

Cabinet
24 February 2015

Irvine, 24 February 2015 - At a Meeting of the Cabinet of North Ayrshire Council at 2.30 p.m.

Present

Willie Gibson, Alan Hill, Marie Burns, Anthea Dickson, Tony Gurney and Ruth Maguire.

Also Present

Donald Reid.

In Attendance

E. Murray, Chief Executive; L. Friel, Executive Director, G. Macgregor, Head of Customer, People and Corporate Support, S. Humphries, Chief Revenues and Benefits Officer and E. Gunn-Stewart, Customer Services Manager (Finance and Corporate Support); J. Butcher, Executive Director (Education and Youth Employment); C. Hatton, Executive Director (Place); K. Yeomans, Executive Director and S. Agass, Interim Head of Service (Economic Growth) (Economy and Communities); R. Moore, Communications Officer (Media and Internal Communications) and A. Little, Committee Services Officer (Chief Executive's).

Chair

Councillor Gibson in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

John Bruce.

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest by Members in terms of Standing Order 16 and Section 5 of the Code of Conduct for Councillors.

3. Minutes

The accuracy of the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2015 were confirmed and the Minutes signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

3. Questions

In terms of Standing Order No. 12, there was submitted the following question:-

(a) a question by Councillor Reid to the Cabinet Member for Community and Culture Policy and Service in the following terms:-

"Can the cabinet member advise on the success of the advisory panels, how often each has met and the key subjects of interest where these meetings have formulated policy changes in the council?"

Councillor Hill thanked the Member for his question and responded in the following terms:-

The Physical Environment Advisory Panel met on 10 occasions and the Communities and Lifelong Learning Advisory Panel met on 2 occasions. The Minutes of these meetings were submitted to Cabinet throughout 2014.

The key subjects considered by these Panels was detailed in a written response that was circulated to Councillor Reid. The response outlined that the Physical Environment Panel meetings had considered areas in relation to the Development of the Parking Strategy, Litter Strategy, Irvine Cycle Friendly Town Study, Environmental, Sustainability and Climate Change, Town Centre Parking Strategy, Hunterston B - Disposal of Radioactive Waste, Flood Risk Management Strategy and Winter Weather and Emergencies Plan 2014/15. Meetings of the Community and Lifelong Learning Advisory Panel had considered areas in relation to the Fairtrade Award for North Ayrshire Schools, Scots Language Paper, 600 Hours and Provision for 2 Year Olds, 2014 progress report, STEM, 1+2 Languages in Schools, Ayrshire College, 2014 Community Events and Community Asset Transfer.

A restructure of Council services and the appointment of Executive Directors of (Education and Youth Employment) and (Economy and Communities) resulted in two meetings of the Communities and Lifelong Learning Advisory Panel taking place in 2014.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Reid asked if opportunities to discuss areas such as the provision of school exam leave may have been available to Members if the Communities and Lifelong Learning Advisory Panel had met more frequently during 2014.

Councillor Hill responded by advising that the remit of the Advisory Panels is to consider matters of policy. Operational issues such as the provision of school exam leave would be for officers to determine and would not have been considered by the Communities and Lifelong Learning Panel.

4. Customer Service Strategy Update February 2015

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on the implementation of the Customer Service Strategy and key areas of progress and improvements in technology, customer service standards, staff development, and customer engagement. The Cabinet also received a presentation by the Customer Services Manager.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to:-

- a range of customer satisfaction questions that are asked regarding the Council service received, the Customer Service experience and the customers' overall Council experience; and
- work that is underway to integrate the Roads maintenance management system with the Lagan system.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note progress; and (b) receive reports on progress on a 6 monthly basis.

5. .Scot Internet Domain Registration

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) which provided information on (a) the proposed migration from the Council's existing internet domain registration format to the new '.scot'; and (b) a consultation exercise that will be undertaken by the Scottish Government on the best approach to the use of the new '.scot' domain within the public sector.

The Cabinet agreed (a) to support the move to '.scot' in principle; and (b) that the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) report to a future meeting on a migration plan following the Scottish Government consultation on the implementation approach.

6. Local Development Plan: Strategic Road Improvements

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on (a) a range of potential trunk road improvements included in the Local Development Plan; (b) the preparation of the Irvine Bay Transport Model Protocol for managing implementation of improvements (Appendix 1); and (c) the proposed legal assurances between the Council and Transport Scotland that will be included in a Minute of Agreement.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) approve the Irvine Bay Transport Model Protocol for managing implementation of the improvements; and (b) delegate signature of the Minute of Agreement between North Ayrshire Council and Transport Scotland to the Executive Director (Economy and Communities).

7. European Structural and Investment Fund Programmes in Scotland 2014-20

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) which provided information on (a) the integration of funds into a single European Structural and Investment Funds framework (ESIF); (b) the content of 2014/20 operational programmes; (c) means of programme disbursement; (d) implications for North Ayrshire; and (e) proposed activity in maximising benefit to North Ayrshire.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note progress in the development and approval of frameworks governing access to EU funding programmes in Scotland 2014-20; (b) note the implications of this for North Ayrshire; and, (c) instruct officers to develop funding applications as outlined in Section 2.12 - 2.18 of the report; and (d) to report on progress thereafter.

8. Strategic Review of Educational Services

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on (a) the Interim Report of the Strategic Review of Educational Services; (b) the three workstream groups to deliver on a number of key objectives and progress against each of the objectives; and (c) the anticipated completion of the review and final report in November 2015.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to:-

- the development of a Programme of Change that will be designed to raise achievement and deliver more equitable outcomes;
- the implementation of the Corporate Transport Hub that provides a corporate approach to the organisation of school transport; and
- the availability of more fit for purpose vehicles.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note the contents of the Interim Report and progress made towards the submission of the final report in November 2015; and (b) that the Executive Director (Place) provide information to Members on the processes in place to ensure all vehicles used for school transport are fit for purpose.

9. Planning Performance Framework

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on (a) feedback from the Scottish Government on the Council's Planning Performance Framework 3 (Appendix 1); and (b) the proposed action programme as outlined in Appendix 2.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note the feedback contained within Appendix 1 to the report; and (b) approve the action programme contained within Appendix 2.

10. Non Standard Lending

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) which provided information on progress made against some of the key recommendations of the Council's short-life non standard lending working group, including Debt and Money Advice Services, Credit Unions, Not for Profit Loan Fund and Rent-to-Buy Social Enterprise Schemes and advanced payment of earnings.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note the progress made on the review of non-standard lending recommendations as set out in the action plan at Appendix 1 to the report; (b) approve the recommendations outlined in the report; and (c) note that a further progress report will be submitted to Cabinet in April 2015.

11. Minutes of the Physical Environment Advisory Panel

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Place) on the minute of the Physical Environment Advisory Panel held on 26 January 2015.

The Cabinet was advised that an amendment was required in respect of the statement made by Councillor Reid at Item 1 - Minutes of Previous Meeting - 15 December 2014. The amendment would be recorded at the next meeting of the Advisory Panel.

Noted.

The meeting ended at 3.30 p.m.