



**NORTH AYRSHIRE**  
COUNCIL

Cunninghame House,  
Irvine.

6 March 2014

### **Cabinet**

You are requested to attend a Meeting of the Cabinet of North Ayrshire Council to be held in the Council Chambers, Cunninghame House, Irvine on **TUESDAY 11 MARCH 2014** at **2.30 p.m.** to consider the undernoted business.

Yours faithfully

Elma Murray

Chief Executive

**1. Declarations of Interest**

Members are requested to give notice of any declaration of interest in respect of items of business on the agenda.

**2. Minutes (Page 5)**

The accuracy of the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2014 will be confirmed and the Minutes signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (copy enclosed).

**3. North Ayrshire Employability and Skills Strategy (Page 9)**

Submit report by the Corporate Director (Development and Environment) and receive a presentation on the findings from the North Ayrshire Employability and Skills review and seeking agreement to the development of a number of work streams to develop detailed action plans based on the recommendations (copy enclosed).

## **GENERAL BUSINESS FOR DECISION**

### **Reports by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support)**

**4. Write-off of Ex Tenant Arrears (Page 23)**

Submit report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on tenant rent arrears and court costs, and seeking approval to write-off irrecoverable amounts (copy enclosed).

**5. Annual Review of Fees and Charges (Page 27)**

Submit report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on the proposed increases in the level of fees and charges for Council services from April 2014 (copy enclosed).

**6. Largs: 3 Morris Street: Ground Floor, Left Rear: Closing Order (Page 43)**

Submit report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) seeking approval for the serving of a Closing Order on the property at Ground Floor, Left Rear, 3 Morris Street, Largs (copy enclosed).

### **Reports by the Corporate Director (Development and Environment)**

**7. Housing Service Standards (Page 45)**

Submit report by the Corporate Director (Development and Environment) on the outcome of the review of the Housing Service Standards (copy enclosed).

**8. Urgent Items**

Any other item which the Chairs considers to be urgent.

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## Cabinet

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Sederunt: **Elected Members**

Willie Gibson (Chair)  
Alan Hill (Vice-Chair)  
Marie Burns  
John Bruce  
Anthea Dickson  
Tony Gurney  
Ruth Maguire

Chair:

Attending:

Apologies:

Meeting Ended:



Cabinet  
25 February 2014

**Irvine, 25 February 2014** - At a meeting of the Cabinet of North Ayrshire Council at 2.30 p.m.

**Present**

Willie Gibson, Alan Hill, Marie Burns, John Bruce, Tony Gurney and Ruth Maguire.

**Also Present**

Alex Gallagher, Tom Marshall and Alex McLean.

**In Attendance**

E. Murray, Chief Executive; L. Friel, Corporate Director, D. Tate, Senior Manager (Property Management and Investment), P. Doak, Senior Manager (Internal Audit and Risk Management), T. Reaney, Procurement Manager and J. Hamilton, Employment Services Manager (Finance and Corporate Support); C. Hatton, Corporate Director, K. Yeomans, Head of Service (Development Planning) and A. Laurenson, Team Manager (Regeneration) (Development and Environment); C. Kirk, Corporate Director (Education and Skills); M. Gilmour, Senior Communications Officer and A. Little, Committee Services Officer (Chief Executive's Service).

**Chair**

Councillor Gibson in the Chair.

**Apologies for Absence**

Anthea Dickson.

**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.

**2. Minutes**

The accuracy of the Minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2014 was confirmed and the Minutes signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, subject to the following amendment in respect of Item 4 - Re-zoning the Denominational Primary School Catchment Areas in Kilwinning:

The Cabinet agreed to (a) *"note the information contained within the report;"* and (b) to receive (i) statutory public consultation documents; and (ii) updates on the progress of the proposal at a future meeting of the Cabinet.

### **3. Millport Regeneration**

Submitted report and presentation by the Corporate Director (Development and Environment) on progress with a series of regeneration projects in Millport.

The report and presentation provided information on:-

- the need for regeneration of Millport;
- the operation of Millport Marine Biological Station by Field Studies Council and phased capital investment that will deliver new accommodation, parking and renewable energy and refurbishment of the existing accommodation and teaching facilities;
- the Townscape Heritage Programme that helps communities improve the built environment of conservation areas in need of investment;
- the re-submission of a bid for Townscape Heritage funding for the Millport Conservation Area in conjunction with a bid to the Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme that targets conservation areas with social and economic disadvantages;
- the identification of a preferred option for the future redevelopment of Millport Pier (Appendices 1 and 2 to the report) and the need to identify sources of external funding to develop the preferred option;
- the design of a shared use path through the centre of Millport to lessen pedestrian/cycle conflict and improvements to the Quayhead, as illustrated in Appendix 3 to the report;
- the potential for a community fuel facility on Cumbrae and a public consultation event that will take place on 18 March 2014; and
- the implementation of the Road Equivalent Tariff Scheme that will reduce the costs of ferry travel by car.

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

- a report that will be presented to the North Coast Area Committee in May 2014 on the Field Studies Council;
- the examination of six options for the redevelopment of Millport Pier and the identification of Option 5 as the preferred option for the pier; and
- the development of clear and focused proposals to target external project funding.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note the progress made with proposals for: Millport Marine Biological Station; Millport Conservation Area; Millport Pier; a shared use path and improvements to the Quayhead; (b) the preparation and submission of a bid for Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme funding; the re-submission of an application for Townscape Heritage Initiative funding; and, support a shopfront improvement scheme within Millport town centre; and (c) note that Option 5 provides the most efficient economic outcome for Millport Pier and that, subject to the securing of external funding, this be developed for further consideration.

#### **4. Gaelic Language Plan**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Education and Skills) on the outcome of the consultation events on the Gaelic Language Plan held in North Ayrshire and submissions received via the online consultation facility.

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

- new consultation on Gaelic Medium Education and the identification and promotion of clear pathways for parents who wish to have their children educated through the medium of Gaelic.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note the outcome of the consultation; and (b) approve the Gaelic Language Plan for submission to Bòrd na Gàidhlig.

#### **5. Tourism in North Ayrshire**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Development and Environment) on progress made in the development of the tourism economy of North Ayrshire.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note the progress which has been made in tourism development both at a regional level by the pan-Ayrshire Tourism Team and locally by North Ayrshire Council; (b) approve the approach of focusing on 3 key tourism priorities for future development; and, (c) approve the proposed work to develop a local tourism strategic policy and investment framework for future growth opportunities.

#### **6. Refurbishment of Cunninghame House**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on progress being made with the Cunninghame House refurbishment project; the result of the tender exercise for phase 1 of the works; and proposals for the award of contract for the phase 1 works.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the award of the contract for phase 1 of the works to James Frew Ltd, at a contract value of £1,301,839.36.

#### **7. Contract for Provision of Non-Life Insurance Services and Claims Handling Services**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on the result of the tender exercise for the provision of Non- Life Insurance Services and Claims Handling Services.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the award of the contract to Zurich Municipal Ltd, at a contract value of £10,990,304.01.

## **8. Maximising Attendance Performance - December 2013 (Quarter 3 Summary)**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on an analysis of sickness absence in Quarter 3 and the current year to date position.

Noted.

## **9. Housing Revenue Account Business Plan Implementation Group: Minutes of Meeting held on 17 January 2014**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Development and Environment) on the Minutes of the meeting of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan Implementation Group held on 17 January 2014.

Noted.

## **10. 1st Tier JCC and Corporate Health and Safety Group: Minutes of Meetings held on 6 February 2014**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the Minutes of the meetings of the 1st Tier JCC and the Corporate Health and Safety Group held on 6 February 2014.

At its meeting on 5 December 2013, the 1st Tier JCC agreed that each meeting would focus on a particular theme. The meeting on 6 February 2014 received a presentation from the Director (North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership) on Social Health and Integration - Preparing for Integration, which was well received.

The format of future meetings of the Corporate Health and Safety Group will also be reviewed.

Noted.

The meeting ended at 3.15 p.m.



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## **NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **Agenda Item 3**

**11 March 2014**

#### **Cabinet**

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**Subject:** **North Ayrshire Employability and Skills Strategy**

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**Purpose:** To advise the Cabinet of the findings from the North Ayrshire Employability and Skills review and seek agreement to the development of a number of work streams to develop detailed action plans based on the recommendations.

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**Recommendation:** The Cabinet is invited to (a) note the findings of the employability and skills review report and (b) agree that the time-limited work-streams at 2.6 are set up to develop detailed action plans to take forward the recommendations.

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#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 A paper seeking approval for a review of Employability and Skills and the development of an employability and skills strategy was presented to, and approved by Cabinet on 30 April 2013. Subsequent to this and following a competitive tendering process Rocketscience consultants were commissioned to carry out this work.
- 1.2 The review has been carried out at a time when North Ayrshire continues to have the highest claimant unemployment rate in Scotland and the fourth highest youth unemployment rate in Scotland - this is despite North Ayrshire having the biggest decrease of any Local Authority in Scotland in youth unemployment in the last 12 months.

#### **2. Current Position**

##### **Report Conclusions**

- 2.1 The report makes a number of observations and conclusions on how employability and skills services are delivered in North Ayrshire and factors that influence that delivery. These conclusions include:

- North Ayrshire Council and its partners are taking decisive action on Economic Development particularly around supporting businesses and delivering employability and skills services. The Council has a clear sense of the range of ways in which it can influence employment e.g. through the Modern Apprenticeship programmes and Youth Employment service which contributed towards a reduction of 450 of the 16-24 age group claimant count in the last 12 months.
- The employability and skills 'system' in North Ayrshire is made up of a wide range of organisations with varying roles. The potential contribution that all these organisations can make to the employability and skills agenda is more strongly appreciated in North Ayrshire than in many other areas - for example, health and social care have a clear understanding of the significance of their engagement with key client groups and of the opportunities they have to create jobs and work-like opportunities.
- However, the 'system' is complex because of the number of organisations involved and the different services provided. Some of these resources are not well aligned around agreed priorities, and not as focused as they could be on the needs of business and on their successful growth. It may also be difficult for businesses or individuals to navigate their way around the system.
- The review has confirmed that the significant 'jobs gap' in North Ayrshire is an issue of fundamental importance and lies behind the difficulty in making a serious impact on unemployment. The report concludes that the scale of the jobs gap means that the focus of the employability and skills effort should be on supporting business growth: sustainable employment can only be achieved with sustainable jobs growth. There needs to be better connections with businesses ensuring all potential for business growth is realised. Team North Ayrshire should lead on this but it is important that employability and skills are embedded in this approach.
- The report also highlights the role of smaller businesses and micro enterprises that have a significant capacity to increase their workforce – if the right support is available. It is important that the employability and skills service targets these businesses to encourage them with their recruitment.

- The current programme of employability support managed by North Ayrshire Council and delivered across the employability and skills pipeline, provides a range of approaches which meet the different needs of different client groups and has many services tailored to the needs of local businesses. Overall, performance is strong with examples of good practice. However, there are variations in performance and this review provides an opportunity to build on what is good and reconsider what is not working so well.
- The report concludes that it is the services which are specifically responding to the needs of business, e.g., the Youth Employment Service, Modern Apprenticeship programmes and the integrated employability service that are achieving the highest performance across the employability and skills pipeline.
- Demand for employability services continues to increase particularly for those who are longer term unemployed and those who are furthest from the labour market. The key programme of support for these clients furthest from the labour market is the Work Programme. The positive progression from the Work programme is low with an increasing number of clients returning to Jobcentre plus after two years on the Work Programme without any significant progression. However, there is an openness among members and officers of the Council, key partners, and the Prime Contractors to identify ways of responding to this and providing more intensive support for those furthest from work.

## **Report recommendations**

- 2.2 The report recommends that a 'system-wide' approach will be the most effective approach to the future delivery of employability and skills services in North Ayrshire. This essentially means all partners agreeing to work together in a more co-ordinated manner, being clear about their respective roles and the relationships they need to have to perform effectively. This will mean better performance management across the system as well as better analysis and sharing of data.
- 2.3 In practice this will mean focusing on the following broad recommendations:
- Future employability and skills services should respond to demand from business with clear links and alignment established with business Team North Ayrshire;
  - Future supply has to be flexible and responsive to demand from local businesses;

- Links between education at all stages and industry need to be improved;
- Long-term unemployment has increased in North Ayrshire over the last two years. There has to be a focus on tackling the barriers which are causing this trend.
- There needs to be better co-ordination of employability and skills system across North Ayrshire. There has to be an increased focus on service improvement, service alignment targeting, performance management and reporting.

2.4 One of the early recommendations emerging from the report was a need to have a strategic group in North Ayrshire responsible for providing a strategic overview for employability and skills activity. This group has already met, chaired by Councillor Marie Burns. It has a membership of JobCentre Plus, Skills Development Scotland, The Ayrshire College, The Ayrshire Chamber of Commerce and North Ayrshire Council.

2.5 This group has agreed that a number of work-streams based on the key recommendations of the report should be set up. These work-streams will develop more detailed actions around each of the recommendations and will be led by different partners on approval. These actions will then be collated into an employability and skills plan for North Ayrshire.

2.6 The work-streams recommended are:-

**Work-Stream 1: Understanding business demand – better information and intelligence**

The task is to support business growth by understanding the specific needs of business. This work-stream will focus on how information can be collated and analysed more effectively to inform current and future skills provision. This will mean sharing and disseminating intelligence across partners.

**Work-Stream 2: Future employability and skills supply**

This will focus on future activity and how this can be modelled to deliver relevant and responsive services to local people and local businesses. This may include a rapid response to current demand from businesses looking for employees but also seek to address the longer term needs identified by local businesses. Early actions may focus on issues around workforce planning (both public/private), encouraging micro enterprises to employ etc.

### **Work-Stream 3: Linking education to employability**

This work-stream will examine how links are improved between the education system and business. This stream will tie in with the review of education that is currently on-going. A number of areas this work-stream may consider include: the recommendations of the Wood commission on vocational education; more active management of transition to, and through work, for those leaving school; the senior phase of curriculum for excellence and how this can be improved to achieve sustainable progressions relevant to the local economy.

### **Work-Stream 4: Managing information**

This work stream will focus on improving performance. This will review performance measurement across the employability and skills system and ensure that the right Performance Indicators are being measured. It will focus on collating and presenting performance information both quantitative and qualitative and measuring customer satisfaction to demonstrate impact across the employability and skills system In North Ayrshire.

### **Work-Stream 5: Support to those furthest from the labour market**

This work-stream will put actions in place that will target support at those who require most support in overcoming specific barriers such as lack of work experience, issues with addictions, numeracy and literacy, etc.

- 2.7 Detailed action plans, lead partner, measurement and timescales will be developed for each of the work-streams. Templates detailing the remit for each of the work-streams, membership and Lead Officer are attached in Appendix 1.

## **3. Proposals**

- 3.1 The Cabinet is invited to (a) note the findings of the employability and skills review report and (b) agree that the time - limited work-streams at 2.6 are set up to develop detailed action plans to take forward the recommendations.

## **4. Implications**

### Financial Implications

- 4.1 The review concludes that improving employability and skills services is about managing the system and improving performance rather than increasing resources. There may be need to shift resources across different elements of the work-streams but that will be determined in due course. On-going consideration through each of the work-streams will have to be given to the implications of the European Structural Funds 2014-2020 programme and how this may provide additional resources to develop and deliver the employability and skills programme.

### Human Resource Implications

- 4.2 There are no Human Resource implications from this report.

### Legal Implications

- 4.3 There are no Legal implications from this report.

### Equality Implications

- 4.4 There are no equality implications from this report.

### Environmental Implications

- 4.5 There are no environmental implications from this report.

### Implications for Key Priorities

- 4.6 Increasing the numbers in employment and decreasing the numbers in unemployment is a key priority for North Ayrshire Council. This is reflected in the Council's plan and the Single Outcome Agreement - A Working North Ayrshire' and, addresses the strategic objectives set out in the North Ayrshire Economic and Regeneration Strategy relating to tackling worklessness and making North Ayrshire a leading place to do business. The implications of the review's recommendations will make a significant contribution to addressing these policy objectives.

### Community Benefit Implications

- 4.7 This service will support community benefit in the broadest sense, directly supporting and engaging with local communities but also specifically targeting the business community. Services will also respond to 'community benefit' clauses in public sector contracts to ensure maximum impact for local people, local businesses and ultimately local communities.

## **5. Consultations**

- 5.1 Consultations have taken place with all directorates within North Ayrshire Council, members of the Economic Development and Regeneration Board, local businesses, The Scottish Government, Skills Development Scotland, Irvine Bay Regeneration Company, The Ayrshire College, JobCentre plus, The Ayrshire Community Trust.

## **6. Conclusion**

- 6.1 Tackling unemployment is a key priority for North Ayrshire Council. A new labour market strategy will mean future resources are better targeted to achieve the best outcomes for local people, businesses and communities. It also reflects the changing remit of Economic Development Services with the focus on growing businesses, increasing jobs growth and ensuring that local businesses are getting the right skills to match their growth potential. This strategy will also ensure that there is a continued support for those furthest from the labour market and that more effort is made to maximise the impact of the wider partnership in this area.



CRAIG HATTON  
Corporate Director (Development and Environment)

Reference : AO/AB

For further information please contact Angus O'Henley, Economic Development Officer on 01294 324308

## **Background Papers**

None





## Work Stream template

Work-stream	Work stream 1: business demand – better information and intelligence
Lead Agency	Skills development Scotland
Lead officer	Katie Hutton, TBC
Membership	Skills Development Scotland NAC – Business development NAC – employability and skills Chamber of Commerce Job Centre plus The Ayrshire College
Remit of the group (still to be agreed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-ordinate activity with wider Team North Ayrshire to link into wider business development approach</li> <li>• Scope out models of engaging with businesses to identify their recruitment intentions and their skills requirements - both immediate and longer term.</li> <li>• Gather/Collate/analyse business information on business need relating to recruitment and skills requirements and disseminate to partners</li> <li>• Co-ordinate activity with Regional and Local Skills plans being developed by Skills Development Scotland</li> <li>• Consider how this information can be best used to inform supply activity</li> <li>• Report to North Ayrshire strategic employability and skills group</li> </ul>

Work-stream	Work stream 2: future employability and Skills Supply
Lead Agency	The Ayrshire College
Lead officer	Jackie Galbraith
Membership	The Ayrshire College North Ayrshire Council – business development North Ayrshire Council – employability and skills Skills Development Scotland Job centre Plus
Remit of the group (still to be agreed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on emerging intelligence, develop employability and skills models responsive to the needs of local people and local businesses</li> <li>• Examine and suggest delivery structures for future employability and skills services</li> <li>• Assess balance of current activity to ensure effective targeting</li> <li>• Based on intelligence on future skills demand, identify models of partnership working which will address these short and medium to longer term needs –vocational pathways</li> <li>• Liaise with the Ayrshire College and the University of the West of Scotland to shape their services to meet current and future demand</li> <li>• Encourage more efficient and effective partnership working to maximise impact of the employability and skills system in North Ayrshire</li> <li>• Report to North Ayrshire strategic employability and skills group</li> </ul>

Work-stream	Work stream 3: Linking Education to employability
Lead Agency	North Ayrshire Council
Lead officer	TBC ( has to be tied into education review – they should identify lead)
Membership	Education and Skills Skills Development Scotland Chamber of Commerce NAC – Employability and Skills NAC- Business development The Ayrshire College
Remit of the group (still to be agreed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Link into wider review of Education Services</li> <li>• Clarify current employability offer within North Ayrshire schools</li> <li>• Clarify current links between North Ayrshire education services and business community</li> <li>• Highlight examples of best practice for school/business engagement including activity already happening in North Ayrshire</li> <li>• Consider the recommendations of the commission on ‘developing Scotland’s Young workforce’ and their relevance to North Ayrshire</li> <li>• Improve the management of transition for those leaving school to ensure sustainable progressions</li> <li>• Consider the effectiveness of careers advice in North Ayrshire schools</li> <li>• Make recommendations on future employability and business links with schools</li> <li>• Report to North Ayrshire strategic employability and skills group</li> </ul>

Work-stream	Work stream 4: Managing information/performance management
Lead Agency	North Ayrshire Council
Lead officer	TBC ( Senior Employability Manager)
Membership	NAC – senior employability manager Skills Development Scotland NAC – employability and skills Job centre plus The Ayrshire College
Remit of the group (still to be agreed by lead)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a comprehensive performance management and reporting framework for the north Ayrshire employability and skills system</li> <li>• Consider how to collate and present performance indicators both qualitative and quantitative</li> <li>• Examine how to share information and intelligence across partners</li> <li>• Measure customer satisfaction</li> <li>• Consider how continuous evaluation and continuous improvement is embedded into the system</li> <li>• Report to North Ayrshire strategic employability and skills group</li> </ul>

Work-stream	Work stream 5: supporting those furthest from Labour Market
Lead Agency	North Ayrshire Council
Lead officer	TBC
Membership	NAC- Social Services and Health NAC -Housing Services NAC- Finance (welfare reform side) Jobcentre plus NAC – employability and skills
Remit of the group (still to be agreed by Lead)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a better analysis of those considered to be further from the labour market and the barriers they face</li> <li>• Identify current support services for this client group and assess effectiveness</li> <li>• Examine and recommend support and interventions to support this group make realistic progression – not necessarily into employment</li> <li>• Examine the impact of welfare reform on this group</li> <li>• Identify flexible and responsive models of support to engage and make positive progressions</li> <li>• Encourage more efficient and effective partnership working to maximise impact of the employability and skills system in North Ayrshire for this group</li> <li>• Report to North Ayrshire strategic employability and skills group</li> </ul>



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## **NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **Agenda Item 4**

**11 March 2014**

#### **Cabinet**

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**Subject:** **Write off of Tenant Rent Arrears**

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**Purpose:** To advise Cabinet on tenant rent arrears and court costs and to seek approval to write-off irrecoverable amounts.

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**Recommendation:** That Cabinet approves the write-offs totalling £59,653.59, as detailed in Section 2 of the report.

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#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Rent arrears, and associated court costs, for former tenants of Council houses accumulate for a variety of reasons, such as tenants abandoning the house, eviction, imprisonment, or death. In these circumstances, arrears can eventually be deemed to be irrecoverable.
- 1.2 In April 2013 Cabinet agreed to not pursue tenants in Council homeless temporary accommodation for under-occupation arrears, pending clarification of the definition of exempt supported accommodation from the DWP. A further report will be brought to Cabinet presently, by the Interim Head of Housing, to update Members on the current position, including proposals for managing under-occupancy arrears for temporary accommodation going forward.
- 1.3 In terms of the Council's Financial Regulations (Code of Financial Practice 3) relating to the control of income, individual arrears of under £1,000 can be written off with the approval of the Corporate Director (Finance & Corporate Support) after consultation with the Chief Executive.
- 1.4 Arrears of £1,000 and over can only be written off following approval by Elected Members.

#### **2. Current Position**

- 2.1 Reports are submitted twice yearly to Committee, seeking Members' approval to write off rent arrears. This is the second report to be presented to Cabinet for financial year 2013/14. The first report was submitted to Cabinet on 29 October 2013.

- 2.2 The table below summarises the total proposed write-offs for 2013/14, analysing write-offs between those that were approved in October and those that have been identified to be written off at this time. The table also further analyses total write-offs between mainstream rent (plus associated court costs) and temporary accommodation underoccupancy arrears.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Cabinet Date</b>	<b>Cabinet Date</b>	<b>Cabinet Date</b>	<b>Cabinet Date</b>
	<b>29 Oct 2013</b>	<b>11 March 2014</b>	<b>2013/14 Total</b>	<b>2012/13 Total</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Rent Arrears	129,199.90	72,209.10	201,490.00	184,008.60
Court Costs	12,629.52	5,270.94	17,900.46	35,087.66
<b>Mainstream sub-total</b>	<b>141,829.42</b>	<b>77,480.04</b>	<b>219,390.46</b>	<b>219,096.26</b>
Temp Accommodation Underoccupancy Arrears	-	95,772.87	95,772.87	-
<b>Total Write-off identified</b>	<b>141,829.42</b>	<b>173,333.91</b>	<b>315,163.33</b>	<b>219,096.26</b>
Already approved	(141,829.42)	(113,680.32)	(255,509.74)	(219,096.26)
<b>Write-off per this report</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>59,653.59</b>	<b>59,653.59</b>	<b>-</b>

- 2.3 The proposed rent write-off of £168,062.97 represents 0.37% of the Council's budgeted house rent income for 2013/14.
- 2.4 £113,680.32 has been written off with the approval of the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support), after consultation with the Chief Executive, in accordance with the Code of Practice . The remaining £59,653.59, relating to tenants with total balances owed of £1,000 or more, requires the approval of Cabinet for write off.
- 2.5 The balance of £59,653.59, noted above, includes £28,776.75 in relation to under occupancy arrears for homeless temporary accommodation whilst the remainder relates to Tenant accounts that have been pursued by Legal Services but where all avenues open to them have been exhausted, or the individual concerned has been sequestered.
- 2.6 The HRA Revenue budget for 2013/14 include Write offs a provision of £1,046,909 to meet the cost of rent write offs in the year.



- 2.7 It is anticipated that the total outstanding rent arrears as at 31 March 2014 (including mainstream arrears) will show a significant increase in comparison to the opening arrears position at 1 April 2013, as a result of the new under-occupation rules. Such an increase in arrears would require an uplift in the bad debt provision for 2013/14, which would be an additional charge against the rent write-offs budget referred to in paragraph 2.6 above. The Period 10 budgetary control report which will be submitted to Cabinet on 25th March 2014 will include a projection of the total spend against this budget.
- 2.8 The Welfare Reform Working Group will track changes to benefit entitlements, which may impact adversely on the level of rent arrears and subsequent write off. This will be monitored to identify issues at the earliest opportunity, minimising the impact on residents, the Council's rent collection levels and delivery of the Housing Business Plan.

### **3. Proposals**

- 3.1 It is proposed that Cabinet agrees to write off balances in excess of £1,000 per tenant, totalling £59,653.59.

### **4. Implications**

#### Financial Implications

- 4.1 The Housing Revenue Account budget for 2013/14 includes sufficient provision to meet the cost of the total proposed rent write-off, as outlined within this report.
- 4.2 The balances written off in relation to temporary accommodation under-occupancy arrears will not be pursued, as agreed by Cabinet in April 2013. Proposals for the ongoing management of these arrears will be brought to Cabinet presently.
- 4.3 The remainder of the proposed write offs, i.e. other than the temporary accommodation under-occupancy arrears, will continue to be pursued for recovery if new information becomes available.

#### Human Resource Implications

- 4.4 There are no Human Resource implications arising from this report.

#### Legal Implications

- 4.5 There are no Legal implications arising from this report.

#### Equality Implications

- 4.6 There are no Equality implications arising from this report.

#### Environmental Implications

- 4.7 There are no Environmental implications arising from this report.

#### Implications for Key Priorities

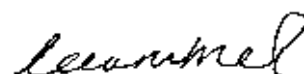
- 4.8 There are no implications for key priorities arising from this report.

### **5. Consultations**

- 5.1 The Interim Head of Housing has been consulted on this matter and supports the proposed action.

### **6. Conclusion**

- 6.1 It was agreed by Cabinet in April 2013 that temporary accommodation under-occupancy arrears will not be pursued, it is therefore recommended that Cabinet approves the write off of these sums. A report including proposals for managing these arrears going forward will be brought to Cabinet by the Interim Head of Housing presently.
- 6.2 It is recommended that Cabinet exercises its powers to write off the remainder of the proposed write offs (i.e. other than the temporary accommodation under-occupancy arrears) which are considered to be irrecoverable at this time, on the understanding that these debts will be pursued if new information comes to light.



LAURA FRIEL

Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support)

#### Reference :

For further information please contact Keith MacDonald, Management Accountant on 01294 324511

#### **Background Papers**

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## **NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **Agenda Item 5**

**11 March 2014**

#### **Cabinet**

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**Subject:** **Annual Review of Fees & Charges**

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**Purpose:** To advise the Cabinet of the proposed increases in the level of fees and charges for Council services from April 2014.

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**Recommendation:** That the Cabinet approves the increases to Council fees and charges, as outlined in the report, with effect from April 2014.

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#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 On 21 September 2010, a report was approved by the former Executive Committee which set out a corporate policy for charging for Council services. The policy established corporate principles and recognised the need to consider issues of access and equity in all decisions relating to a review of charges. Section 5 of the policy also stated a presumption that charges will be increased annually at least in line with inflation unless there is a clear case for not doing so.
- 1.2 Some statutory charges are set at national level and are, therefore, out-with the scope of this report. Where Council charges are discretionary there is scope to review in line with the policy. A review of the current level of fees and charges has been carried out and proposals for increases identified.

#### **2. Current Position**

- 2.1 In some instances the revenue budget for 2014/15 reflects additional income to be achieved.
- 2.2 In some areas of service, no increases are proposed, e.g. Estates fees for commercial lets, where an increase would not be prudent in the current economic climate. In addition, there are some charges which are based on the recharge of the actual cost.
- 2.3 There are also some services where, for a variety of reasons, it is proposed to apply an increase by more or less than the rate of inflation, this is identified in the attached appendices.

- 2.4 This report fulfils the requirements of the Council's policy for charges, to both review all Council fees and charges on an annual basis and to seek approval for any proposed increases.
- 2.5 A report was submitted to the Audit Committee on 10 February 2014 which highlighted the main findings from a review by Audit Scotland on policies and processes for charging for services by all Scottish local authorities. As a consequence, a comprehensive review will be undertaken in 2014/15 which examines the current practices within North Ayrshire and benchmarks them against the good practices outlined in the Audit Scotland report.
- 2.6 Appendix 1 lists all those charges where it is proposed to increase in line with inflation. Inflationary increases will be based on the Consumer Price Index (C.P.I.) at October 2013 which was 2.2%.
- 2.7 Appendix 2 lists all those charges which it is proposed to increase by a factor other than the October 2013 C.P.I.
- 2.8 Appendix 3 summarises increases already approved as part of the 2014/15 budget.

### **3. Proposals**

- 3.1 That the Cabinet approves the increases to Council fees and charges, as outlined in the report, with effect from April 2014.

### **4. Implications**

#### Financial Implications

- 4.1 The proposed increase in charges will, assuming a steady level of demand, result in additional income to the Council. Sums have already been reflected in the 2014/15 budget in respect of the areas detailed in Appendix 3. The remainder of the increased income is unlikely to be significant but the annual review ensures that charges are keeping pace with inflation and mitigates the impact on the Council of the rising costs of service provision.

#### Human Resource Implications

- 4.2 There are no Human Resource implications arising from this report.

## Legal Implications

- 4.3 Many statutes governing the provision of services, including discretionary services, by local authorities contain express provisions permitting or requiring charges to be made. Examples include the Local Authorities (Goods and Services) Act 1970 and the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.

## Equality Implications

- 4.4 The guiding principles and relevant factors set out in the charging policy take account of the need to consider issues of access and equity in all decisions relating to a review of charges.

## Environmental Implications

- 4.5 There are no Environmental implications arising from this report.

## Implications for Key Priorities

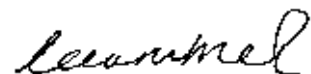
- 4.6 The charging policy acknowledges the primary importance of the core objectives and values set out in the Council Plan and the Single Outcome Agreement.

## 5. Consultations

- 5.1 Consultation has taken place with all services in the preparation of this report.

## 6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The Council requires to review its fees and charges on an annual basis with the presumption that there will be an increase at least in line with inflation. Appendices 1 to 3 list those fees and charges to be increased, together with the recommended uplift which should apply from April 2014.



LAURA FRIEL

Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support)

## Reference :

For further information please contact Hazel Hair, Senior Manager, Financial Management on 01294 324548

## Background Papers

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## Proposed Increases - CPI to be applied

Directorate	Service	Charge Description	Current Charge (13/14)	Proposed Charge (14/15) CPI of 2.2% (at October 2013)	Increase (%)	Comments
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Bacteriological Swimming Pool Sampling	£2.86	£2.90	1.6%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Chemical Swimming Pool Sampling	£73.83	£75.50	2.3%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Pest Control - Fumigations/Sprays for heavy infestations e.g. bedbugs, fleas	£65.73	£67.20	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Pest Control Charge - Insects (Domestic)	£32.86	£33.60	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Pest Control Charge - Rates/Mice/Insects (Commercial)	£53.40	£54.60	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Pest Control Charge - Rats/Mice/Squirrels (Domestic)	£53.40	£54.60	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Pest Control Charge - Wasp Nests/Bees	£32.86	£33.60	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Section 50 Certificates	£102.70	£105.00	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Weights & Measuring Act 1985 Charge - Special weighing & measuring equip (visits	£71.75	£73.30	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Fee for the adjustment of any weight or measure in the course of a service provided pursuant to Section 74 of the Weights and Measures Act, 1985, shall be charged at the appropriate hourly rate of the officer carrying out the adjustment	£71.75	£73.30	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Weighbridge Operators Test	£55.92	£57.20	2.3%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Weights & Measuring Act 1985 Charge - Certificate of Accuracy	£37.06	£37.90	2.3%	Relates to any test setting out the traceability of calibration to UK national standards
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Weights & Measuring Act 1985 Charge - Cubic Ballast Measures	£162.15	£165.70	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Weights & Measuring Act 1985 Charge - Linear Measures under 3m or for each scale	£9.13	£9.30	1.9%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Weights & Measuring Act 1985 Charge - Other Weights	£6.26	£6.40	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Weights & Measuring Act 1985 Charge - Special weighing & measuring equipment	£107.62	£110.00	2.2%	Visits carried out partly or entirely outwith office hours may incur a charge of 50% surcharge on standard Fee or on the standard hourly rate per officer rate
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Weights & Measuring Act 1985 Charge - Templets - additional items	£17.30	£17.70	2.3%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p

## Proposed Increases - CPI to be applied

Directorate	Service	Charge Description	Current Charge (13/14)	Proposed Charge (14/15) CPI of 2.2% (at October 2013)	Increase (%)	Comments
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Weights & Measuring Act 1985 Charge - Weighing Instruments	£107.62	£110.00	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest £. When testing instruments incorporating remote display or printing facilities, and where completion of the test requires a second person or a second series of tests by the same person, an additional fee may be charged
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Weights & Measuring Act 1985 Charge - Weighing Instruments NAWI (1 tonne to 10 tonnes)	£149.73	£153.00	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Weights & Measuring Act 1985 Charge - Weighing Instruments NAWI (Exceeding 10 Tonnes)	£327.82	£335.00	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Weights & Measuring Act 1985 Charge - Weighing Instruments NAWI (Not exceeding 1 tonne)	£96.74	£98.90	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Weights & Measuring Act 1985 Charge - Weighing Instruments Non-NAWI (1 tonne to 10 tonnes)	£94.20	£96.30	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Weights & Measuring Act 1985 Charge - Weighing Instruments Non-NAWI (Exceeding 10 tonnes)	£196.67	£201.00	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Weights & Measuring Act 1985 Charge - Weighing Instruments Non-NAWI (Not Exceeding 1 tonne)	£58.14	£59.40	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Weights & Measuring Act 1985 Charge - Weights over 5kg or under 500mg	£8.17	£8.40	2.8%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Weights& Measuring Act 1985 Charge - Measuring Instruments for Intoxicating Liquor (Not exceeding 150ml)	£15.93	£16.30	2.3%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Weights& Measuring Act 1985 Charge - Measuring Instruments for Intoxicating Liquor (Other)	£18.42	£18.80	2.0%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Weights& Measuring Act 1985 Charge - Measuring Instruments for Liquid Fuel or Lubricants - Testing of credit card acceptor	£71.76	£73.30	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Weights& Measuring Act 1985 Charge - Measuring Instruments for Liquid Fuel or Lubricants	£107.62	£110.00	2.2%	When testing instruments incorporating remote display or printing facilities, and where completion of the test requires a second person or a second series of tests by the same person, an additional fee may be charged
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Weights& Measuring Act 1985 Charge - Measuring Instruments for Liquid Fuel or Lubricants	£67.01	£68.50	2.2%	Single/Multi-outlets (nozzles) Each Additional Nozzle tested



## Proposed Increases - CPI to be applied

Directorate	Service	Charge Description	Current Charge (13/14)	Proposed Charge (14/15) CPI of 2.2% (at October 2013)	Increase (%)	Comments
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Weights& Measuring Act 1985 Charge - Measuring Instruments for Liquid Fuel or Lubricants	£109.01	£111.40	2.2%	Single/Multi-outlets (nozzles) First nozzle tested, per site
Development & Environment	Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Weights& Measuring Act 1985 Charge - Measuring Instruments for Liquid Fuel or Lubricants	£71.76	£73.30	2.2%	Testing of peripheral electronic equip on a separate visit - Per Hour
Development & Environment	E&RS - Transport Services	Car Inspection	£25.68	£26.20	2.0%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	E&RS - Transport Services	MOT Class 4	£46.22	£47.20	2.1%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	E&RS - Transport Services	MOT Class 5	£61.62	£63.00	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	E&RS - Transport Services	MOT Class 7	£51.35	£52.50	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	E&RS - Transport Services	Tachograph Calibration	£47.24	£48.30	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	E&RS - Transport Services	Tachograph 2 year Inspection	£32.86	£33.60	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	E&RS - Transport Services	Tachograph 6 year Inspection	£47.24	£48.30	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	E&RS - Transport Services	Vehicle Inspections - Taxi	£77.03	£78.70	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	E&RS - Transport Services	Vehicle Inspections - Taxi Retest	£46.22	£47.20	2.1%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	E&RS - Streetscene Services	Grass Cutting Scheme	£60.00	£61.00	1.7%	CPI and rounded to nearest £
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	External Customer - ARRAN Mixed Waste Site Entry & Disposal Permit Vehicles over 3500kg and Large Skips (Blue)	£73.59	£75.20	2.2%	CPI increase to price of permit, plus charge for Landfill calculated on weight
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	External Customer - ARRAN Mixed Waste Site Entry & Disposal Permit Vehicles under 3500kg and Mini Skips (Yellow)	£44.16	£45.10	2.1%	CPI increase to price of permit, plus charge for Landfill calculated on weight
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	New/Replacement of Waste Bins Domestic 240 Litre	£37.60	£38.40	2.1%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	New/Replacement of Waste Bins Commercial 360 Litre	£62.05	£63.40	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	New/Replacement of Waste Bins Commercial 1100 Litre	£316.02	£323.00	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Disposal Charge - Non Streetscene Mixed Waste	£73.76	£75.40	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p

## Proposed Increases - CPI to be applied

Directorate	Service	Charge Description	Current Charge (13/14)	Proposed Charge (14/15) CPI of 2.2% (at October 2013)	Increase (%)	Comments
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Uplift Commercial White Goods per item	£41.08	£42.00	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Bin Parts - Lid & Lock	£71.17	£72.70	2.1%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Bin Parts - Lid & Lock Fitting 1/2 hour	£22.91	£23.40	2.1%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Bin Parts - Lid & Lock Delivery 1/2 hour	£22.91	£23.40	2.1%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Bin Parts - Front Wheel	£15.29	£15.60	2.0%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Bin Parts - Rear Wheel	£20.38	£20.80	2.1%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Rear Wheel fitting - 1/2 hour	£22.91	£23.40	2.1%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Rear Wheel delivery - 1/2 hour	£22.91	£23.40	2.1%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Cardboard Stickers - Book of 50	£25.00	£25.60	2.4%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Sub-Contractor Cardboard Stickers	£27.00	£27.60	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Sub-Contracted Commercial Collection Card	£7.49	£7.70	2.8%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Scheduled Bin Uplift Cardboard Cage	£6.94	£7.10	2.3%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Development & Environment	E&RS - Bereavement Service	Internment of Cremated Remains	£194.00	£198.00	2.1%	CPI and rounded to nearest £
Development & Environment	E&RS - Bereavement Service	Internment of Sixteen and Over	£404.00	£413.00	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest £
Development & Environment	E&RS - Bereavement Service	Memorial Foundation	£147.00	£150.00	2.0%	CPI and rounded to nearest £
Development & Environment	E&RS - Bereavement Service	Memorial Foundation and Re-erect	£210.00	£215.00	2.4%	CPI and rounded to nearest £
Development & Environment	E&RS - Bereavement Service	Purchase of Exclusive Right of Burial (New Lair)	£404.00	£413.00	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest £
Development & Environment	E&RS - Bereavement Service	Dis-internments	£809.00	£827.00	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest £
Development & Environment	E&RS - Bereavement Service	Internment on common ground	£210.00	£215.00	2.4%	CPI and rounded to nearest £
Development & Environment	E&RS - Bereavement Service	Purchase of Exclusive Right of Burial - Cremated Remains Only (New Lair)	£194.00	£198.00	2.1%	CPI and rounded to nearest £
Development & Environment	E&RS - Bereavement Service	Purchase of Exclusive Right of Burial - Cremated Remains Only in Garden of Remembrance(New Lair)	£194.00	£198.00	2.1%	CPI and rounded to nearest £
Development & Environment	E&RS - Bereavement Service	Purchase of Exclusive Right of Burial - Private Baby Lair	£194.00	£198.00	2.1%	CPI and rounded to nearest £
Development & Environment	E&RS - Bereavement Service	Purchase of Exclusive Right of Burial (Woodland Area)	£404.00	£413.00	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest £
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Arts)	Studio 1 - Commercial	£21.57	£21.57	0.0%	The service would prefer charge to remain the same in order to continue supporting community development/groups
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Arts)	Studio 1 - Non-Commercial	£14.89	£15.20	2.1%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Arts)	Studio 2 - Commercial	£15.41	£15.70	1.9%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Arts)	Studio 2 - Non-Commercial	£6.16	£6.16	0.0%	The service would prefer charge to remain the same in order to continue supporting community development/groups
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Arts)	Theatre Hire - Commercial	£57.51	£58.80	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Arts)	Theatre Hire - Non-Commercial	£35.43	£35.43	0.0%	The service would prefer charge to remain the same in order to continue supporting community development/groups

## Proposed Increases - CPI to be applied

Directorate	Service	Charge Description	Current Charge (13/14)	Proposed Charge (14/15) CPI of 2.2% (at October 2013)	Increase (%)	Comments
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Museums)	Genealogy pre 1874 - one line of family tree	£40.00	£41.00	2.5%	Prices were not increased at 1 April 2013 despite approval being given. In line with CPI and then rounded up to nearest £
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Museums)	Genealogy pre 1874 - two lines of family tree	£80.00	£82.00	2.5%	Prices were not increased at 1 April 2013 despite approval being given. In line with CPI and then rounded up to nearest £
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Museums)	Genealogy pre 1874 - three lines of family tree	£115.00	£117.00	1.7%	Prices were not increased at 1 April 2013 despite approval being given. In line with CPI and then rounded up to nearest £
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Museums)	Genealogy pre 1874 - four lines of family tree	£155.00	£158.00	1.9%	Prices were not increased at 1 April 2013 despite approval being given. In line with CPI and then rounded up to nearest £
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Museums)	Genealogy pre 1900 - one line of family tree	£46.00	£47.00	2.2%	Prices were not increased at 1 April 2013 despite approval being given. In line with CPI and then rounded up to nearest £
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Museums)	Genealogy pre 1900 - two lines of family tree	£92.00	£94.00	2.2%	Prices were not increased at 1 April 2013 despite approval being given. In line with CPI and then rounded up to nearest £
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Museums)	Genealogy pre 1900 - three lines of family tree	£133.00	£136.00	2.3%	Prices were not increased at 1 April 2013 despite approval being given. In line with CPI and then rounded up to nearest £
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Museums)	Genealogy pre 1900 - four lines of family tree	£179.00	£183.00	2.2%	Prices were not increased at 1 April 2013 despite approval being given. In line with CPI and then rounded up to nearest £
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Museums)	Genealogy pre 1920 - one line of family tree	£47.00	£48.00	2.1%	Prices were not increased at 1 April 2013 despite approval being given. In line with CPI and then rounded up to nearest £
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Museums)	Genealogy pre 1920 - two lines of family tree	£94.00	£96.00	2.1%	Prices were not increased at 1 April 2013 despite approval being given. In line with CPI and then rounded up to nearest £
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Museums)	Genealogy pre 1920 - three lines of family tree	£136.00	£139.00	2.2%	Prices were not increased at 1 April 2013 despite approval being given. In line with CPI and then rounded up to nearest £
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Museums)	Genealogy pre 1920 - four lines of family tree	£183.00	£187.00	2.2%	Prices were not increased at 1 April 2013 despite approval being given. In line with CPI and then rounded up to nearest £
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Museums)	Genealogy post 1935 - one line of family tree	£53.00	£54.00	1.9%	Prices were not increased at 1 April 2013 despite approval being given. In line with CPI and then rounded up to nearest £
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Museums)	Genealogy post 1935 - two lines of family tree	£106.00	£108.00	1.9%	Prices were not increased at 1 April 2013 despite approval being given. In line with CPI and then rounded up to nearest £

## Proposed Increases - CPI to be applied

Directorate	Service	Charge Description	Current Charge (13/14)	Proposed Charge (14/15) CPI of 2.2% (at October 2013)	Increase (%)	Comments
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Museums)	Genealogy post 1935 - three lines of family tree	£154.00	£157.00	1.9%	Prices were not increased at 1 April 2013 despite approval being given. In line with CPI and then rounded up to nearest £
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Museums)	Genealogy post 1935 - four lines of family tree	£207.00	£211.00	1.9%	Prices were not increased at 1 April 2013 despite approval being given. In line with CPI and then rounded up to nearest £
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Country Parks)	Books	£2.10	£2.20	4.8%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Country Parks)	Campsite	£7.30	£7.50	2.7%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Country Parks)	Cottage Lets	£380.50	£389.00	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest £
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Country Parks)	Events Fields	£91.00	£93.00	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Country Parks)	Fishing Permits	£26.00	£27.00	3.8%	CPI and rounded to nearest 50p
Education & Skills	Outdoor Education	Instructor daily charge	£100.00	£103.00	3.0%	CPI and rounded to nearest £
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Country Parks)	Racquet Hall	£16.50	£17.00	3.0%	CPI and rounded to nearest 50p
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Community Facilities)	Hall lets, Letting Commission and School Letting - Category 1 user (eg Commercial Activities) - SMALL ROOM	£18.00	£18.00	0.0%	Given that some lets have been lost over the year, some venues are moving to keyholding and asset transfer and venues are being promoted for sport, and pre-5 a freeze is proposed for 14/15 year only. Thereafter a full review will take place on all categories and charges. NAFA encourage this view also in order to promote footfall.
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Community Facilities)	Hall lets, Letting Commission and School Letting - Category 1 user (eg Commercial Activities) - LARGE ROOM	£36.00	£36.00	0.0%	As above
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Community Facilities)	Hall lets, Letting Commission and School Letting - Category 2 user (eg Family Functions) - SMALL ROOM	£10.50	£10.50	0.0%	As above
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Community Facilities)	Hall lets, Letting Commission and School Letting - Category 2 user (eg Family Functions) - LARGE ROOM	£21.00	£21.00	0.0%	As above
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Community Facilities)	Hall lets, Letting Commission and School Letting - Category 3 user (eg Agency Letting) - SMALL ROOM	£9.50	£9.50	0.0%	As above

## Proposed Increases - CPI to be applied

Directorate	Service	Charge Description	Current Charge (13/14)	Proposed Charge (14/15) CPI of 2.2% (at October 2013)	Increase (%)	Comments
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Community Facilities)	Hall lets, Letting Commission and School Letting - Category 3 user (eg Agency Letting) - LARGE ROOM	£19.00	£19.00	0.0%	As above
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Community Facilities)	Hall lets, Letting Commission and School Letting - Category 4 user (eg Adult Sports Groups) - SMALL ROOM	£5.80	£5.80	0.0%	As above
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Community Facilities)	Hall lets, Letting Commission and School Letting - Category 4 user (eg Adult Sports Groups) - LARGE ROOM	£11.60	£11.60	0.0%	As above
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Community Facilities)	Hall lets, Letting Commission and School Letting - Category 5 user (eg Pre 5 groups) - SMALL ROOM	£3.20	£3.20	0.0%	As above
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Community Facilities)	Hall lets, Letting Commission and School Letting - Category 5 user (eg Pre 5 groups) - LARGE ROOM	£6.30	£6.30	0.0%	As above
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Community Facilities)	Hall lets, Letting Commission and School Letting - Category 6 user (eg Disabled org's) - SMALL ROOM	£2.10	£2.10	0.0%	As above
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Community Facilities)	Hall lets, Letting Commission and School Letting - Category 6 user (eg Disabled Org's) - LARGE ROOM	£4.20	£4.20	0.0%	As above
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Community Facilities)	Wedding packages - Ceremony and Reception	£735.00	£735.00	0.0%	As above
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Community Facilities)	Wedding packages - Reception only	£525.00	£525.00	0.0%	As above
Education & Skills	Culture & Community (Country Parks)	Shop Stock	£1.60	£1.65	3.1%	CPI and rounded to nearest 5p



## Proposed Increases - Specific increases to be applied

Directorate	Service	Charge Description	Current Charge (2013/14)	Proposed Charge (14/15)	Increase (%)	Comments
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Replacement of Waste Bins Commercial 240 litre	£28.20	£38.62	37.0%	Price changed to be in line with domestic rate
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	External Customers - Direct Disposal per tonne at Shewalton	£106.15	£115.07	8.4%	£8 per tonne Landfill Tax Escalator plus CPI
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	New/Replacement of Waste Bins Commercial 140 litre (Food waste only)	£0.00	£26.50	n/a	£97.25 is per tonne or part thereof inclusive of Landfill Tax
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	New/Replacement of Waste Bins Commercial 500 litre (Food waste only)	£0.00	£260.00	n/a	New charge for new option for service delivery.
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	New/Replacement of Waste Bins Commercial 660 Lite	£0.00	£270.00	n/a	New charge for new option for service delivery.

Finance & Corporate Support	Registration Services	Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships at Registration Office <b>outwith office hours</b>	£240.00	£250.00	4.2%	Incremental annual increase based on comparison with neighbouring authorities
Finance & Corporate Support	Registration Services	Guest Supplement: <b>during office hours</b> when more than 4 guests attend a marriage/civil partnership at Registration offices	£95.00	£100.00	5.3%	Incremental annual increase based on comparison with neighbouring authorities
Finance & Corporate Support	Registration Services	Naming & Renewal of Vows Ceremonies conducted at Registration Offices <b>during office hours</b>	£190.00	£200.00	5.3%	Incremental annual increase based on comparison with neighbouring authorities
Finance & Corporate Support	Registration Services	Naming & Renewal of Vows Ceremonies conducted at Registration Offices <b>outwith office hours</b>	£240.00	£250.00	4.2%	Incremental annual increase based on comparison with neighbouring authorities
Finance & Corporate Support	Registration Services	Private Citizenship Ceremonies - <b>during office hours</b> with 4 or less guests attending	£95.00	£100.00	5.3%	Incremental annual increase based on comparison with neighbouring authorities.
Finance & Corporate Support	Registration Services	Private Citizenship Ceremonies - <b>during office hours</b> with more than 4 guests attending	£190.00	£200.00	5.3%	Incremental annual increase based on comparison with neighbouring authorities.
Finance & Corporate Support	Registration Services	All Ceremonies at approved venues - fee for attendance of a Registrar <b>during office hours</b>	£230.00	£240.00	4.3%	Incremental annual increase based on comparison with neighbouring authorities
Finance & Corporate Support	Registration Services	All Ceremonies at approved venues - fee for attendance of a Registrar <b>outwith office hours</b>	£280.00	£290.00	3.6%	Incremental annual increase based on comparison with neighbouring authorities
Finance & Corporate Support	Registration Services	Civil Marriage/Partnership & Naming Ceremony booked together and conducted at Registration Offices <b>outwith office hours</b>	£360.00	£375.00	4.2%	Increase of 4.2% proposed for 2014/15 and 4.0% for 2015/16
Finance & Corporate Support	Registration Services	Civil Marriage/Partnership & Naming Ceremony booked together and conducted at Approved Venues <b>during office hours</b>	£345.00	£360.00	4.3%	Increase of 4.3% proposed for 2014/15 and 4.2% for 2015/16

## Proposed Increases - Specific increases to be applied

Directorate	Service	Charge Description	Current Charge (2013/14)	Proposed Charge (14/15)	Increase (%)	Comments
Finance & Corporate Support	Registration Services	Civil Marriage/Partnership & Naming Ceremony booked together and conducted at Approved Venues <b>outwith office hours</b>	£420.00	£435.00	3.6%	Increase of 3.6% proposed for 2014/15 and 3.5% for 2015/16
Finance & Corporate Support	Registration Services	Guest supplement: <b>during office hours</b> when more than 4 guests attend a Civil Marriage/Partnership & Naming Ceremony at Registration Offices	£190.00	£200.00	5.3%	Increase of 5.3% proposed for 2014/15 and 5.0% for 2015/16



## Proposed Increases - Included in Budget Proposals

Directorate	Service	Charge Description	Current Charge (13/14)	Proposed Charge (14/15)	Increase (%)	Comments
Education & Skills	Education - Music Service	Charge for instrumental tuition	£140.00	£160.00	14.3%	This charge is for the first child. Additional child is half price and service is free to SQA pupils and pupils in receipt of FSM
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Commercial Refuse Scheduled Bin Uplift 240 Litre Bin	£3.02	£3.42	13.2%	Increase in charges to meet approved efficiency of £50k, annual inflation (based on CPI), and increases in Landfill Tax and associated disposal costs.
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Commercial Refuse Scheduled Bin Uplift 360 Litre Bin	£6.04	£6.84	13.2%	Increase in charges to meet approved efficiency of £50k, annual inflation (based on CPI), and increases in Landfill Tax and associated disposal costs.
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Commercial Refuse Scheduled Bin Uplift 660 Litre Bin	£9.06	£10.26	13.2%	Increase in charges to meet approved efficiency of £50k, annual inflation (based on CPI), and increases in Landfill Tax and associated disposal costs.
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Commercial Refuse Scheduled Bin Uplift 1100 Litre Bin	£15.10	£17.09	13.2%	Increase in charges to meet approved efficiency of £50k, annual inflation (based on CPI), and increases in Landfill Tax and associated disposal costs.
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Commercial Refuse Scheduled Bin Uplift 1280 Litre Bin	£18.12	£20.51	13.2%	Increase in charges to meet approved efficiency of £50k, annual inflation (based on CPI), and increases in Landfill Tax and associated disposal costs.
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Scheduled Bin Uplift Island Mixed Recyclate Service 240 Litre Bin	£2.22	£1.71	-23.0%	Price changed to be in line with Mainland
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Scheduled Bin Uplift Island Mixed Recyclate Service 1280 Litre Bin	£11.48	£10.26	-10.6%	Price changed to be in line with Mainland
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Sub-Contracted Commercial Collection 240 Litre bin	£3.26	£3.69	13.2%	Increase in charges to meet approved efficiency of £50k, annual inflation (based on CPI), and increases in Landfill Tax and associated disposal costs.
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Sub-Contracted Commercial Collection 360 Litre bin	£6.52	£7.38	13.2%	Increase in charges to meet approved efficiency of £50k, annual inflation (based on CPI), and increases in Landfill Tax and associated disposal costs.
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Sub-Contracted Commercial Collection 660 Litre bin	£9.78	£11.07	13.2%	Increase in charges to meet approved efficiency of £50k, annual inflation (based on CPI), and increases in Landfill Tax and associated disposal costs.
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Sub-Contracted Commercial Collection 1100 Litre bin	£16.30	£18.45	13.2%	Increase in charges to meet approved efficiency of £50k, annual inflation (based on CPI), and increases in Landfill Tax and associated disposal costs.
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Sub-Contracted Commercial Collection 1280 Litre bin	£19.56	£22.14	13.2%	Increase in charges to meet approved efficiency of £50k, annual inflation (based on CPI), and increases in Landfill Tax and associated disposal costs.
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Scheduled Bin Uplift Organic Food Waste 140 Litres	£3.97	£3.97	0.0%	New service - no increase in first year
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Scheduled Bin Uplift Organic Food Waste 500 Litres	£14.18	£14.18	0.0%	New service - no increase in first year
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Sub-Contracted Commercial Collection Organic Food Waste 140 Litres	£4.29	£4.29	0.0%	New service - no increase in first year
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Sub-Contracted Commercial Collection Organic Food Waste 500 Litres	£15.31	£15.31	0.0%	New service - no increase in first year
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Sub-Contracted Commercial Collection Island Mixed Recyclate Service 240 Litre Bin	£2.40	£1.85	-22.9%	Price changed to be in line with Mainland
Development & Environment	E&RS - Waste Services	Sub-Contracted Commercial Collection Island Mixed Recyclate Service 1280 Litre Bin	£12.79	£11.07	-13.4%	Price changed to be in line with Mainland

**Proposed Increases - Included in Budget Proposals**

Directorate	Service	Charge Description	Current Charge (13/14)	Proposed Charge (14/15)	Increase (%)	Comments
Social Services & Health	Adults and Older People	Care at Home	£11.25	£11.50	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Social Services & Health	Adults and Older People	Day Care (purchased and provided)	£11.25	£11.50	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Social Services & Health	Adults and Older People	Day Care (charges to Other Las)	£201.00	£205.40	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Social Services & Health	Adults and Older People	Community Alarms service - mainland	£4.10	£4.20	2.4%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Social Services & Health	Adults and Older People	Community Alarms service - Arran	£2.05	£2.10	2.4%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p
Social Services & Health	Adults and Older People	Meals on Wheels	£2.75	£2.82	2.5%	Recharge of actual cost
Social Services & Health	All	Maximum Weekly Charge	£77.00	£78.70	2.2%	CPI and rounded to nearest 10p

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## **NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **Agenda Item 6**

**11 March 2014**

#### **Cabinet**

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**Subject:** **Largs: 3 Morris Street: Ground Floor, Left Rear:  
Closing Order**

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**Purpose:** To advise the Cabinet on the condition of the above property.

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**Recommendation:** That the Cabinet approves the serving of a Closing Order on the above property.

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#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 On 11 December 2013, the owner of the above noted property requested that the Council inspect the condition of the two- apartment flat.
- 1.2 The Council has powers to serve a Closing Order in terms of Section 114 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987.

#### **2. Current Position**

- 2.1 Upon inspection of the property, it was found to be in very poor condition, with penetrating dampness throughout. The property was found to be below the tolerable standard as defined by Section 86 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987.
- 2.2 The property is privately owned, but is unoccupied at this time.

#### **3. Proposals**

- 3.1 Given the condition of the property, it is proposed that the Cabinet approves the serving of a Closing Order in terms of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987.

#### **4. Implications**

Financial Implications

- 4.1 Council Tax will stop being due to North Ayrshire Council.

#### Human Resource Implications

- 4.2 None.

#### Legal Implications

- 4.3 A notice will be served under Section 114 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987.

#### Equality Implications

- 4.4 None.

#### Environmental Implications

- 4.5 None.

#### Implications for Key Priorities

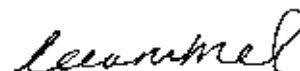
- 4.6 None.

### 5. Consultations

- 5.1 Discussions have taken place with the Council's Revenues and Benefits Team.

### 6. Conclusion

- 6.1 It is considered appropriate for a Closing Order to be served on the owner of the property and Cabinet approval to this is therefore requested.



LAURA FRIEL

Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support)

Reference : DT

For further information please contact David Tate, Senior Manager (Property Management & Investment) on 01294 225051

### Background Papers

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## **NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **Agenda Item 7**

**11 March 2014**

#### **Cabinet**

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**Subject:** **Housing Service Standards**

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**Purpose:** To advise the Cabinet of the outcome of the review of the Housing Service Standards.

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**Recommendation:** That the Cabinet approves the revised draft Housing Service Standards (Appendix 1).

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#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 One of the key aims of the Housing Service is to provide excellent customer services tailored to meet the needs of a diverse customer base. The Service Standards were initially approved and introduced in 2004 and then reviewed again in 2008 to take account of new service areas that had been introduced.

#### **2. Current Position**

- 2.1 In April 2012, the Scottish Government introduced the Scottish Social Housing Charter. The key purpose of the Charter is to improve the quality and value of services that social landlords provide. It will do so by:
- Stating clearly what tenants and other customers can expect from social landlords, and helping them to hold landlords to account;
  - Focusing the efforts of social landlords on achieving outcomes that matter to their customers; and
  - Establishing a basis for the Scottish Housing Regulator to assess and report on how well landlords are performing. This assessment will enable the regulator, social landlords, tenants and other customers to identify areas of strong performance and areas needing improvement.
- 2.2 The Charter set out 16 outcomes that all social landlords should aim to achieve. The existing standards have now been reviewed and amended to take account of the requirements of the Charter. The revised draft Service Standards are included at Appendix 1.

- 2.3 A Performance Monitoring Framework is in place and performance against each standard is monitored on a quarterly basis. Performance is reported back to tenants via the Tenants Newsletter, annual performance report to tenants and the website.

### **3. Proposals**

- 3.1 It is proposed that the Cabinet approves the new Standards, as set out in the attached appendix.

### **4. Implications**

#### Financial Implications

- 4.1 There will be costs to the Housing Revenue Account (provision has been made for this from the 2013/14 budget) in relation to the production and publication of the Service Standards Booklets for customers.

#### Human Resource Implications

- 4.2 There are no Human Resource Implications to this report.

#### Legal Implications

- 4.3 There are no legal implications to this report.

#### Equality Implications

- 4.4 There are no equality implications to this report.

#### Environmental Implications

- 4.5 There are no environmental implications to this report.

#### Implications for Key Priorities

- 4.6 The Service Standards will contribute to the Council's key priority of 'Operating More Efficiently and Effectively'.

### **5. Consultations**

- 5.1 Consultation on the new Standards has been carried out with North Ayrshire Network and staff. All feedback received has been incorporated into the new Standards.

- 5.2 Consultation has also taken place with the Senior Manager (Housing, Assets and Investments) and Head of Service (Environment and Related Service). Both services contributed to the review.

## **6. Conclusion**

- 6.1 The new Service Standards will assist the Council to continually improve the level of service provided to housing customers, and ensure that the Council provides excellent customer services in line with the aim of the Scottish Social Housing Charter. They will also ensure that public services are accountable and effective.



CRAIG HATTON  
Corporate Director (Development and Environment)

Reference : CH/AA/LB

For further information please contact Marianne McManus, Divisional Manager, Housing Services on 01294 602611

### **Background Papers**

None





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The council's Housing Service aims to give you a service we can be proud of. We are committed to having high standards, which will meet the needs of our customers.

The Scottish Social Housing Charter which was introduced in April 2012 set out 16 outcomes that all social landlords should aim to achieve.

We have listened to your comments about our service and, after consulting with tenants and resident association groups in the area; we have agreed the standards of service you can expect from us under each of the outcomes. This booklet explains these standards.

### **Performance Monitoring and Reporting**

We will use the standards in conjunction with our regulatory requirements to achieve the Scottish Social Housing Charter (SSHC) outcomes when performing housing activities. We will measure our performance in achieving the standards in various ways such as regularly quality checks, tenant satisfaction surveys and using tenant inspectors to test our services.

We will publish details of how we are doing in our annual performance report, our tenants' newsletter, on our website and in our local offices.

### **How you can help us**

If you feel we are not meeting our standards or could improve any of the standards please let us know. This will help us to review our systems and provide you with a better service. Please contact us:

- by phone or in writing to any housing office
- by e-mail at the Contact Us section of the Council's website at [www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk](http://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk)
- by writing to the Quality & Performance Team at Cunninghame House, Irvine KA12 8EE
- by submitting an enquiry via social media

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## **The Customer/landlord Relationship**

**Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcome 1 Equalities** -*Social landlords perform all aspects of their housing services so that: every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services.*

### **We will:**

- ensure all victims of harassment receive equity of treatment irrespective of the equality ground under which they are being harassed;
- monitor the ethnic background of tenants, housing applicants and homeless applicants;
- use jargon free language in all our documentation;
- if requested provide information in alternative formats or languages;
- if requested arrange for interpretation services to be provided;
- visit you at home if you are not able to call into our local offices, because of a disability; and
- provide equalities training to all staff, tenants and residents associations and individuals on the tenant's consultation register.

**Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcome 2 Communication** -*Social landlords manage their businesses so that: tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides.*

### **Customer care**

#### **We will:**

- be polite, respectful and helpful;
- give you our names when we answer the phone, interview you, or call at your home; and

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- wear name badges when we are in the office;

**Phone calls, written correspondence, fax and e-mail**

**We will:**

- answer the phone within 30 seconds and give you our name;
- reply to written correspondence within 10 working days, where we are unable to achieve this, we will keep you up to date with progress;
- reply to e-mails received via our website within 5 working days, where we are unable to achieve this, we will keep you up to date with progress;
- send you forms and information you have asked for within 3 working days; and
- provide a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address on all correspondence.

**Home visits and appointments**

**We will:**

- make appointments where possible at times that are convenient for you;
- carry and show you identity cards when we do home visits; and
- offer you an appointment if we cannot see you within 10 minutes.

**Confidentiality**

**We will:**

- carry out interviews with you about personal, confidential or difficult issues in private; and
- keep your personal information secure, both on computer and in paper files.

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**Complaints and Appeals**

We will monitor our response to complaints in line with our corporate complaints procedure. Our complaints procedure has two stages.

**Stage 1 Complaints**

- we will give you a decision in 5 working days or less, unless there are exceptional circumstances

**Stage 2 Complaints**

- we will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 3 working days
- discuss your complaint with you to understand why you remain dissatisfied and what outcome you are looking for
- give you a full response to the complaint as soon as possible and within 20 working days

We will respond to appeals against our decisions within 10 working days.

**Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcome 3 Participation - Social**  
*landlords manage their businesses so that: tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.*

**We will:**

- provide a range of opportunities for tenants and service users to share views with us and use your opinions to help shape the housing service
- consult with tenants on any changes to service delivery;
- meet tenants interested in setting up a new group within 10 working days and arrange a venue for the first public meeting and invite all tenants in the area within a further 15 working days;
- encourage, support and help fund Tenants Groups so they can play an effective part in consultation;
- provide all Tenant and Resident Groups with a manual of useful information;

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- attend meetings provided 15 working days notice and an agenda are provided in advance;
- carry out an annual tenant service inspection which will be agreed with the North Ayrshire Network; and
- in conjunction with tenants produce a quarterly tenants' newsletter.

## **Housing Quality and maintenance**

**Scottish Social Charter Outcome 4 Quality of Housing** - *Social landlords manage their businesses so that: tenants' homes, as a minimum, meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) by April 2015 and continue to meet it thereafter, and when they are allocated, are always clean, tidy and in a good state of repair.*

- We will ensure our properties meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015 and maintain this standard thereafter

**Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcome 5 Repairs Maintenance and improvements** - *Social landlords manage their businesses so that: tenants' homes are well maintained, with repairs and improvements carried out when required, and tenants are given reasonable choices about when work is done*

### **We will:**

- provide you with free phone numbers (available 24 hours a day, seven days a week) to report repairs;
- respond to any emergency repairs within 2 hours, and make safe within 24 hours;
- respond to urgent repairs within 3 days;
- inform you of the priority and target date for responding when you report a routine repair;
- offer you a morning or afternoon appointment for non-emergency repairs;
- service and check your gas every year;

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- provide smoke detectors in all our houses; and
- make sure our workers or contractors follow the council's customer care code and the repair standards that you can find in the tenants handbook.

**Major Repair and Improvement Work**

**We will:**

- write to you to tell you that your house is included in a programme of work, when we will carry the work out and the name of the contractor;
- ensure the contractors (apart from in exceptional circumstances) will give you at least seven days' notice before starting work;
- let you choose:-
  - the type of fire when we install new gas central heating;
  - where you would like us to place radiators and storage heaters, within limits, when we install new central heating;
  - the colour of kitchen units and worktops and, within limits, the layout of kitchen units when we install a new kitchen;
  - the wall covering around the bath and WC when your new bathroom is being installed;
- give you a contact phone number to report any problems with on-going work;
- supervise the contractor's work to make sure it is going well and being carried out to a satisfactory standard; and
- get your opinion of completed work by asking you to fill in a tenant satisfaction survey form.

**Management of Empty Properties**

**We will:**

- ensure that the rent lost from empty houses is kept to a minimum. We will tell you what our targets are and our performance against these targets;
- inspect all empty houses within 1 working day of receiving the keys from the tenant who moves out;

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- make sure all empty houses meet our minimum letting standard before the new tenant moves in;
- accompany applicants for housing to view properties they have been offered; and
- we will visit new tenants within 6 weeks to check they have settled in.

### **Neighbourhood and Community-**

**Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcome 6 Estate management, anti-social behaviour, neighbour nuisance and tenancy disputes** - *Social landlords, working in partnership with other agencies, help to ensure that: tenants and other customers live in well-maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe.*

#### **Managing the Estate**

##### **We will**

- In each estate where there is a Tenants and Residents Group, we will inspect the estate each year with tenants, owners where appropriate, other Council services and Elected Members;
- remove graffiti within 3 working days;
- within 1 working day investigate and secure (where appropriate) any abandoned property we know or are told about;
- we will inspect gardens and take action to deal with those that are overgrown;
- provide a concierge service for the multi-storey flats in Irvine all year round and:
  - carry out security checks twice a day on all blocks
  - test the fire alarm system once per week
- clear fly tipping on public land within 3 working days

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**Community Wardens**

**When mobile teams are in designated areas we will:**

- carry out at least 2 foot patrols every day except Wednesdays;
- respond to requests for help in dealing with antisocial behaviour within 1 hour of the resident making contact; and
- within 1 working day, report relevant information to other services about abandoned vehicles, faulty street lighting, graffiti, illegally dumped rubbish and repairs;

**Antisocial Behaviour Complaints**

**We will:**

- respond to complaints about anti-social behaviour issues within 3 working days and, where appropriate contact other services and agencies for help and support;
- within 10 working days of our first response, tell the person who has complained about the progress we are making with their complaint;
- within 5 working days send written confirmation to the person who has complained if we have referred their case to the Antisocial Behaviour Investigation Team (ASBIT);
- within 5 working days of receiving the referral, the Anti Social Behaviour Investigation team will contact the person who has complained to arrange a suitable time and meeting place to discuss the case;
- contact victims of harassment on equalities grounds within 1 working day of ASBIT receiving the referral;
- at least every 10 working days phone the person who has complained to discuss the progress of their complaint; and
- within 5 working days, explain our decision to the person who has complained when we have decided to close the case for any reason;



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**Home Security Project**

**We will:**

- contact you within 1 working day of receiving the referral;
- visit you at home, and carry out a home security assessment within 5 working days of first contacting you;
- arrange to install extra security measures within a maximum of 6 working days; and
- install technical equipment within 2 working days, if necessary.

**Access to Housing and support**

**Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcomes 7, 8 and 9 Housing Options**

**Housing Options - *Social landlords work together to ensure that:***

*People looking for housing get information that helps them make informed choices and decisions about the range of housing options available to them.*

*People on housing lists can review their housing options.*

*People at risk of losing their homes get advice on preventing homelessness.*

**As part of our general housing options approach we will:-**

- offer you a housing options interview and
- provide you with the housing options action plan following the interview.

**As part our homeless housing options approach we will:**

- meet with you on the day you approach the service or offer an appointment at a time which suits you;
- give you advice to help you understand your housing needs and send you a letter summarising this advice within 5 working days of your interview;
- help you to achieve a housing outcome which meets your needs;

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- make sure the rent deposit guarantee team contact you within 3 working days and interview you within 5 working days of receiving your referral; and
- for the 12 months following your initial approach for housing options advice we will contact you every three months until you receive a housing outcome.

**Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcome 10 Access to social housing**  
***Social landlords ensure that:*** *people looking for housing find it easy to apply for the widest choice of social housing available and get the information they need on how the landlord allocates homes and their prospects of being housed*

**Rehousing Services.**

**We will:**

- provide all new applicants for housing with an information pack including:-
  - an application for housing
  - a housing application guide
  - a summary of the North Ayrshire Housing Allocation Policy
- let empty houses quickly. We will tell you what our targets are and our performance against these targets;
- give you a decision on your mutual exchange application within 20 working days;
- process your application for housing within 10 working days;
- contact you each year to make sure your application is up to date; and
- ensure your application for accessible housing is assessed by a qualified occupational therapist within 30 working days.

**Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcome 11 Tenancy Sustainment -**  
***Social landlords ensure that:*** *tenants get the information they need on how*

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*to obtain support to remain in their home; and ensure suitable support is available, including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations.*

**We will:**

- contact you within 7 working days of receiving your referral for tenancy support;
- provide you with details of the type of support we can provide; and
- involve you in planning and reviewing your support needs, and provide you with a copy of your support plan.

**Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcome 12 Homeless People -**  
***Local councils perform their duties on homelessness so that: homeless people get prompt and easy access to help and advice; are provided with suitable, good-quality temporary or emergency accommodation when this is needed; and are offered continuing support to help them get and keep the home they are entitled to.***

**We will:**

- explain your rights under homelessness legislation and give you a leaflet which explains the homelessness process;
- provide temporary accommodation on the day you need it;
- measure how satisfied you were with our temporary accommodation and use your feedback to review and improve our service;
- undertake an assessment of your support needs, within 10 working days of booking you into temporary accommodation;
- ensure you have access to primary health care and help you to register with a local GP practice if required;
- undertake a minimum of fortnightly inspections of dispersed furnished accommodation and a daily inspection of hostel provision to monitor both quality and health and safety issues;
- write to you within 28 days advising you of our decision on your homeless application; and

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- undertake a review of your homeless decision within 5 working days if requested.

## **Getting Good Value from rents and service charges**

**Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcome 13 Value for Money - *Social landlords manage all aspects of their businesses so that: tenants, owners and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for the rent and other charges they pay.***

**We will:**

- produce an annual Value for Money report detailing clearly how rent and other money is spent;
- consult annually with key stakeholders to ensure the Value for Money report continues to meet your needs and expectations; and
- consult with tenant representatives during the annual budget setting process.

**Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcomes 14 & 15 Rents and service charges - *Social landlords set rents and service charges in consultation with their tenants and other customers so that: a balance is struck between the level of services provided, the cost of the services, and how far current and prospective tenants and other customers can afford them and tenants get clear information on how rent and other money is spent, including any details of individual items of expenditure above thresholds agreed between landlords and tenants.***

**We will:**

- consult with you annually on any rent increases and provide you with a rent increase notice;
- offer Housing Benefits advice to new tenants and carry out a rent check when we visit new tenants for the first time;

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- offer a range of convenient payment methods;
- provide help and advice for tenants with rent difficulties, including referring you to a Welfare Rights Advisor, Debt Advisor or Tenancy Support Officer if you agree to it;
- contact you within 5 working days of first getting into arrears so that debts do not become difficult to manage and we will agree realistic repayment arrangements;
- provide you with an annual rent statement; and
- advise former tenants of the final balance on their rent account within 10 working days of them giving up their tenancy.

## **Other Customers**

**Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcome 16 Gypsies/Travellers -**  
***Local councils and social landlords with responsibility for managing sites for Gypsies/Travellers should manage the sites so that:*** sites are well maintained and managed.

**We will:**

- process your application for a pitch on site within 5 working days;
- inspect your pitch and take action within 3 working days to deal with pitches that are not maintained to a satisfactory standard; and
- complete weekly inspections of the grounds within the Redburn Site to ensure they are kept clean and tidy.

## **Services for Older People**

**We will:**

- offer a visiting service to all older tenants;
- carry out a home visit to all applicants within North Ayrshire who apply for sheltered housing; and

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- refer tenants to Social Services within five working days, for an assessment, if they would benefit from having a 24 hour Community Alarm Service; and
- ensure that older people are involved in the strategic planning of Older People's services in order that current and future housing needs are met.

**Owners - Factoring Service**

**We will:**

- give you a free phone number (available 24 hours a day, seven days a week) to report repairs;
- make sure our workers or contractors follow the council's customer care code;
- comply with the terms of our property factoring "Statement of Services"; and
- provide a dedicated factoring team to address all communal repair issues in factored blocks.

**Private Rented Sector**

**We will**

- carry out an inspection of your home within 14 working days of receiving a referral that the property is 'Below Tolerable Standard';
- hold a minimum of 2 Landlord Forums per year; and
- provide information and advice in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Assistance.

**Additional Standards to enhance service delivery**

**Council House Building**

**We will:**

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- seek the views of residents and tenants to inform the design of Council House development projects;
- minimise disruption to surrounding residents where council house building is taking place;
- maximise community benefits such as apprenticeships through the council house building programme; and
- build new homes to meet secure by design and housing for varying needs standards.

**Housing Strategies**

We will:

- seek the views of local people and representative groups to ensure that our strategies are relevant to the local context; and
- hold two Housing Strategy Forums per year.