
NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

29 November 2022

Cabinet

Title:	Establishment of a Policy Advisory Panel
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Purpose:	To seek approval to establish an Elected Member Policy Advisory Panel to assist in the preparation of policy proposals for consideration by Cabinet.
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Recommendation:	That Cabinet agrees to the establishment of a Policy Advisory Panel to support its work.
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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 During the previous Administration, the Council operated an Elected Member Advisory Panel to support policy development. During the pandemic the panel did not operate as initially set out due to the redirection of resources and focus.
- 1.2 This paper sets out proposals for the establishment of a new cross-party Policy Advisory Panel, chaired by the Depute Leader of the Council to assist in the development of policy proposals being prepared for consideration by Cabinet.

2. Background

- 2.1 A number of Elected Members have expressed an interest in reforming a cross-party Policy Advisory Panel to assist in the development of policy proposals being prepared for consideration by Cabinet.
- 2.2 During the last Administration, the Council operated a Policy Advisory Panel.
- 2.3 The panel was not part of the formal Constitutional Arrangements of the Council, although minutes were submitted to Cabinet for noting and published as an appendix to North Ayrshire News (the Members' Newsletter). However, during the pandemic the redirection of resources and focus resulted in infrequent meetings with agenda items, where meetings took place, focussing on updates on initiatives rather than policy development.
- 2.4 Members who have expressed an interest in reforming the Panel have asked that agendas are meaningful. Focusing on strategic policy development and that the frequency of meetings reflects this. A proposed Remit for the new Policy Advisory

Panel, which is not limited to any specific area of policy development, is attached at Appendix 1 for consideration.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 Cabinet is invited to consider the establishment of a new cross-party Policy Advisory Panel to assist in the preparation of policy proposals for consideration/approval by Cabinet.
- 3.2 It is proposed that the Advisory Panel will meet on a quarterly basis with the proviso that meetings can be cancelled where there is no substantive business or additional ones arranged should the need arise.

4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty

Financial

- 4.1 None.

Human Resources

- 4.2 Operation of the Panel will be supported from existing resources.

Legal

- 4.3 None.

Equality/Socio-economic

- 4.4 The establishment of a cross-party Policy Advisory Panel will ensure that implications on equalities are robustly assessed during the development of policies and strategies.

Climate Change and Carbon

- 4.5 The establishment of a cross-party Policy Advisory Panel will ensure that implications on climate change and carbon are robustly assessed during the development of policies and strategies.

Key Priorities

- 4.6 The establishment of a cross-party Policy Advisory Panel will support the development of key policies and strategies required to deliver priorities.

Community Wealth Building

- 4.7 The establishment of a cross-party Policy Advisory Panel will ensure Community Wealth Building principles are considered in the development of policy.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 Consultation has taken place with the Executive Leadership Team, Political Group Leaders and Independent Elected Members on the establishment of a Policy Advisory Panel.

Craig Hatton
Chief Executive

For further information please contact **Craig Hatton, Chief Executive**, on **01294 324124**.

Background Papers

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POLICY ADVISORY PANEL REMIT

Remit

The remit of the Policy Advisory Panel will be:

1. To consider Council Policies and Strategies both proposed and existing.
2. To consider and support the development of such Council policies and procedures as may be referred to by officers.
3. To ensure that the implications on finance, equalities, children and young persons, climate change and carbon, community benefits and islands impact of Council policies are properly assessed during the development of such policies.
4. To consider and support the development of such policies as may be remitted to it by Cabinet or Council.
5. To ensure proper alignment and consistency of Council policies and procedures with the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan, the Council Plan, the Integration Joint Board Strategic Plan, the Local Development Plan, Locality Plans and other major Strategic plans.
6. To consider such other reports from Officers where it is felt that cross-party consultation is required in order to facilitate consensus or produce a solution which commands cross-party support.

*Note: The Policy Advisory is **not** a formal Committee of the Council and will have no formal delegated power. The Audit and Scrutiny Committee will remain the primary means whereby Elected Members are able to scrutinise the work of Council. Consideration by the Advisory Panel does not prevent any policy or strategy from subsequently being ‘called-in’ following the decision of Cabinet.*

Confidentiality

To allow free and frank discussion in the development of policies and strategies, business will be considered on a confidential basis.

Chair

The Policy Advisory Panel will be chaired by the Depute Leader of the Council.

Membership

Membership of the Policy Advisory Panel will be open to all Members of the Council on a meeting-by-meeting basis.

Frequency of Meetings

The Policy Advisory Panel will meet on a quarterly basis or as required to consider policies, strategies and developments thereof. If there is no or only limited business, meetings may be cancelled in consultation with the chair.