

Cabinet
13 June 2023

IRVINE, 13 June 2023 - At a Special Meeting of the Cabinet of North Ayrshire Council at 2.30 p.m.

Present

Marie Burns, Tony Gurney, Alan Hill, Margaret Johnson, Christina Larsen and Shaun Macaulay.

Also Present

Cameron Inglis, Davina McTiernan and Eleanor Collier.

In Attendance

C. Hatton, Chief Executive, M. Boyd, Head of Service and D. Forbes, Senior Manager (Finance) and F. Walker, Head of Service (People & ICT) (Chief Executive's Service); A. Sutton, Executive Director (Communities & Education); C. Cameron, Director and E. Stewart, Interim Head of Service (Children, Families & Justice) (Health & Social Care Partnership); R. McCutcheon, Executive Director, T. Reaney, Head of Service (Neighbourhood Services), Y. Baulk, Head of Service and A. Elliot, Senior Manager (Housing and Public Protection), N. McIlvanney, Interim Head of Service (Growth, Investment and Employability) and M. Ritchie, Interim Senior Manager (Growth & Investment) (Place); A. Craig, Head of Service, I. Hardy, Team Manager and N. Sugden, Policy Officer (Policy, Performance & Elections), J. Hutcheson, Senior Communications Officer (Communications), S. Wilson and C. Stewart, Committee Services Officers (Democratic Services).

Chair

Marie Burns in the Chair.

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest by Members in terms of Standing Order 11 and Section 5 of the Code of Conduct for Councillors.

2. Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000

Submitted a report by the Head of Service (Democratic Services) providing an update on the Council's use of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000.

Members asked a question and were provided with further information in relation to the powers afforded to the Council and appropriate use of the Act.

Noted.

3. Discretionary Housing Payment Policy

Submitted a report by the Head of Service (Finance) seeking approval of the revised Discretionary Housing Payment policy. The revised policy was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

The Cabinet acknowledged that a key priority for the Council was addressing child poverty and the cost-of-living crisis, noting that the increased allocation of £315,000 in the budget for 2023/24 ensured support would continue to be provided to those in need.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the revised policy for the administration of Discretionary Housing Payments, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

Please note – the following item was heard by the Audit & Scrutiny Committee on 27 June 2023, please refer to the minute of that Committee for the decision.

4. Council Tax for Second and Empty Homes, and Non-Domestic Rates Thresholds: Consultation

Submitted a report by the Head of Service (Finance) outlining the proposed response from North Ayrshire Council to the Scottish Government's consultation on Council Tax for second and empty homes, and non-domestic rates thresholds. The Respondent Information Form was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

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

- the proposed response to the Scottish Government consultation;
- support for the Council having the powers to decide whether to apply a premium Council Tax on second and empty homes; and
- decisions taken based on supporting evidence and the consequences of applying a premium rate.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the proposed consultation response at Appendix 1 to the report, for submission to the Scottish Government by the consultation deadline of 11 July 2023.

5. North Ayrshire Children's Services Plan 2023-26

Submitted a report by the Director (Health & Social Care Partnership) presenting the North Ayrshire Children's Services Plan 2023-26. This was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

Councillor Burns thanked officers of the Council and the Health and Social Care Partnership and the young people involved in the first joint Cabinet for care experienced young people which took place on 13 June 2023.

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

- the services and outcomes delivered for families through the expanded Family Centred Wellbeing Service; and
- available resources and additional funding from the Scottish Government ensuring best use of these to improve outcomes for children and families.

The Cabinet agreed to endorse the North Ayrshire Children's Services Plan 2023-26 attached at Appendix 1 to the report for submission to the Scottish Government.

6. Corporate Parenting Plan and The Promise 3 Years On

Submitted a report by the Director (Health & Social Care Partnership) providing an update on the ongoing work within North Ayrshire to develop the Corporate Parenting Plan and to deliver "The Promise". The Summary Report on Progress and the Corporate Parenting Plan were attached at Appendices 1 and 2 to the report.

The Cabinet acknowledged and thanked the team involved for the considerable work undertaken in this area and highlighted the benefits that came from "The Promise" in terms of putting young people at the heart of the system.

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

- the impact on services and young people amid growing demand for continuing care in placement; and
- the criteria used by the Council to measure success in "The Promise".

Noted.

7. Child Poverty Strategy 2023-26; Progress report 2022-23 and Action Plan 2023-24.

Submitted a report by the Executive Director (Communities & Education) on the draft North Ayrshire Child Poverty Strategy covering the period 2023-26, the North Ayrshire Child Poverty Report 2022-23 and the North Ayrshire Child Poverty Action Plan 2023-24 set out in the appendix to the report. The report sought approval to submit the report to the Scottish Government and publish it on the North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership website.

The Cabinet noted the importance of highlighting the cause of poverty and thanked the Employability team for the considerable work undertaken.

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

- addressing the risks exacerbated by the cost-of-living crisis, specifically to children on the Islands and rural communities; and
- how the reports presented to Cabinet linked into the Child Poverty Strategy.

The Cabinet agreed to approve (a) the North Ayrshire Child Poverty Strategy covering the period 2023-26 and the North Ayrshire Child Poverty Report 2022-23 and Action Plan 2023-24 set out in the appendix to the report; and (b) submission of the report to the Scottish Government in addition to being published on the North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership website.

8. Children's Rights Report 2020/23

Submitted a report by the Executive Director (Communities & Education) seeking approval of the North Ayrshire Children's Rights Report 2020/23 attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the North Ayrshire Children's Rights Report 2020/23 set out at Appendix 1 to the report.

9. Dundonald Crescent, Auchengate.

Submitted a report by the Executive Director (Place) on the outcome of the Member/Officer Working Group on Dundonald Crescent, Auchengate.

Members asked a question and were provided with further information in relation to how often the Council received requests to adopt a private road and the process undertaken when a request was received.

The Cabinet thanked all involved for the work undertaken to reassess the costs, as noted within the report.

The Cabinet agreed (a) not to undertake the upgrade works at Dundonald Crescent, Auchengate to bring the private road and associated infrastructure up to an adoptable standard; and (b) otherwise to note (i) the findings of the Member/Officer Working Group and (ii) that the maintenance responsibility for the road and associated infrastructure lay with the owners.

10. I3 – Sale of Land at Strategic Investment Campus

Submitted a report by the Executive Director (Place) seeking approval for a minor increase to the size of an area of land at i3 in Irvine that Cabinet had previously approved to be sold, subject to appropriate conditions. The proposed site location and layout plan were attached at Appendices 1 and 2 to the report, respectively.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to ensuring the Council maximised the potential of the i3 site.

The Cabinet agreed (a) to approve the increase from 2 acres to 2.498 acres of the area of land to be sold to System Five Off Site Ltd. at the Strategic Investment Campus at i3 Irvine and (b) grant authority to the Executive Director of Place to negotiate the terms of the sale, including a price proportionate to the revised area of land.

11. Local Housing Strategy 2023-2028

Submitted a report by the Executive Director (Place) seeking approval of the proposed Local Housing Strategy 2023 - 2028 and associated action plan attached at Appendices 1 and 2 to the report, respectively.

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

- the use of North Ayrshire Council's internal architects for the development at Irvine Harbour and whether this would be the preferred process for future developments;
- the percentage of new build houses that were built with accessible needs in mind and whether this had alleviated pressure to adapt current housing stock;
- whether the target number of new dwellings would still be achievable by 2028; and
- what powers and resources the Council had to take action in terms of private buildings in disrepair.

The Cabinet agreed (a) to approve (i) the Local Housing Strategy 2023 – 2028 at Appendix 1 to the report and (ii) the associated action plan at Appendix 2; and (b) that these be published and submitted to the Scottish Government.

12. North Ayrshire Visitor Management Plan 2023

Submitted a report by the Executive Director (Place) seeking approval of the amended Visitor Management Plan, to support ongoing actions to manage domestic tourism in North Ayrshire during 2023. The Visitor Management Plan was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

The Cabinet thanked the team and all involved in the working group for the excellent work undertaken on the Visitor Management Plan.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the draft North Ayrshire Visitor Management Plan for 2023 set out at attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

13. Housing Services' Customer Participation Strategy 2023-2028

Submitted a report by the Executive Director (Place) presenting the draft Customer Participation Strategy 2023-2028 for approval. The Strategy was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

Members asked a question and were provided with further information in relation to different routes, such as social platforms, that were worth exploring to ensure as wide a range of people as possible was reached.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the content of the draft Customer Participation Strategy 2023-2028 attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

The meeting ended at 4.35 p.m.