time. The change of venue was met with approval from a large section of the residents but others preferred the Duthie Park venue.

9.11 Winter festival

9.11.1 This year we had a very successful Winter Festival with the star attraction the **new Christmas lights in Union Street**. Several thousand people attended the annual switch on ceremony and many compliments have been received from city residents, visitors and other cities.

9.12 Schools

9.12.1 There was strong support for a number of sports in the City's **secondary Schools** including athletics, basketball, boxing, cross-country, canoeing, football, golf, hockey, and rugby. There has been individual and team success at local, regional and national levels. Particularly significant team successes were seen in football including:

- Aberdeen U-18's Runners Up in Scottish Cup
- Aberdeen Grammar School 13's – winners Scottish Cup



- Kincorth Academy 12's – Finalists in Scottish Cup on 29 May 2002

9.12.2 A new funding initiative under **New Opportunities Fund for PE and Sport in Schools** was launched in March. Aberdeen City has a provisional allocation of £1,033,000 for PE and Sports Programmes and £1,670,000 for PE and Sports Facilities – subject to the completion and approval of a bid by September 2002. The Council and NHS Grampian have met to ensure a coherent and strategic approach to this (and a number of other funding opportunities) is taken.

## 10. Strengthening Local Democracy

### 10.1 Strategy and Action Plan

10.1.1 We have recently successfully concluded a participative process that has built a consensus amongst the key stakeholder groups of elected members, *aberdeen futures* officers and community representatives on the aims, objectives and outcomes of our Strengthening Local Democracy Strategy. The action plan to implement the strategy, which is subject to Committee consideration, will if approved form an **important strand of community planning** and the new Council structure. Specific initiatives contributing to the strategy, which are nearing conclusion, include the development of Participation Guidelines, Community Council Protocol and the Audit of Resources for Community Capacity Building.

10.1.2 The Council has **successfully applied to be part of the EU funded Demos Project**, bringing together six cities from across the European Union to develop and exchange experiences of innovation in citizen participation. Our contribution is the development of an *aberdeen futures* **Citizens Panel**, together with a virtual panel and a link to the cyberyouth website. This project will enable the Council and its partners to sound out public opinion from a large balanced sample of citizens.

### 10.2 The Scottish Parliament in Aberdeen, 28-30 May

10.2.1 **Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeen University are delighted to have jointly hosted the three-day visit of the Scottish Parliament to Aberdeen.** We are also delighted that it has been hailed as a great success by Parliamentarians and colleagues from the Scottish Parliament and Scottish Executive.

10.2.2 We have been able to show Ministers and MSPs from across Scotland, at first hand, the **pioneering work being done in the city**, in both the public and private sectors. The debates, meetings with Ministers, visits to city projects and round-table discussions have also **demonstrated where assistance from the**

**Scottish Parliament and the Executive can make the most significant difference** to the future life of the city and its people.

- 10.2.3 It is hoped that our MSPs return to Edinburgh, inspired by what they have seen and with a greater understanding of the needs of this area - which plays a crucial role in the ongoing success of Scotland's economy as a whole.
- 10.2.4 In practical terms, we have also demonstrated that Aberdeen is not just able to accommodate the Scottish Parliament, but that we also have the capacity to do it in style.
- 10.2.5 Beyond the immediate positive impact on and for Aberdeen, **the challenge is now to ensure that the city reaps the benefits of our efforts in both the short and the longer term.** This will be done by follow up meetings with MSPs and continued liaison with our local MSPs to ensure that they are fully briefed on the work continuing in the city.
- 10.2.6 From 17 September 2001 to 20 October 2001, Aberdeen hosted an important **Scottish Parliament Travelling Exhibition** in the Central Library, Bridge of Don and Kincorth. This followed staff training on 1 and 9 May; Paul Anderson, Scottish Parliamentary Library Liaison Officer visited the Central Library to conduct workshops for members of staff involved in the administration of their Scottish Parliamentary Information Centres. As a follow up, Information Officers from the Scottish Parliament were available in the Central Library on Friday, 9 November to provide members of the public with the opportunity to find out more about the workings of the Scottish Parliament.

## **11. Supporting the Present and Future Financial Wellbeing of the City**

### **11.1 Fishing Industry**

- 11.1.1 The last fifteen months or so have seen **significant changes in the industry.** The doom and gloom being preached last year has mostly been replaced by optimism in both sectors. Success has been seen in many different areas particularly management development, product development and independent financial reviews. The level of take up for the various strands of support available is very low in Aberdeen in comparison to elsewhere in Scotland.
- 11.1.2 The increased level of supply has focussed the industry's attention on **skill shortages** and a considerable amount of work is being done in this area with a view to encouraging school leavers to consider the industry and a programme

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to target women returners will be launched later this year. The lack of filleters in particular has led to good quality fish sometimes being processed for fishmeal.

- 11.1.3 The catching sector has benefited significantly from **increased prices and quota**, but the main issues within the catching sector are imports and the Common Fisheries Policy Review. There have been discussions with our MEPs and Struan Stevenson MEP, the Chair of the European Parliaments Fisheries Committee has spoken very strongly on the status of the review and the positions taken by other member states.

## 11.2 Business Training Unit

- 11.2.1 8 Accredited **Management Development programmes** have been delivered to local SMEs jointly funded by ACC and European Social Fund. The programmes ranged from Introductory level to an advanced Diploma in Management.
- 11.2.2 Due to the removal of income generation and staff involvement within European projects, there have only been 5 commercial training programmes delivered within the last 12 months.
- 11.2.3 A number of local businesses are progressing through the **Aberdeen Service Achievement Award** award with 3 local businesses likely to achieve the Gold level by Sept 2002 (Jamieson & Carry, Athol Hotel and Ashvale Restaurant).
- 11.2.4 The **third Survey of Employers in Aberdeen** was commissioned by Aberdeen City Council and conducted by Robert Gordon's University. The results and findings from within this survey have been used as the basis for research and development leading to the **production of an Aberdeen Skill Strategy**. Work has been ongoing during the whole of 2002 towards the development of a skill strategy. A large amount of research and consultation has been undertaken with internal departments and external agencies. From activities to date a number of gaps in provision have been identified and steps are currently being taken to address these gaps on a partnership basis.

## 11.3 Offshore Europe 2001

- 11.3.1 Aberdeen again played host to **Offshore Europe in September 2001** and benefited from the event attracting some **24,500 visitors** and 1600 exhibitors from around 72 countries, bringing an estimated **£20M worth of revenue to the City**. Aberdeen City Council and its partners expended considerable time and energy ensuring the success of the event. Initiatives undertaken in support of the exhibition included:-

Promotion:-

- 22 double-sided **banners were hung along Union Street** and lamp post banners erected along main roads in and out of the City. 21 local companies sponsored the banners. Scottish Enterprise Grampian sponsored all of the lamppost banners;
- **30,000 z-cards were produced** for the Offshore Europe exhibition. 10,000 were distributed to local taxi drivers;
- An intensive publicity campaign was implemented with **articles and interviews** in publications such as Offshore Engineer, Business AM and The Press and Journal, as well as interviews on Offshore Europe TV;
- Other promotional material on the City and council services was available including literature and CD-ROMS.
- A new **Business Guide** was produced and launched at Offshore Europe;

Exhibition Presence:-

- A **285sqm stand** was jointly hosted by Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council;
- Internet for Business and Aberdeen Journals sponsored areas of the stand;
- The Aberdeen showreel video was updated and shown on the stand as well as on Offshore Europe TV;
- The ground floor of the stand housed an **informal lounge area and internet café**. Also on the ground floor level 12 local small companies sublet exhibition space. Display panels promoting the Council and the City were displayed throughout the stand. The upper deck of the stand housed a business lounge that was used for private meetings, presentations and masterclasses. The masterclasses focussed on the new and developing markets of Brazil and The Faroes and on the setting up of joint ventures;
- **VIPs and international delegations were hosted** from Brazil, The Faroes, Canada, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Australia. A **civic reception for 600** guests was held at the Beach Ballroom.

#### 11.4 Other Exhibitions

11.4.1 Aberdeen partnered with Aberdeenshire at the **Offshore Technology Conference 2002 in Houston** in May. Seven local companies exhibited with the Council at this year's event in May. Early feedback indicates that the companies were delighted with the contacts made and business done.

11.4.2 Work on Offshore Northern Seas 2002 in Norway has started with target companies being identified and invited to participate on the Aberdeen stand.

#### 11.5 Community Economic Development

11.5.1 The Council works with community groups to benefit the economy of their local communities. One such development is the **formation of a Resident Service Organisation** within the Great Northern Partnership Area. This organisation will provide local employment, training and assistance with jobsearch and work development to ensure every citizen of the City can contribute to the financial wellbeing of the City.

#### 11.6 Community Training Unit

11.6.1 The Council has continued to work with Job Centre Plus to maintain job entries in Aberdeen City from New Deal Environment Task Force and Voluntary Sector at above 50%. This exceeds the targets set and reflects the **'into work' philosophy** of New Deal generally. The **Council has recently been awarded the New Deal contract for Lone Parents and Partners** for Aberdeen City. This is only one of two contracts awarded in the Job Centre Plus area of Grampian, Orkney and Shetland. It is intended that this contract will initiate a programme of tailored employability support for those considering a return to the workplace.

11.6.2 Development work linked to the Skills Strategy, **Overcoming Barriers to Work**, has included wide consultation with those organisations who operate provision to those facing redundancy.

11.6.3 Development work has also been taking place to extend the Placement Partnership. This consortium, facilitated via Aberdeen City Council, aims to assist employers who participate in **work experience for those with additional needs**. To date Aberdeen City Council, Rehab Scotland, Cornerstone Community Care and Aberdeen Foyer are involved. Enquiries have been received from Aberdeenshire Council Social Work Department, the Scottish Drugs Forum and SACRO regarding possible membership. Areas of work undertaken to date include a database of employers participating, the development of Health and Safety paperwork and the accreditation via City and

Guilds for the Community Training Unit to offer qualifications to personnel involved in Managing Work Experience Placements. The Placement Partnership is supported by Careers Scotland and Job Centre Plus.

#### 11.7 International Work

- 11.7.1 The focus of the past 12 month's trade development activity has been on delivering the 2001/2002 trade development programme and progressing plans for the 2002/2003 programme. The 2001/2002 programme once again focussed on the **target oil and gas markets** that companies identified as being key to local businesses' internationalisation efforts, as does the 2002/2003 programme. These included attendance at the world's major oil shows including the Offshore Technology Conference in Houston and a major presence at Offshore Europe in Aberdeen. For 2002, ACC once again attended a very busy OTC and will organise a joint stand with Aberdeenshire Council for ONS in Stavanger in August 2002.
- 11.7.2 The target **market of Brazil featured strongly** once again with two very successful outward missions in 2001 and several inward missions from the State of Rio and most importantly, from Petrobras, the Brazilian state oil company and still the biggest player in the market, seeking technology, expertise and innovative oil and gas solutions from Aberdeen companies. Brazil continues to be an important market and as well as expected numerous inward visits, the Rio Oil and Gas Show in September 2002 looks set to attract a strong presence of companies from the North East as part of the joint trade mission between ACC and the Northern Offshore Federation.
- 11.7.3 The emerging **market of the Faroe Islands was heavily promoted** during 2001 with a seminar, a joint Operator/Supplier conference, an inward visit as well as one outward trade mission and a further visit to develop activities identified under the Memorandum of Understanding. During 2002, it is intended to organise another trade mission. Interest in this market is likely to be largely affected by operator activity and the success of exploration in 2002/03.
- 11.7.4 During 2001, Aberdeen City Council also applied for accreditation from **Trade Partners UK (TPUK)** in order to be eligible to apply for TPUK support to run outward trade missions. Accreditation, **one of only three organisations in Scotland**, was received in April 2002. The oil and gas trade mission to Calgary and Newfoundland is the first mission that Aberdeen City Council have run with TPUK support and as the UK lead sponsor.
- 11.7.5 Ongoing **support continues to be offered to companies** on an individual basis to assist with their internationalisation plans and a 2002 version of the export survey is being planned, along with partner North East organisations for

the last quarter of 2002. This will give us up to date information and allow us to continue to review and tailor our trade support activities to specific company need.

11.7.6 Aberdeen City Council continues to be represented on the **East of Scotland European Consortium** (ESEC), which it joined in January 2002. ESEC is a non-statutory joint committee representing the European interests of twelve local authorities in Eastern Scotland. ESEC's role in European policy and advocacy has assumed greater importance due to the reduction of COSLA's European function and priorities for ESEC and individual councils for 2002 will include regional policy, environmental issues, European funding and representation.

#### 11.8 Twinning

11.8.1 A varied programme of twinning activities took place over the past year with our twin cities, although links with Bulawayo were restricted due to the political situation and advice from the Foreign Office. The achievement included:

- Participation of teams from **Regensburg** and **Gomel** in the Football Festival and artists from **Clermont Ferrand** in Aberdeen International Youth Festival;
- **Youth exchanges** between Beacon Community Education Centre and Regensburg, a work placement exchange in Regensburg by 6<sup>th</sup> year pupils from Cults Academy and a visit to Aberdeen by pupils from Regensburg Albrecht-Altdorfer School who attended school in Aberdeen and carried out work placements at BP and in local sports centres;
- **Senior Citizens visit to Regensburg** in October/November 2001 – 48 senior citizens participated. A successful senior citizens visit to Clermont-Ferrand took place this month;
- A seven women delegation from community groups in Aberdeen participated in the **KVV Women's Fair in Stavanger** in June 2001 along with the Lord Provost;
- A joint project involving Aberdeen Maritime Museum and Stavanger Petroleum Museum produced an **exhibition on "Women in the Oil Industry"** which has been on display in Stavanger since June 2001 and is coming to Aberdeen in 2002. Future joint projects are planned;
- Visit by a **senior citizens group from Stavanger** to Aberdeen and a visit from a sports group for people with special needs which has resulted in an

Aberdeen group for people with special needs visiting Stavanger at the end of May to participate in sporting activity;

- Work on the **joint Teenage Pregnancy Project** involving groups of health specialists from Aberdeen and Gomel in exchange visits;
- Setting up language lab and computer equipment in Gomel and establishing email links between Robert Gordons University and Gomel State University;
- Two week **study visit to Aberdeen** by two English Teachers from Gomel and reciprocal visit on Tom Collins to Gomel State University to assist in the teaching of English;
- Links established between **Aberdeen College and Bulawayo FE College**, and cultural links with the National Arts Council Zimbabwe.

11.8.2 **Planned work** includes participation of young people from Zimbabwe in this years International Football Festival, development of joint work to divert young people at risk of drug and alcohol abuse with Gomel and Torry Youth Project, reviving the previous TACIS project focusing on economic and community development involving partners from Gomel, Aberdeen and Clermont-Ferrand. This is now possible with the reinstatement of TACIS funding by the United Nations to Belarus.

## **12. Unpolluted and Healthy Environment**

### **12.1 Waste Management**

12.1.1 Considerable advances have been made with our partners in Aberdeenshire Moray and SEPA in producing the Draft Area Waste Plan for the North East. The Plan, when adopted, will inform waste management for the next 20 years.

12.1.2 As part of our own waste strategy, we have now implemented a **pilot green waste collection scheme** whereby 2000 houses in Kincorth, Kingswells and Deeside are having their garden and "green" kitchen waste collected for composting.

### **12.2 Cleanliness of the City**

12.2.1 Major advances have been made over the last year in **improving the cleanliness and appearance of the City**. The total containerisation of domestic and commercial waste is now bearing fruit with marked reductions in the level of complaints and increases in standards of cleanliness being



recorded by Keep Scotland Beautiful. In fact the survey for May indicates the City will achieve its highest result since it won Britain's Cleanest City award in 1993. In March and April the total number of complaints received was 69 compared to 370 over the same period a year ago. This should give great encouragement to the **Civic Pride** campaign.

12.2.2 A major effort has been made to step up the **removal of chewing gum** from pavements in the City which remains one of the ongoing problems faced in keeping cities clean. Our efforts have led to a significant improvement in the appearance of the City, however, a re-education of people who drop chewing gum is one of the outcomes hoped for from the Civic Pride campaign. As part of this initiative a **high profile gum awareness day** was held on the 9<sup>th</sup> May at Tullos Primary School and the City Centre. The event attracted TV and radio coverage. The awareness campaign has followed with a targeted poster campaign aimed at the 13-25 age group. 1000 window stickers and 500 posters have been mailed out to night-clubs, pubs, supermarkets, shopping centres, sports clubs, health clubs, cinemas, take-aways, service stations, universities, adult education centres, schools, leisure centres & newsagents whose support we very much need and welcome.

12.2.3 18 groups from communities, businesses and Council have taken part in **Aberdeen Spring Clean**. Each event has attracted media coverage including the launch – Council staff clean up at the end of March.

### 12.3 Civic Pride Campaign

12.3.1 One of the most significant initiatives in 2001/02 has been the launch by Aberdeen City Council of a major **Civic Pride Campaign** aimed at improving the environment throughout the City. The Campaign has been well received and given a high profile and support from Business, the media and the people of Aberdeen generally. The focus in the first year of the Campaign has been work on improving the appearance of the City, something which is consistently identified as a priority by citizens. The following areas have seen significant work:-

- Attacks on Litter - As well as the chewing gum and Spring Clean initiatives mentioned above, we continue to put significant resources in to fighting litter. In addition to litter cleans, £5,000 has been spend on education materials encouraging citizens to take a socially responsible attitude to litter. Officers regularly visit schools, youth groups and community groups to promote this message. Work has also been ongoing with key partners to combat "fly-tipping". Further work on dealing with discarded cigarette butts is planned for next year.

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- Improvements to Street Cleaning - Monitoring of the cleanliness of streets in Aberdeen has been stepped up with the result that **significant improvements in the cleanliness** have been seen. This is reflected in the Keep Scotland Beautiful rating for the City. The Council is exceeding its own targets set for the street cleanliness, but further improvements are being sought.
- Street Washing - Aberdeen city Council took delivery of a **new street washing machine** in February and its use has seen significant improvements in this area. A street washing programme which previously took a month to complete can now be done in one week. The standard of clean is also much improved from previous machinery.
- Bird Proofing - Officers have identified where **nuisance problems with roosting birds** are affecting the City's municipal buildings and a three year programme of improvement costing £100,000 has been agreed.
- Encouragement to Private Sector Owners to Improve Their Property - Council officers have been operating a policy of identifying environmental **problems with privately owned buildings** and liaising with owners to develop solutions even where the Council has no direct legal role.
- Pressure on BEAR to Improve A90 (Anderson Drive) and A96 - City Council officers have made significant efforts to persuade BEAR (contractors responsible for the maintenance of Trunk Roads) of the importance of the appearance of trunk roads in the City and at the main entrances to the City. As a result **replanting of verges has commenced on the A90 (Anderson Drive) and the A96**, however, there remains significant work to be done in many areas and we continue to push for an increase in the volume and speed of this work.
- Work With Railtrack on the Railwayline - Discussion have continued this year between Railtrack and Council Officers on making **improvements to the Railway station** and the rail entry to the City. Railtrack took the significant step of selecting Aberdeen Station as one of 10 in Scotland which will be given special attention in improving its appearance and a programme of works is being developed by them.
- Responsible Dog Ownership - Talks on Responsible Dog Ownership were given by the Dog Wardens to a record number (1335) of primary 5 schoolchildren during the pre Easter school term this year. The "Poetry" competition which was a follow up to these talks produced four winning entries which will be used to promote Responsible Dog Ownership during the forthcoming year. Draft bylaws, to exclude dogs from the central area of

Aberdeen beach are with the Scottish Executive for approval. These will be implemented once this approval is granted. Staff involved in Dog Control are linking up with "Clean and Green" staff to **promote anti-litter and responsible dog ownership initiatives** at outdoor events over the summer period.

- Inconsiderate Driving and Parking - The Campaign will also target other **anti-social behaviour** which adversely affects the citizens of Aberdeen. One example of this is inconsiderate driving and parking. Aberdeen City Council will act jointly with its partners and the public to highlight this and other issues with the aim of directly improving the lives of citizens.
- Infrastructure - A massive programme of improvement is in place to **improve the fabric of the City. Almost £1M has been identified** to deal with:-
  - ❑ Roads
  - ❑ Pavements
  - ❑ Street Lights
  - ❑ Signs
  - ❑ Railings and other street furniture
  - ❑ Entrances to the City

#### 12.4 Statutory Nuisances

- 12.4.1 A total of **1069 complaints of nuisance, were successfully dealt with**, between September 2001 (when a new computerised reporting system was introduced) and March 2002. 265 of these complaints related to **noise issues** such loud music, construction site noise, noisy extraction systems and intruder alarms. Other common complaints investigated by officers included **dampness and condensation** within residential properties, **defective drainage, dirty houses and offensive smells**.

#### 12.5 Air Quality

- 12.5.1 The Environment Act 1995 requires authorities **to review and assess the air quality in their areas** and determine whether air quality objectives for specific pollutants are likely to be met by 2005. Aberdeen City Council's review and assessment was completed in March 2001 which showed that we are already **exceeding targets which had been set for 2005 for air quality** for the pollutant nitrogen dioxide in areas of the City Centre. Road traffic emissions are the primary source of the raised nitrogen dioxide levels. The affected area

– Market St, Union St, Guild St, Virginia St and parts of King St was declared an **Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)** in June 2001. The Council, in conjunction with other council services and outside agencies, is working towards the development of an Action Plan detailing how the air quality in the designated area is to be improved in future years.

## 12.6 Bathing Water Quality

- 12.6.1 The section provides public information on the quality of the bathing water at Aberdeen Beach. Samples are taken close to the Beach Ballroom on a weekly basis from June to September.

In 2001 the **bathing water complied with the EC imperative values specified in the Bathing Water Directive**. 65% of the samples also complied with the more stringent EC Guideline value.

## 12.7 Contaminated Land

- 12.7.1 Aberdeen City Council's **Contaminated Land Strategy was published in October 2001, in accordance with the Environmental Protection Act 1990**. The strategy sets out how the council proposes to inspect the area for contaminated land, ensure the restoration of land identified as contaminated and maintain a public register of contaminated land. Work towards the implementation of the strategy has been active since October and will continue to do so in future years.

## 12.8 Parks and Countryside Management

- 12.8.1 **Success at the Beautiful Scotland in Bloom Awards** in September 2001 saw the City sweep the boards, winning the Rosebowl for overall Scottish Winner, an award for horticultural excellence and best City, our best results in these awards since 1992.
- 12.8.2 We also **improved our position at the Britain in Bloom Awards** 2001 being placed third, a significant improvement from not being placed the previous year. Aberdeen will be hosting the prestigious award ceremony in September 2002 the first time it has been held in Aberdeen, with over 450 delegates from award winning communities throughout Britain being invited.
- 12.8.3 Attendance in **Nations in Bloom 2001 in Shenzhen**, China also proved to be a worthwhile experience. Whilst not winners on this occasion Aberdeen's entry was highly commended by the judges and many useful ideas and contacts were gained.

12.8.4 Preparatory work started on the **development of Duthie Park Winter Gardens** in last quarter of 2001. Scottish Enterprise Grampian confirmed their support and part funding of the project in March. Completion of the project will provide lasting improvements to one of Aberdeen's best loved facilities. In mentioning the Duthie Park, I must pay **tribute to David Welch** who sadly passed away this year. David was the City's Director of Leisure & Recreation from 1967 until 1989 and in his time in Aberdeen he initiated the planting of roses along roadsides, totalling £2.5M. Daffodils were planted all around Aberdeen in great swathes, some £25M. The Duthie Park Winter Gardens, a favourite with the public, fell into disrepair in 1969 and by 1970 Mr Welch saw the rebuilding of a new facility. The Winter Gardens was added to over the next few years and this provided the fabulous gardens that survive today.

12.8.5 The **Hazlehead Woodland Management Plan** was reported to Committee in September, the ambitious proposal aim to ensure the effective management of one of the largest woodlands within the boundary of the City. A range of recreational, environmental and wildlife benefits are planned. Forestry Commission grant funding for the project was confirmed in March.

12.8.6 Funding has also been secured for the **Countryside Ranger Service** for another three years through to 2005. We have also managed to secure grant funding for an additional ranger post bringing the total up to 3.5 members of staff. We hope to appoint the new member of staff by Summer 2002. A variety of groups and visits have been organised by the Ranger Service, over 400 participants, ranging from school children to adults, have attended. The service has also attended galas and shows throughout the City to increase awareness of the service and support events. **A highlight of 2001 was participation in the Making Waves Roadshow for National Science Week**, a five day event targeted at raising science awareness amongst school children.

12.8.7 The Parks and Countryside Service has worked with a variety of volunteers to install **projects of practical and lasting community benefit** across the City. Footpath work has been completed on the Deeside Line and at Walker Dam and habitat enhancements on Local Nature Reserves. Staff from Shell and Mobil Exxon have been involved and work with the International Scout Group provided in excess of 250 volunteers.

### **13. Good Quality Built and Natural Environment and Competitive Place**

#### **13.1 Local Plan**

13.1.1 Aberdeen City Modified Finalised Local Plan "The Local Plan", has been the subject of considerable discussion throughout 2001. It was considered by Full

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Council on 1 May 2002, when it was agreed to place the plan 'on deposit' and to invite objections during a 6 week period starting around mid-August.

This was an important decision as the modified plan now replaces the finalised Local Plan published in September 1999. The modifications bring the plan into conformity with NEST and as it continues to pass through the statutory stages towards adoption its materiality in decision making increases in importance.

Should a Local Plan public inquiry be required this would likely occur in spring 2003.

### 13.2 Promoting the City

13.2.1 A **Promotion of Aberdeen group** has been established to co-ordinate the public relations work throughout the City, both in the public and private sector. The group has taken on the 'Aberdeen's Image' challenge in the Community Plan and focuses on several areas, including the longer-term strategy work, 'quick gains', and media relations. The strategy work will ensure Aberdeen continues to be promoted with a **strong, consistent, positive message**, demonstrating that it is an attractive city to visit, live, work and do business in and with. It will also ensure that the City is showcased as a **centre of excellence** in targeted business sectors, identified as crucial to the sustainability, development and diversification of the economy.

13.2.2 An events programme has also been established to attract high-quality international events that will **enhance the profile and reputation of the City** as a place where things happen. A 'welcome wagon' project has also been established to sell Aberdeen to targeted individuals, companies and organisations, to persuade them to locate and settle into the City once they have arrived. The quick gains project is co-ordinated by Aberdeen City Centre Partnership, to develop and enhance projects such as the summer events and Christmas Festival programmes. A **City Ambassadors programme** is also being established in partnership with the Aberdeen and Grampian Convention Bureau to sell the city to targeted audiences and market places - particularly abroad. Promotional material has also been developed by Council officers, with input from partner organisations. The Promotions Group also enables recent events to be reviewed and for planning future events.

### 13.3 Land Use and The Environment

13.3.1 To paraphrase the advice from central government on planning - "The planning system guides the future development and use of land in Aberdeen in the long term public interest. The aim is to ensure that development and changes in

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land use occur in suitable locations and are sustainable. The planning system must also provide protection from inappropriate development." Under the umbrella of the Community Plan this means a number of more specific aims, as follows:-

- We need to protect the 'granite heritage of Aberdeen', and ensure that where possible we enhance it for future generations of Aberdonians;
- We also need to protect our trees and open spaces and valuable countryside - we know that within the built up area we have less open space per person than the other Cities of Scotland;
- We must make sure that Aberdeen remains a vibrant and vital place, which will encourage people to stay here and encourage more visitors to come to the City too;
- We have to make sure that it is an attractive place in which to invest for our future economic well being;
- We have to set standards of design and development, which encourage a sense of pride in the City.

13.3.2 February saw the launch of the **Urban Realm exhibition** in Aberdeen Art Gallery. The project sets out the **vision for development in the city centre** and set out possible development scenarios for different area. Almost 15,000 people visited the exhibition and there was **almost universal agreement with the issues highlighted by the exhibition** and that the good practice of other cities should be used in forming possible schemes. The key projects, which came through the process, were the Castlegate, Union Street and Union Terrace Gardens.

13.3.3 The Structure Plan approved in April 2002, plus the Local Plan will guide development and will **provide a framework to see the City grow** in a sustainable manner. These important legal documents will bring policies forward which will:

- help provide new land for housing and for industry which can be developed without unduly burdening the existing infrastructure of the City [whether schools, roads, public transport, or the service utilities];
- help to deliver a framework within which planning gain can be achieved whether on brown field sites or green field sites; and

- help improve the design of any new buildings (and their settings) that are being built in the City.

13.3.4 This Building Standards system and will play a key role in rolling out measures to seek a **safe and sustainable built environment** and, importantly, one which does not discriminate. The Council has also played a key role in a very high profile dangerous building case, and is pressing for a change in the legislation to help prevent such circumstances occurring again.

## 14. Sustainable and Integrated Transport

### 14.1 Access from the North

14.1.1 With the adoption of the action plan last year efforts have been focussed on the **completion of the short term measures and the consideration of the range of options for the medium term that were highlighted by the public**. Over the last six months there has been ongoing testing of these options and the Environment and Infrastructure Committee has approved a range of measures which should improve reliability of journey times from north of the Don. The key to **securing long term improvements to journey times is set out in the longer term actions**, the vast majority of which are being progressed as part of the MTS, whether it be improved rail, bus services or the Western Peripheral Route. Grandholm Bridge will close on 10<sup>th</sup> July with limited off peak access retained to CALA's sales office until 17<sup>th</sup> August when the bridge will be blocked for all traffic. All efforts are being made to introduce the measures already approved as quickly as possible.

### 14.2 Kingswells Park and Ride

14.2.1 After a period of phased construction, the Kingswells Park and Ride service started operation on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2001. From a slow start, partly due to the limited time available to complete advanced marketing, **the service has gained in popularity** with around 900 vehicles and 1500 passengers per week using the linking service with the Bridge of Don site.

### 14.3 Other Park and Ride

14.3.1 Following the selection of a preferred site on the Inverurie Road, a planning application has been progressed with ongoing discussions with the Scottish Executive in relation to impact on the trunk road. The application has been considered by the planning Committee and is due to be considered by the full Council. Staff have continued negotiations with the land owner and approval



has been given for the progression of a Compulsory Purchase Order for the site if necessary.

#### 14.4 Foresterhill Parking

- 14.4.1 Following the development stage, which involved input from residents in the area, a controlled parking scheme was promoted and subsequently approved, with slight amendment, by the Environment & Infrastructure Committee. **The measures, which are funded by the Hospital Trust and the University of Aberdeen, are part of the overall plan to address long term access and parking in the Foresterhill area** as the site undergoes change through development. (as members will be aware the building of the new Children's hospital is ongoing) The parking controls are to be introduced in the coming weeks and the Committee instructed monitoring and a report back within twelve months specifically to consider issues raised by objectors to the proposals.

#### 14.5 Garthdee Parking

- 14.5.1 The second phase of development for the Robert Gordon University has been progressing and as part of the planning process it required a controlled parking zone to be introduced to deal with possible overspill parking and enhance residential amenity. **In a similar manner to the process adopted at Foresterhill, the views of local residents were sought on an ongoing basis.** The Environment and Infrastructure Committee recently approved the introduction of the scheme and its **installation is programmed to commence during the summer recess.**

#### 14.6 Parking strategy

- 14.6.1 Last year saw the **largest consultation exercise undertaken, by the Council,** in relation to the views of residents, businesses and general comments on **the future role of parking in the city.** The need for parking controls to meet overall transport objectives and retain residential amenity were explained throughout the process and comments were sought on how far parking controls should be extended, what form the controls should take and what sort of charging regimes should be introduced. In most areas the concept of some form of control was supported although the precise boundaries were open to debate. In addition the form of control and the priority for treatment were mixed depending on the area under consideration. One issue raised by small businesses was the need to modify the charging regime in operation at present, due to the minimum time permitted in peripheral area. This matter was addressed in the annual revision of car parking charges which was announced at the meeting of the Council on 14<sup>th</sup> February to consider the revenue budget.

#### 14.7 Traffic Management Reviews

- 14.7.1 Throughout the last year **the eleven traffic management areas have been progressing through the various stages of public consultation and implementation.** One aspect that has become apparent is the difficulty to match timescales and public aspirations with budget availability, even with every potential source of funding being used. This is a matter that was highlighted recently to the Environment and Infrastructure Committee, when considering the programme of works for transport and roads in revenue and capital terms for the coming year.

#### 14.8 Winter Maintenance

- 14.8.1 During the past year **winter maintenance operations were carried out across the City.** The worst period encountered was during the Christmas holidays which caused disruption to traffic and pedestrian movement. Although significant resources were deployed in accordance with the operational plan, some areas suffered **longer than expected periods of inconvenience.** Taking on board the concerns of Elected Members and the general public a major review of operations is now underway. This includes a consultation exercise with Elected Members, Community Councils, Statutory Bodies etc. The public have been consulted through a questionnaire in the May issue of the Bon Accord and the Council's web-site. This has generated a substantial response which is currently being analysed along with all other feedback. A Members workshop, which could be extended to include partner organisations and community groups, is being arranged for late summer, with a view to a revised plan being approved later this year for subsequent implementation. This is part of the implementation of the outcomes of an approved service review.

#### 14.9 Western Peripheral Route

- 14.9.1 The last twelve months has seen considerable activity in the progression **of the Western Peripheral Route.** Through ongoing lobbying from both public and private sectors, the **Scottish Executive agreed to support various aspects of work which require to be undertaken** to deliver this major element of the Modern Transport System. The Executive agreed to fund the extension of the Central Scotland Transport Model to cover the North East of Scotland, thereby **allowing comparison to be made with similar schemes in the central belt.** In addition they agreed to provide grant funding to both Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire to assist with the other elements of work which require to be done when undertaking appraisals of transport projects. This work has been progressed through hard work by officials from both Councils and **7<sup>th</sup> June saw the launch of the initial stage of consultation** with local community organisation in relation to the northern leg of

the WPR between the A96 Inverurie Road and the A90 Ellon Road. This first stage should be completed in August with the aim of having a series of reports being considered by both Councils over the following six months and a **possible decision in the Spring of 2003 on a preferred corridor**. In the meantime work is to be taken forward on aspects of the previously approved western leg from the A90 Stonehaven Road to the A96.

#### 14.10 Public Transport Fund

- 14.10.1 After a year's gap, **bids were submitted to the Scottish Executive for the fourth round of Public Fund** in August last year. Initial awards, announced in November indicated that the Council was **only partly successful** with monies being awarded to take forward elements of the Modern Transport System, e.g. linking the Real Time system with the Urban Traffic Control system, reinstating bridges on the former Deeside railway line at Hardgate and Holburn Street to form the continuous pedestrian and cycle route. Detailed reports have been considered by the Environment and Infrastructure Committee over the past six months on the procurement and development of these elements which will be implemented over the next eighteen months.

#### 14.11 Concessionary Travel

- 14.11.1 The **Scottish Executive has indicated a wish to see a free, off peak concessionary travel scheme in operation from October 2002**. The scheme, which the Executive has indicated should at least operate within the local authority area, has been the subject of ongoing debate with operators and the Executive in relation to support funding and prospective costs. These negotiations are continuing and the appropriate legislation will be in place prior to the scheme commencing on 30<sup>th</sup> September.

#### 14.12 Road Safety

- 14.12.1 Staff have been working in partnership with counterparts in Grampian Police, Aberdeenshire and Moray Councils with a view to developing a business plan for submission in June for **approval to operate a cost recovery scheme relating to camera offences and their contribution to road safety**. The plan, if approved, should see the scheme commence in October. The scheme is seen as being an **important step in contributing to the reduction in road accidents** within not just Aberdeen but the north east as a whole. Last year Aberdeen was a whisker away from meeting its 2010 accident targets and measures such as improved facilities for pedestrians and reduced vehicle speeds will assist in not only reducing accidents but also their severity.

#### 14.13 Decriminalisation of parking

14.13.1 The last year has been frustrating to Elected Members and Officers of the Council regarding our attempt to **introduced decriminalised parking in Aberdeen**. Ongoing discussions on the legal aspects of the order lead to the Executive identifying the need to amend the legislation relating to Glasgow and Edinburgh. These **amendments are now in place and meetings with the SE are being hurriedly arranged to get the scheme back on track** with a view to a speedy resolution.

#### 14.14 Facilities for Disabled

14.14.1 The role of the Disability Advisory Group has been enhanced through its role of sounding board/consultee in relation to possible transport schemes and their impact on those with mobility difficulties. Through this process **early discussions are now taking place to identify impacts and possible solutions before legislation is promoted** allowing schemes to be tailored to address accessibility issues. As a result of these discussions additional spaces have been provided in the enhanced streetscape scheme in Belmont Street/Back Wynd.

#### 14.15 Christmas Closure

14.15.1 For the first time the section of **Union Street between Market Street and Bridge Street was closed on both Saturday and Sunday on the run up to Christmas**. While it would be fair to say that there were hot-spots in terms of traffic congestion, which did have an impact on the reliability of public transport, the general feedback from people in the City Centre was that they welcomed the additional space to move around on foot. Some of the locations where traffic problems occurred are being investigated to determine if any minor changes can provide some relief to congestion in those areas

## Continuous Improvement

**In the remaining sections of the report we reflect on the various areas of internal operation where development work is going on.**

### 15. Strategies, Plans, Policies

#### 15.1 Neighbourhood and Area Planning

15.1.1 Neighbourhood **action plans are now complete** for the Area Regeneration areas and for the Bridge of Don. The Council has made a commitment to roll

out Neighbourhood Plans to **all areas of the city by 2006**. Following the move by the Council to the neighbourhood structure, details of the plan for the wider rollout will be presented to Committee and is expected to happen much earlier than 2006.

- 15.1.2 Work is being undertaken within the Community Planning Local Planning Group with partners to consider neighbourhood boundary definition, shared needs assessment, working together a local level, joint consulting and reporting to communities on progress, bringing **together all local action into one Neighbourhood Action Plan**.

## 16. Systems

### 16.1 Mainframe

- 16.1.1 The Council's mainframe computer system **was successfully decommissioned at the end of March 2002**. In the lead up to the decommissioning the non computer systems such as Payroll/Human Resources, Revenues (including Debtors, Creditors, General Ledger, Purchasing Stores) were migrated to a new UNIX platforms. The decommissioning of the mainframe computer, and the transfer to new systems was **a major exercise which was very well planned by ICT staff**, with very few problems. Unfortunately, one problem which did occur was the wrong call of Council Tax direct debits on 24 December, due to incorrect programming in software. A comprehensive report was presented to Standards and Scrutiny Committee in July 2002 explaining the background to the problem and the corrective action. However, this incident should not detract from the significant amount of planning and preparation which went into the replacement of the mainframe with new systems. As well as replacing systems the ICT staff had to deal with the installation of a large number of new software releases which had to be installed onto systems. This often involved weekend working thereby minimising disruption to day to day service delivery.

### 16.2 ICT Security

- 16.2.1 The system made **significant strides in enhancing ICT security during the year**, with the appointment of an ICT Security Officer. It is generally recognised that the **City Council is at the forefront** of local authorities in developing ICT security measures. ICT security is a constantly evolving issue as systems become more complex and the threat from hackers becomes greater. Unfortunately the City Council suffered from a new strain of computer virus in early February 2002. Since it was a new strain of virus, no anti-virus software had been invented at the time. The ICT Business Continuity Plans immediately

swung into action to prevent the virus spreading to key systems and the prevent the loss or corruption of data. A full report on the virus was presented to the Standards and Scrutiny Committee in March 2002.

### 16.3 Accord Card

- 16.3.1 The **Accord Card is at crucial stage** in its implementation and a six-month implementation plan has been established to ensure that the 50,000 smartcards are delivered to school students and elderly citizens in the City. The first of the Cards will be available in the period between 1<sup>st</sup> June and 31<sup>st</sup> October 2002. The Card will offer an e-purse; Cashless Catering in Schools, Cashless Vending, a Library Card, Access to Leisure, Travel Concessions and Proof of Age. In addition the card for school students is also supported by YoungScot.

### 16.4 Website

- 16.4.1 The Website statistics show yet another increase in popularity of the site. There were **41,597 individual visits to the website during April 2002**, compared with 40,270 in March. Nearly 30,000 of these visits – the vast majority – were made by people who had found the site themselves or who have bookmarked the site for return visits, as opposed to those who were referred from other sites or search engines. This indicates that increasing numbers of people are aware of, or seeking out, the website address rather than happening across links to the site from other sources. The online Bon Accord went live in May, as print copies of the May edition are being delivered to homes in the city. The electronic version of the Council newspaper will be highlighted on the front page of the website. A major revamp of the website, has been undertaken and the new look website was launched in May.

**Visit the web site at [www.aberdeencity.gov.uk](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk)**

### 16.5 E-Procurement

- 16.5.1 E-Procurement is recognised as having the potential to make **savings on the costs of Council's current procurement** process. These savings can come, for example, through the automation of certain procurement processes or by enforcing purchases through the Council's contracts thereby eliminating the possibility of maverick buying. The Scottish Executive, recognising the likely savings, tendered during 2001 for an E-Procurement scheme that they believed would be beneficial to most public bodies within Scotland. They are currently piloting this scheme with early adopters. An E-Procurement Team from this Council has met with the Scottish Executive Implementation Team to understand how their proposed scheme would operate. This proved

inconclusive and a number of questions raised by the Council Team were not fully answered on the day. These questions have now been submitted to the Scottish Executive to form the basis for a follow-up meeting.

#### 16.6 Strategic Partnership

16.6.1 The Council is in the process of identifying a private sector business solutions provider with whom it can form a **long-term strategic partnership**. The company chosen as our "Strategic Partner" will assist the Council in developing new and better ways of planning and providing services, that will make a real difference to the lives of Aberdeen citizens.

16.6.2 The Strategic Partner's role will be to help the Council achieve its aim of

- **Organisational Change** - Creating a more flexible organisation that is able to respond to changing demands;
- **Customer Focus** - Providing a consistent, high quality service that aims to resolve requests in a single transaction. Providing citizens with a choice of ways of contacting the Council: telephone, face-to-face (Customer Service Centre), Internet etc, each of which is designed to respond to citizens' needs and expectations promptly and comprehensively;
- **Cultural Change** - Transforming the organisational culture to better support a citizen-centric approach.

16.6.3 The closing date for the **return of final bids for the Strategic Partnership was 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2002**. Final evaluation has begun and will follow the process as defined in the Evaluation Plan. Presentations by the bidders took place on 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> April. All elected members were invited to these presentations. The full Council on 26<sup>th</sup> June will approve the successful bid. With the start date for partnership being anticipated as 1<sup>st</sup> September 2002.

#### 16.7 Internal Audit

16.7.1 During the year **Internal Audit produced 50 reports (2000/01=39)** covering planned audits for systems based or computer audits. The audits were spread across all Council services and were wide-ranging in the subjects addressed, which were **selected as a result of a risk assessment exercise**. Additionally, these planned audits complemented the work undertaken by the External Auditor.

16.7.2 Investigations were undertaken **in six instances where there were suspicions of theft or fraud**.

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16.7.3 A **summary of the controls status** reported within planned audits shows:-

Opinion	2000/01		2001/02	
	Number	%	Number	%
Unsatisfactory	22	56	16	32
Average	10	26	16	32
Satisfactory	7	18	18	36
Total reports	39	100	50	100

16.7.4 Overall there is a distinct **improvement in all categories** with a decrease in the number of unsatisfactory reports and increases in those deemed average or satisfactory.

16.7.5 **Themes** continuing to require improvement include inventory maintenance; the **level of security within computer systems** as well as the ability to maximise the benefit from the Council's investment in new computer systems from the use of reporting tools for management information. There is an ongoing issue **of non-compliance with standard procedures** within certain functions, an issue which should be addressed through departmental self-checks (see below). This presents an easy opportunity for management to address through emphasis on compliance and should warrant the introduction of some form of deterrence for a continuing problem. A further area for improvement is the need for comprehensive **documented procedures** which give guidance to staff. It is recognised that progress is being made.

16.7.6 In addition to planned audit work **Internal Audit have reported on compliance checks and departmental self checks work.** Compliance Checks were undertaken at random throughout the year on inventories, cash imprests and stores. The opinion is that this area is showing only slight improvement and a revised approach to broadcast deficiencies with attendant improvement actions has been introduced. With regard to the introduction of departmental self-checks this has revealed wide variances in application and in the results. Although we have reported a moderate increase in the average score further improvement is required in commitment to the exercise through maintaining programme and expansion to cover non-administration elements of service delivery. One service continues to experience problems in introducing and completing the checks.

16.7.7A further guide to the controls environment is the degree of **success achieved in implementing recommendations** agreed within timescale. Due mainly to the rigorous monitoring through the Standards and Scrutiny Committee, an **improvement has been achieved to reduce the level of overdue items.**



16.7.8 Whilst improvements in understanding and awareness of internal controls have been registered, it is contended that further **cultural changes are required to emphasise the importance of controls** in a changing environment of *aberdeen futures*; management could assist this through integrating controls responsibilities within everyday operations and by specific reference within job descriptions. It must also be highlighted that in times of change the risk of internal controls being compromised is always increased.

16.7.9 Overall, a **better position than reported last year**. In summary, the conclusion must be that whilst in general the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and other policies are being observed, the overall standard of internal controls still has room for improvement as does the need for enhancing established procedures and control measures, both of these areas presenting a moderate risk to the Council.

## 17. Organisational Structures

17.1.1 As part of *aberdeen futures* the Council is making **radical changes to its organisational structure** to ensure a citizen-centred approach to all aspects of service provision, such as services being delivered through multi-disciplinary neighbourhood management structures, and the development of innovative working practices. The last year has seen the appointment of Directors to new posts, including three Directors of Neighbourhood Directors with Area responsibility for all services, and the recent appointment of second tier officers to posts within the new structure. In almost all cases, the remaining staff will be transferred in their existing posts.

17.1.2 The new City Development and Environment and Infrastructure Services were commenced on schedule on 1st April 2002. The new multi-functional Neighbourhood Services Sections will be commissioned on 29th July also on schedule. This marks the latest steps in the **most radical redesign of local authority service delivery in the UK**.

## 18. Knowledge Management

18.1 As part of the support for *aberdeen futures*' reorganisation of the Council's service delivery structure into Neighbourhood Teams, and closer working with our Community Plan Partners, the **development of an Information and Knowledge Management Strategy/Implementation Action Plan** is currently being prepared by the central research unit. To be effective, the Information and Knowledge Management strategy has to provide us with the means to plan,

collect, organise, use, control, disseminate and eventually dispose of information, which meets customers' expectations.

- 18.2 In terms of joined-up service delivery at a more local level, it is important to break the traditional mould of service-produced and held information to a situation of **more widely accessible information/knowledge within the confines of data protection and confidentiality**. This will involve everyone in managing and being able to access information and, in particular, the **need for a major change in the information culture of the Council** to positively exploit our information and knowledge resources.
- 18.3 To help achieve this, it is **important that elected members and chief officers provide the leadership** to enable others to develop and effect the changes that are required. This will help create an environment where the principles of sharing knowledge and information along with addressing Best Value are being met.

## 19. Communication

- 19.1 In the last year the Council's Chief Officers have reviewed internal communication and the approach to handling the media. As a result of this review one chief officer has been given responsibility for co-ordinating the council's approach to such matters.
- 19.2 Employees continue to be informed about the change process through regular issues of the **aberdeen** futures newsletter and the City Lights employee magazine. In addition, the Chief Executive has continued to invite all employees to face to face briefings with him. While, Citizens have continued to be informed through the Council's Bon Accord Newspaper (which is now available on the Council's Web Site)

## 20. Resources Management

### 20.1 Finance

- 20.1.1 **Extremely tight financial settlements** meant that both Revenue and Capital Budgets had to be very closely monitored throughout the year. Monitoring statements were presented to the Finance Monitoring Sub Committee on a regular basis.

- 20.1.2 The draft accounts are due to be presented to Council on 26th June 2002. The General Fund Revenue Account, Housing Revenue Account and the Common Good each show a **better than budget out-turn position**. The Housing and Non Housing Capital Accounts both reveal an out-turn position within the Scottish Executive Consent limits.
- 20.1.3 There is a **need for continued close monitoring of both Revenue and Capital budgets in the current financial year**. This is more important than ever this year given the Service Restructuring underway in the council and the need to realign budgets and appoint new budget holders, etc.
- 20.1.4 The Scottish Executive has embarked on its 3 year review of local government funding. The Corporate Director of Finance and ICT, on behalf of the Scottish Director of Finance Section gave evidence to the Scottish Parliament Local Government Committee on the Spending Review. The **main emphasis of the presentation was to adequately fund core services with less diversion of funds to new initiatives**. We await the outcome of the Spending Review, which is due to be announced later in the year.
- 20.1.5 The City Council has been **selected as one of authorities to “Road Test” a new system of capital finance**. This involved the planned replacement of capital consent controls with a system of Prudential indicators. The main Prudential Centre is affordability, i.e. whether the capital financing costs can be contained within Revenue Budgets (and ultimately met by the Council Tax Payers). The **results of the Road Testing will be made available later this year**, and it is hoped that the new Prudential Regime will be implemented in April 2003. The Scottish Executive has indicated that it plans to exclude the Housing Revenue Account Plan from the new Prudential Regime. The City Council has therefore submitted a case for including the HRA within the Prudential Regime.
- 20.1.6 The main source of financing local authority capital expenditure is the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) which lends to local authorities at predetermined rates. The Corporate Director of Finance and ICT was appointed a PWLB Commissioner during the year.

## 20.2 Property

- 20.2.1 An ongoing **review of the Council's non-operational portfolio** is being carried out to ensure that these properties continue to perform in terms of the twin criteria of providing suitable accommodation for economic activity in the City and providing revenue income to the Council.

- 20.2.2 At a more strategic level the Council has instructed that investigations are instigated into the possibility of using the value of existing property assets as collateral in the **formation of a Development Company** targeted with delivering property to fulfil operational and economic development objectives is being investigated. The current position is that Scottish Enterprise Grampian, in association with Aberdeen City Centre Partnership, are assisting in funding the commissioning of consultants in order that a full appraisal can be undertaken.
- 20.2.3 This year 12 properties have been sold, realising approximately **£13.6M in capital enhancements** for the Council. This included 5 miscellaneous commercial premises, which had been identified as under-performing assets.
- 20.2.4 The Council leases approximately 750 commercial premises, including factories, shops, offices and licensed premises. Consistently through the year only 4% (ie 30 premises) were vacant at any one time. Many of these properties are identified as being suitable for start up businesses and businesses wishing to expand.
- 20.2.5 A major aspect of the work undertaken within the property sector over the last twelve months is the **increase of partnership working**; utilising property to jointly work to **achieve beneficial improvements for the citizen's of Aberdeen**. This includes the disposal of the former Timmer Market Site in the Castlegate to Grampian Housing Association to facilitate the regeneration of the Castlegate; the excambion of land to Grampian Primary Care Trust to enable the construction of a new Neighbourhood Centre in Torry; and the sale of land at Garthdee to Robert Gordon University to allow much needed medical facilities to be constructed.
- 20.2.6 Aberdeen will again be participating in **Doors Open Day** this year. On weekends throughout September hundreds of buildings throughout Scotland, and thousands of buildings around Europe, that are not normally open to the public will be open free of charge. The **Aberdeen Doors Open Day will be on 14 September**. The Council properties that will be open for all or part of the day are:

The Town House  
 The Carillon, St Nicholas Kirk  
 The Music Hall (murals)  
 The Tolbooth  
 The Museum of Education: the Victorian Classroom

## 21. Health and Safety

- 21.1 A **Health and Safety Guidance Manual** has been developed by Health and Safety staff and is available on the Intranet. The manual's main purpose is as an aid to management and supervisory staff and it is linked to associated policies and procedures, providing a useful source of reference for Council employees.
- 21.2 In response to the Health and Safety Commission's "Re-vitalising Health and Safety" campaign the corporate **Health and Safety Committee have set improvement performance targets**. While the campaign runs until 2010 we have set interim targets for achievement by 2004. The first of these is a 5% reduction in the incidence rate of all reportable accidents to employees and our returns for 2001 / 2 show an improvement of more than 9% (92 accidents compared to 102 accidents) over the year 2000 / 1.
- 21.3 During the last year staff have been working on the creation of an electronic **register of asbestos in Council properties**. Commissioning trials are now almost complete and the register will be in operation in the near future.
- 21.4 During October, the Council participated in the "**European Week for Health and Safety**", which is now an annual event giving the opportunity to promote Health and Safety matters. Activities included back pain workshops, anti-stress massage therapy, lung function, blood pressure and body mass index checks. These events, which were extremely well supported, took place at St. Nicholas House, Woodhill House, Johnstone House, Kittybrewster and Summerhill and were organised in conjunction with colleagues from UNISON and Aberdeen Industrial Doctors. We have also participated in the National "No-Smoking Day" and "Stress Down Friday" in support of Capability Scotland and "Walk a Mile for Barnardos" (with whom the Council have several partnership projects).
- 21.5 The Resources Management Committee has recently approved corporate policies on both Noise and Vibration hazards. These hazards are most relevant to employees working on grounds, roads, vehicle maintenance and buildings. Both policies will provide the framework for the management of risks from noise and vibration in the future.

## 22. Performance Management

### 22.1 Corporate

- 22.1.1 The drive for **Continuous Improvement (including Best Value)** has continued throughout the past year. It has been integrated into the **aberdeen** *futures*

approach as the management agenda by which services and service delivery is being improved and made more efficient.

22.1.2 A programme of half-yearly reporting to the Standards and Scrutiny Committee has been commenced, providing an overview of progress on the broad range of aspects of Continuous Improvement and Best Value. At a more detailed level, more frequent reports on the progress of Best Value service reviews, and on the rigour with which these service reviews are carried out, are being submitted to the Service Monitoring Panel and to the Committee respectively.

22.1.3 Following the completion of **corporate service reviews** in the areas of **School Meals, Welfare Catering** and **Vehicle Maintenance**, as intimated in last year's report, further reports of service reviews have been submitted to the appropriate committees in respect of -

- refuse collection
- environmental cleansing
- grounds maintenance
- other catering (parks, venues and sports facilities, but excluding civic catering and Beach Ballroom)
- roads construction and maintenance
- housing repairs

In the case of refuse collection, environmental cleansing, roads, and housing repairs, the rigour assessment reports concluded that there was further work to be done, and this is ongoing. In the case of grounds maintenance, the report proposed an implementation plan for taking the review through to completion, and this also is ongoing.

22.1.4 In addition to the foregoing corporate reviews, many other **departmental service reviews** and **continuous improvement projects** are ongoing.

22.1.5 The work on the development and maintenance of satisfactory monitoring systems in respect of the Contracting Services is close to completion. So also is the work on the development and maintenance of satisfactory arrangements for client/contractor meetings and action planning arising from those meetings.

22.1.6 Over the course of the past year, the Council has undergone a third **Performance Management and Planning Audit** in which progress in Best Value was examined both at corporate level and in the service areas of **Housing** and **Personnel**. The audit also included a revisiting of services audited in previous years to check that the improvement plans were being duly implemented. The Council's new external auditors have issued generally

favourable reports, in the sense that they are satisfied with the commitment being shown and the progress being made in all audited areas.

22.1.7 The Standards and Scrutiny Committee and the Service Monitoring Panel continue to explore ways of enhancing their effectiveness in terms of promoting the improvement of standards and challenging those areas of service and activity where there is a need for further improvement and/or quicker progress.

22.1.8 We are about to implement a **comprehensive performance management regime** for all Council activities. This will link to the roll out of a standard **Staff Development and Appraisal Scheme**. All areas of service will set, or reset where they already exist, targets for service delivery and service improvement. Success against these targets are, and will increasingly be, rigorously monitored and performance made known to the people of Aberdeen.

## 23. Customer Care

23.1 The Customer Service Centre is the first initiative in the longer-term **development of one-stop services throughout the City**. Underlying this initiative is the principles of *aberddeen futures* that the Citizen-Council interface should be at a neighbourhood level and that the 'one stop approach' should be developed to enable local people to gain access to council services and information.

23.2 The **Customer Service Centre was opened on 18th March 2002** and is located in the building formerly used as the Tourist Information Centre (on Broad Street, next to St. Nicholas House). The first three months of the operation of the Centre are seen as the opportunity to review the services being offered within the Centre. It is anticipated that a formal launch of the Centre will be held in July.

23.3 What the Centre offers:-

A member of the public is able to use the Centre to -

- Obtain parking permits
- Obtain travel and other concession cards
- Obtain 'Access to Leisure' passes
- Pay parking fines
- Pick up job application packs for Council vacancies
- Access information on Council and partner services and have queries answered
- Pick up forms and leaflets

- 23.4 The Council **plans to extend the range of services** provided at the Centre over time. To make sure that any new services are those that are the ones most in demand, the Council will be monitoring carefully what local people use the Centre for and what their greatest information needs are.

- 23.5 The **Opening Hours of the Centre** are:-

Monday - Friday 8:30am - 5:30pm, remaining open until 8pm on Thursdays. It will also be open on Saturday mornings between 9am and 12 noon.

## **24. Culture**

- 24.1 In common with all organisations the culture within Aberdeen City Council is vital to achieving improvements to meet our own objectives and the aspirations of the City. Work is ongoing to progress a number of actions which are aimed at promoting a positive "can do" culture throughout the Council.

## **25. Leadership**

- 25.1 Leadership at all levels is considered **key to the continued success of the organisation**. It is recognised as such by both central government and the Scottish Parliament. The establishment of the Scottish Leadership Foundation is evidence of the importance given to leadership in Scotland.
- 25.2 Within Aberdeen City Council work is underway within the Corporate Management Team on **enhancing and developing Chief Officers leadership skills and knowledge**.
- 25.3 A programme of leadership development is currently being developed which will cascade through the organisation based on **an "action" centred approach to leadership**. The aim is to develop high profile confident leaders who engender both a positive "can do" attitude and "get things done" mentality. The challenge for us is to be able to inspire all staff in all parts of the Council to aspire to, and achieve, the degree of commitment already shown by our best staff and our high achieving areas of service delivery. We will only be able to do this where we first demonstrate such standards and commitment ourselves.

## **26. Conclusion**

- 26.1 2001/02 has been another challenging, but successful year for Aberdeen city Council. This report demonstrates the range and extent of services which we



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deliver against a background of high resource constraint and, against that background. the extent of success which we have achieved.

- 26.2 The ultimate test for an organisation is that in a period of rapid change it can accurately predict the nature and direction of that change is likely to take and prepare for it in ways that are compatible with the basic aspirations of the organisation. Aberdeen City Council has demonstrated over successive years that we have the capacity to do this and this is amply demonstrated by the performance reflected in this report.
- 26.3 Finally, this can not be achieved without the support, commitment and, often, vision of all the key individuals and groups who were involved in , or can influence, the process. I would close this 2001 - 2002 report by acknowledging the support of elected members, our staff and trades union, our partner organisations and the wider community in Aberdeen.

Douglas Paterson  
Chief Executive  
June 2002.

Council Meeting, 26th June, 2002

**APPENDIX B**

**ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL**

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997**

**AND**

**THE ACQUISITION OF LAND (AUTHORISATION PROCEDURE)(SCOTLAND) ACT  
1947**

**THE ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL (19/20/21 REGENT QUAY, ABERDEEN)  
COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 2002**

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL (hereinafter referred to as “the Acquiring Authority”) in exercise of the powers conferred on them by Section 189 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 and of all other powers enabling them in that behalf hereby make the following Compulsory Purchase Order:

- 1      (1)      This Order may be cited as “The Aberdeen City Council (19/20/21 Regent Quay, Aberdeen) Compulsory Purchaser Order 2002”.
- (2)      The Interpretation Act 1978 shall apply for the interpretation of this Order as it applies for the interpretation of an Act of Parliament.
- 2      Subject to the provisions of this Order the Acquiring Authority are hereby authorised to purchase compulsorily the land which is described in the Schedule hereto and is shown delineated and coloured pink on the map signed and sealed with reference to this Order and marked “Map referred to in The Aberdeen City Council (19/20/21 Regent Quay, Aberdeen) Compulsory Purchase Order 2002” for the purpose of securing the carrying out of development, redevelopment or improvement of the land which is suitable therefor: IN WITNESS WHEREOF

**SCHEDULE**

<b>Description of the Land</b>	<b>Owners or Reputed Owners</b>	<b>Lessees or Occupiers</b>
<p>Shop at 19 Regent Quay with pertinents.</p> <p>Eastmost First Floor Flat at 20 Regent Quay with pertinents.</p> <p>Westmost First Floor Flat at 20 Regent Quay with pertinents.</p> <p>Eastmost Second Floor Flat at 20 Regent Quay with pertinents.</p> <p>Westmost Second Floor Flat at 20 Regent Quay with pertinents.</p> <p>Eastmost Attic Floor Flat at 20 Regent Quay with pertinents.</p> <p>Westmost Attic Floor Flat at 20 Regent Quay with pertinents.</p> <p>Back Cottage at 20 Regent Quay with pertinents.</p> <p>Shop at 21 Regent Quay with pertinents.</p>	<p>Mr George Williamson, 6 Hilltop Road, Cults, Aberdeen</p>	<p>None</p>