

Crichiebank Business Centre
Mill Road
Inverurie
Aberdeenshire
AB51 5NQ
T: 07894 176222
E: jackie@thejaconsultancy.co.uk
www.jackieallen.co.uk



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Wednesday, 25 April 2018

IBA voices concerns about the Aberdeenshire Council proposal “Work Space – Office Space Strategy” and its potential implications for Inverurie

On Wednesday 24th April 2018 the Inverurie Business Association (IBA) hosted a meeting along with We Are Inverurie (WAI) and Inverurie Community Council (ICC) to meet with representatives from Aberdeenshire Council, for discussion on the new Council report “Work Space – Office Space Strategy” which was recently made public on the council’s website.

The meeting was called at short-notice for the Inverurie representatives to note their concerns prior to the report being taken to the full council meeting scheduled for 26th April 2018.

The “Work Space – Office Space Strategy” report, available on the Aberdeenshire Council website, was compiled by Allan Whyte – Head of Property and FM at Aberdeenshire Council. The report proposes that the council exit Gordon House, Inverurie and relocate 150 of the current 597 staff to new premises that are out with Inverurie.

In addition, the report proposes for the refurbishment of the Inverurie Town Hall including the addition of an extension for offices, along with parking provision at the old Market Place School site. Whilst the IBA supports the redevelopment of the Town Hall and sees it as a major benefit, there are concerns as to the impact that the Office Space Strategy may have on the town.

Concerns raised at the meeting included: 150 job losses in Inverurie, the knock on negative economic impact to the town, the risk to the council relying on an unconfirmed property agreement at Woodhill House to support their preferred proposal and the negative impression of the council preferring to be located in Aberdeen city rather than being within the Aberdeenshire boundaries. Other issues raised include the longstanding traffic congestion around the town centre and the impact that the location of the additional parking proposed.

Victoria Withy, Chairman of the IBA proposed a motion calling on Aberdeenshire Councillors to delay a decision on the proposed office strategy document and agree to, a) consider locating all council office within the boundaries of Aberdeenshire, b) carry out a full job and economic impact assessment on the various options available for Inverurie, c) agree to consult all relevant and interested parties impacted by the final proposals. On a show of hands, 100% of the attendees eligible to vote agreed with this motion, with one abstention. Ron Reid representing Inverurie Community Council, voiced disquiet as to the unseemly haste on such a major decision.

Ian Sinclair, Chairman of We Are Inverurie Ltd commented the he felt that Aberdeenshire Councillors should be prioritising the option which takes the headquarter into the Shire and not to use another building that is not fit for purpose and costly to maintain for modern office standards.



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Media Contact

Jackie Allen Consultancy at jackie@thejaconsultancy.co.uk. Tel: 0333 344 3565. Mobile: 07984 176222

About Inverurie Business Association

The IBA aims to promote and help all businesses in Inverurie and the surrounding area so all can play an effective role as the town continues to develop as a great place to live, work and do business for future generations.

The IBA Committee can quickly react to issues that affect you by speaking directly to local and national Government on behalf of the business community.

The IBA offers regular opportunities for Members to meet through networking events with expert speakers on a wide range of topics offering advice and assistance.

Our mission is simple: Working together better.

Picture attached for consideration

