



North Ayrshire Council  
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

# LEADER'S REPORT

For the period covering: 16 September – 3  
November 2019

The attached report gives a summary and brief details to Council, of meetings and events attended by the Leader of North Ayrshire Council, Councillor Joe Cullinane.

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## ***ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS CAMPUS AND RESPITE AND RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION GROUND-BREAKING, 16 September***

On 16 September, I was delighted to be invited to the ground-breaking ceremony for the new Additional Support Needs (ASN) Campus and Respite and Residential Accommodation Project. This unique Education and Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) project, which will be based next to Auchenhavie Academy, will see a £30 million capital investment in the creation of modern, state-of-the-art educational and respite and residential accommodation for young people with additional support needs.

The Campus will enable close collaboration and partnership working between Education, HSCP and the children, young people and their families.

## ***COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING COMMISSION MEETING, 17 September***

Our work on Community Wealth Building is progressing well and on 17 September some of our Community Planning Partners, senior officers and representatives from the Centre of Local Economic Strategies (CLES), came together for the first meeting of the Community Wealth Building Commission, held here in Cunninghame House.

The Commission discussed some of the findings from the CLES report and agreed next steps going forward. One of the key areas will be procurement and what can be done collectively. The Commission will meet again in early December to discuss and agree a strategy.

## ***VISIT BY EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE DELEGATION, 18 September***

On 18 September, North Ayrshire Council welcomed a delegation from the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) which was headed up by President of the EESC Brexit Committee, Stefano Mallia. The visit was part of a wider visit to Scotland to meet various organisations to discuss post Brexit implications and the impact on any future working relationships.

### ***STRATEGIC BUSINESS DINNER, 18 September***

Later on 18 September, I attended a strategic business dinner hosted by North Ayrshire Council at the Irvine Townhouse. The dinner was attended by several local businesses and Stefano Mallia, President of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) Brexit Committee.

The dinner gave us an opportunity to talk about Community Wealth Building (CWB) to a wider audience and more importantly, highlight how local businesses could play their part in contributing to this strategic piece of work that North Ayrshire Council is championing in Scotland.

### ***COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING, 19 September***

On 19 September, I chaired the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Board meeting held in the Fullarton Community Hub. CPP partners heard updates on the Children Services Strategic Plan and a presentation from Councillor Robert Foster on the subject of "Corporate Parenting".

Following the presentations, workshops were held for the Garnock Valley Locality Partnership and the Three Towns Locality Partnership to enable Board Members to discuss priorities at a local level and how we are addressing these priorities. We also looked at the impact of strategic approaches and what else is needed to be done to support this work.

### ***Wi-fi SPARKS LAUNCH, 20 September***

As Leader of North Ayrshire Council, I am proud to say that we are hugely committed to getting more people into work and I was therefore delighted to attend the WiFi Spark Launch on 20 September. It is great to see that WiFi Spark has safeguarded 10 good quality jobs by choosing to locate their premises at the i3 site in Irvine.

While this is their first office here in Scotland, WiFi already has plans to grow and diversify. This is great news for North Ayrshire. I know the company has already been working closely with our Team North Ayrshire who have supported them with their move to North Ayrshire. I am sure they will continue to support and help them with their ongoing growth plans.

### ***ECONOMIC, DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION BOARD, 26 September***

On 26 September, the Economic Development and Regeneration Board met in Cunninghame House. The Board received a presentation on the i3 Digital Manufacturing and Demonstrator Hub and another on the COIG. I am pleased the COIG app is now available to download as it

contains really useful information about local walks, restaurants, places of interest which will be helpful for visitors and local residents alike.

### ***FAIR SAY STAFF ENGAGEMENT EVENT, 26 September***

Later on 26 September, I travelled to Arran to take part in the second of our “Fair Say” Staff Engagement sessions together with our Chief Executive, Craig Hatton. The session provided NAC employees with an opportunity to ask myself or Craig questions. These were on a range of issues with a particular focus on our new Council Plan. Further events are planned for later in the year in the remaining localities.

### ***COSLA LEADERS, 27 September***

I attended COSLA Leaders in Edinburgh on 27 September for a meeting to discuss a range of subjects including the Local Government Spending Review, EU Settlement Scheme Applications, Family Leave for Councillors, the 16 days of Action Campaign and the updated Gypsy/Traveller Action Plan. This updated plan was received more positively as it further ensures that Gypsy/Travellers are treated fairly and have positive experiences of our public services, while retaining the right to maintain and enjoy their nomadic lifestyle.

### ***MEETING WITH THE WOODLAND TRUST, 30 September***

On 30 September, myself and officers attended a meeting with The Woodland Trust to explore the possibility of increasing our commitment to tree planting. We have declared a Climate Emergency and I will continue to look at ways of how we can tackle climate change here in North Ayrshire.

### ***FAIR FOR ALL COMMISSIONER MEETING, 3 October***

On 3 October, I attended the Fair For All Commissioner meeting at Fullarton Connexions. Our Fair For All Commissioners heard some more profound stories about those who have experienced hardships in the past and how they have struggled to survive. FFA Commissioners will continue to meet until May 2020 before a report will be submitted to the Scottish Government.

### ***OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE CIRCUIT, QUARRY ROAD, 7 October***

On 7 October, I attended the official opening of The Circuit, Irvine's new £5.4m sports facility at Quarry Road. It was fabulous to have Scottish Women's National Team player Erin Cuthbert, born in Irvine, do the honours.

The new facilities, which have been part funded by North Ayrshire Council, the Scottish Government Vacant and Derelict Land Fund, European Regional Development Fund and the Landfill Tax Credit Scheme, will include a full-size 3G outdoor pitch for football, a 9 a-side 3G indoor pitch to allow all-weather training and a 750m closed cycle loop. The facilities were completed in August and have been used by local groups with very positive feedback. KA Leisure operate the facilities and take bookings for the football pitches. The cycling facilities are free and open for use.

Also, within the same facility is the Circuit Enterprise Hub. This is an incubation facility for small local businesses who aspire to grow and take on their own premises within a 12-month period. It offers subsidised office accommodation for up to 12 new and ambitious early-stage growth businesses with access to business support through the Council's Business Team who are also located in the new offices.

### ***CHALLENGE POVERTY WEEK, 7-13 October***

Once again, North Ayrshire Council supported the Poverty Alliance's Challenge Poverty Campaign, which ran from 7-13 October. This is the fourth year that we have supported this campaign and in those four years, we have done some great work which we should be proud of. This includes our Fair For All Commission work, the expansion of our Early Years Child Care and our social housing programme. This year I was involved in the following:

#### ***Ask the Leader, 7 October***

ASK THE LEADER live social engagement session, streamed on Twitter and Facebook. This enabled me to highlight some of the great work we are doing around poverty and to take questions from members of the public.

#### ***Launch of Kilwinning Employability Hub and Jobs Fair, 8 October***

Launch of Kilwinning Employability Hub and Jobs Fair at Kilwinning Library. Previously located at Ayrshire College in Kilwinning, it is hoped that by moving the Hub to the library it will be more

widely accessible. The Jobs Fair was hugely successful with a total of 14 employers from a range of sectors participating. There were 155 attendees on the day with five job offers from NAC Care at Home.

Thanks to our Employability team for putting on such a successful event and all those employers and partners who took part.



Councillor Alex Gallagher, Liz MacKay CEIS Ayrshire, Barbara Hughes North Ayrshire Council Libraries, Council Leader, Joe Cullinane, Greig Robson Senior Manager at NAC, Julie Berryman Department of Work and Pensions, Kelly Mccandlish Business & Employability Liaison Officer at NAC

### *Visit to Kilwinning Academy Credit Union Access Point, 9 October*

On 9 October, together with Provost Clarkson, I visited the Credit Union Access Point based in Kilwinning Academy. This is run by pupils and volunteers and is the first school in North Ayrshire to have this facility. It is also the first in Scotland to have pupils being trained up in financial literacy, IT and Customer Services courses where they can obtain a recognised qualification. The work is overseen by 1<sup>st</sup> Alliance Credit Union and the aim is to encourage pupils/users to save using a different method to traditional high street banks.



Not only was this a great week but also a first and something to be immensely proud of. Congratulations to all those involved, the teachers at Kilwinning Academy, 1<sup>st</sup> Alliance Credit Union, the volunteers and of course the pupils.



Council Leader, Joe Cullinane with some of the pupils, Rochine (pupil), Angela (volunteer), Amanda (1<sup>st</sup> Alliance), Janet (volunteer), Kyle (pupil) and Taylor (pupil).

### *Real Nappy Scheme*

I also wanted to highlight our Real Nappy Scheme which was launched during Challenge Poverty Week. This innovative scheme could save families up to £1300 per child on the cost of disposable nappies while at the same time reduce our costs of transferring waste to landfill.

Thanks again to officers for their great work challenging poverty during the week.

### ***COSLA CONVENTION AND AWARDS, 10-11 October***

I attended COSLA Convention and Awards held in the Fairmont Hotel in St Andrews. It was another packed programme with a variety of speakers on the first day followed by dinner and the Awards event. At the meeting on the following day, members received updates on the Spending Review, the Local Governance Review and an update on details of planning following UK Exit from the EU.

### ***NATIONAL CARE LEAVERS EVENT, 22 October***

It was another great evening at Ayrshire College on 22 October when I attended the Care Leavers event with the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care, Councillor Robert Foster. We really do have some truly amazing young people in North Ayrshire and it is always great to take part in these events to acknowledge and celebrate their successes.

### ***SUSTAINABLE FOOD CITIES MEETING, 24 October***

On the 24 October I travelled to Stirling to attend the Sustainable Food Cities (SFC) Group Meeting. The SFC Group have more than 50 members throughout the UK and their aim is to drive through positive change in future food delivery, through effective cross-sector Food Partnership working, embedding healthy and sustainable food in Policy and developing and delivering an Action Plan.

The Group will look at 6 main areas:

- Promoting healthy and sustainable food to the public
- Tackling food poverty and increasing access to affordable healthy food
- Building community food knowledge, skills, resources and projects
- Promoting a vibrant & diverse food economy
- Transforming catering and food procurement
- Reducing waste & the ecological footprint of the food system.

### ***COSLA LEADERS, 25 October***

I was back through in Edinburgh on 25 October to attend the COSLA Leaders meeting. Leaders received a verbal update on the Spending Review and heard more about the Parental Employability Support Fund, which is part of the wider Government's Tackling Child Poverty Plan.



There was a report detailing work around the “16 days of Activism against Gender Based Violence” Campaign. North Ayrshire Council (NAC) has always been fully supportive and involved in the “White Ribbon” campaign and will be again this year. The campaign runs from 25 November until 10 December and I, together with other NAC Elected Members, will be signing the White Ribbon pledge later in November.

### ***CONVENTION OF HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS, 28 October***

I travelled up to Inverness on 27 October to attend the Convention of Highlands and Islands meeting (COHI) held on 28 October. Agenda items included a paper on the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF), the Global Climate Change Emergency and a paper on “population and productivity”. NAC is one of eight local authorities on the west coast of Scotland which is anticipated to see population decline between 2016-2026 with the population of Scotland as a whole due to increase. North Ayrshire Council and other West of Scotland local authorities, supported by COSLA, will continue to lobby the Government to look at measures to reduce this imbalance.

### ***COSLA CONVENTION AND AWARDS, 10-11 October***

On 1 November, I was delighted to be able to go along to the North Ayrshire Youth Council Annual Youth Conference held in Ardeer Neighbourhood Centre. The theme this year was Climate Change.

There were several workshops held throughout the day which enabled our young people to outline their concerns for the future, hear some of the work that is being done to tackle climate change and for them to make suggestions of what else they would like to see being done. It was also great to meet Toni Lamont, who started as a Modern Apprentice at Eglinton Country Park studying Countryside Management. She has since then, given her vast experience, gone on to speak at various national events and run workshops about Climate Change.

My thanks to all the young people who attended and for their continued enthusiasm on climate change, to Toni for her valuable input and to all those who were involved in the organization of the event.



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Joe Cullinane". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Councillor Joe Cullinane  
**Leader North Ayrshire Council**