

## FC108.ECONOMIC DOWNTURN - ACTION PLAN

In terms of the Council's Scheme of Delegation, this item had been called into Council by Provost Reid and Councillor Gow.

There was submitted (circulated) (a) Extract of Minute of Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 13 January 2009, and (b) Report by the Chief Executive (a) summarising additional measures aimed at ameliorating the impact of the economic downturn in the local area, and (b) attaching as an appendix, the approved Action Plan detailing the support packages for local businesses.

Councillor A MacDonald, seconded by Councillor Kenna, moved that Council:-

- (1) "Notes comments and intended actions for the suggested additional items of business support covered by this report and agrees to make the following changes to the existing recommendations.
- (2) Agrees the Action Plan as outlined in the report with the following amendments:
  - 2.1 To include non VAT rated businesses in all areas of business support.
  - 2.2 To instruct officers to bring a report back to Committee as soon as possible on the establishment of a council loan fund along similar lines as the BP loan fund that will provide short term opportunities for new and existing companies.
  - 2.3 That the Council's Economic Strategy and Development Committee must alter its membership and role to recognise the challenging times we live in. It has to become a Committee of entrepreneurial challenge containing the best of the best with representatives of local businesses large and small, those entrusted with the provision of business support and any other relevant stakeholder if we are serious about tackling the problems we have within the local economy.
  - 2.4 To note the concerns expressed by the Grangemouth Independent Retailers Association and agree to investigate these concerns accordingly, reporting back to the first available meeting of the Economic Strategy and Development Committee. In particular officers are asked to produce a comparator between public and private sector ground rents/lease costs and report findings and proposals back to members".

By way of an amendment, Councillor Gow seconded by Councillor Fry moved the recommendations contained in the Report.

On a division 12 members voted for the motion and 15 voted for the amendment.

Accordingly:-

**NOTED** the comments and intended actions for the suggested additional items of business support covered by the Report; and

**AGREED** that the existing business support services together with the Action Plan provide a positive range of support for local businesses in the current financial climate.