

Cabinet
28 October 2014

IRVINE, 28 October 2014 - At a Meeting of Cabinet of North Ayrshire Council at 2.30 p.m.

Present

Willie Gibson, John Bruce, Tony Gurney, Alan Hill and Ruth Maguire; Very Reverend Matthew Canon McManus, Ms Elizabeth H. Higon (Church Representatives) Mr Gordon Smith (Teaching Representative) and Nairn MacDonald (Youth Representative).

In Attendance

E. Murray, Chief Executive, L. Aird, Interim Head of Finance and S. Humphries, Senior Manager (Revenues and Benefits) (Finance and Corporate Support); Y. Baulk, Head of Service and P. Rowley, Structural Engineer (Place); J. Butcher, Executive Director and S. Quinn, Head of Service (Development) (Education and Youth Employment); D. Hammond, Senior Manager Strategic Planning and Infrastructure (Economy and Communities); J. McCrae, Senior Manager (Criminal Justice) (Health and Social Care Partnership); R. Moore, Communications Officer (Media and Internal Communications) and A. Little Committee Services Officer (Chief Executive's).

Also In Attendance

Naill Alexander and Alistair Grimes (Consultants).

Chair

Councillor Gibson in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

Marie Burns, Anthea Dickson and Mr Mark Fraser.

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 Minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2014 were confirmed and signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

3. Report on Statutory Public Consultation on the Proposal to Rezone the West Byrehill Area of Kilwinning from the St Luke's Primary School Catchment to St Winning's Primary School Catchment

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Education & Youth Employment) which provided information on (a) the outcome of the Statutory Public Consultation process (Appendix 1); and (b) the proposed rezoning of the West Byrehill area of Kilwinning

from St. Luke's Primary School catchment to St. Winning's Primary School catchment area with effect from August 2015.

That Cabinet agreed to approve the rezone of the West Byrehill area of Kilwinning from St Luke's Primary School catchment to St Winning's Primary School catchment area with effect from August 2015.

4. Attendance, Absence and Exclusions

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Education & Youth Employment) on (a) the publication of the annual Attendance, Absence and Exclusion data; and (b) the tracking and monitoring processes for attendance and exclusions that facilitate the identification of any areas of concern.

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

- the correlation between high levels of deprivation and higher levels of non-attendance at school;
- a range of approved absences, including those for pupils with support services' appointments;
- the low impact on attendance statistics of children taken out of school for family holidays and that North Ayrshire do not encourage this practice;
- a range of factors that result in the national drop in attendance levels from primary to secondary schools; and
- work to examine the reasons for unauthorised absences.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note the information set out in the attendance, absence and exclusion data; and (b) approve the targeting of support and resources to improve outcomes for young people.

5. Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA) Examination Results 2014

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Education & Youth Employment) on the performance of North Ayrshire schools in the Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA) examinations of 2014.

The report provided information on (a) the new online tool (INSIGHT) that has replaced the main evaluation tool for schools and education authorities; and (b) the current position in relation to improving attainment in Literacy and Numeracy, improving attainment for all, and attainment vs. deprivation (Appendices 2 - 4).

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

- the national figures that do not include statistics for non state schools; and
- the new measurement of overall attainment which will provide a total tariff score per pupil.

The Cabinet agreed (a) to note the content of the report and the achievements of the pupils in this year's SQA examinations; and (b) that a further report will be submitted in the first quarter of 2015 which will comment on the overall performance of the

2014 North Ayrshire Council school leavers as highlighted in INSIGHT's first annual report.

6. Write Off of Tenant Rent Arrears

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) which (a) advised of tenant rent arrears and court costs for former Council house tenants; and (b) sought approval to write off irrecoverable amounts.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the write-offs totalling £109,848.85, as detailed in Section 2 of the report.

7. Non Standard Lending

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on research, findings and recommendations arising from work carried out by the short life payday lending working group.

The Cabinet also received a presentation by Consultants on the scale and nature of payday lending in North Ayrshire; the impact on individuals, families and households; alternatives to high cost credit and how Council services and partners might work better together to provide advice and support to customers affected by high cost short term credit.

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

- a deferred share scheme with First Alliance to increase their ability to lend and retain a capital ratio that meets legislative requirements, facilitating an expansion of their membership and loan book.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note the research findings of Non Standard Lending in North Ayrshire; and (b) that officers explore further the recommendations of the payday lending report and bring back a future report to Cabinet.

8. Units 37A and 37B Kyle Road , Irvine Industrial Estate, Irvine

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Place) on the proposed disposal of the Units 37A and 37B Kyle Road, Irvine Industrial Estate, Irvine to Charles Buyers and Son Limited.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the disposal of Units 37A and 37B Kyle Road, Irvine Industrial Estate, Irvine to Charles Buyers and Son Limited for the sum £0.145m.

9. Projects Funded from Landfill Communities Fund (LCF) 2014/15

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on a proposed programme of projects to be funded through the Landfill Communities Fund (LCF) 2014/15, a tax credit scheme which enables the Council as a Landfill Operator to contribute money to projects which meet environmental objectives contained in the Landfill Tax Regulations.

Members asked questions and were provided with information in relation to the future examination of the evaluation criteria values used to score applications.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) approve the programme of projects set out in Appendix 1 of the report, to be funded from the Council's Landfill Communities Fund (LCF) in 2014/15; and (b) delegate authority to the Executive Director (Economy & Communities) to award any excess LCF monies from the 2014/15 allocation to any eligible project(s).

10. Community Payback Order - Unpaid Work Requirement

Submitted report by the Director (Health & Social Care Partnership) on (a) the range of work undertaken through Community Payback Order (CPO) in 2013/2014 that benefits the community of North Ayrshire Council; and (b) the draft COP Annual Report for submission to the Scottish Government (Appendix 1).

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note the work undertaken in North Ayrshire by offenders placed on Community Payback Order - Unpaid Work Requirements; and (b) approve the Annual Community Payback Report for submission to the Scottish Government.

11. All Ayrshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Place) on progress relating to the development of the Ayrshire Flood Risk Management (FRM) Strategy.

The report outlined (a) the key phases in preparing the draft strategy; (b) the SEPA Characterisation Report (Appendix 1); (c) the Surface Water Management Plans; (d) the Initial Objectives (Appendix 2); and (e) a Long List (Appendix 3) and Short List (Appendix 4) of measures intended to address the objectives.

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

- the currency of the data, including the original vulnerable flooding areas shown within the SEPA Characterisation Report and work to update the maps illustrating potentially vulnerable areas; and
- consideration of the installation of a water gauge in the north east of Largs to measure the water levels over a period of time.

The Cabinet noted the progress to date on the development of the Local Flood Risk Management Plan for Ayrshire Local Plan District.

12. Improving Children's Outcomes

Submitted report by the Director (Health & Social Care Partnership) on (a) progress in implementing the Improving Children's Outcomes project; (b) details of a community survey and on-line schools survey now underway; (c) gathering of fund mapping information; and (d) information briefings for a range of partners, including CPP partners, Head Teachers, School Co-ordinators, Elected Members and Health and Social Care staff.

Members asked questions and were provided with information in relation to work with teachers to obtain the views of children and young people with disabilities.

The Cabinet noted the progress of the Improving Children's Outcomes Project.

13. Physical Environment Advisory Panel held on 29 September 2014

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Place) on the minutes of the Physical Environment Advisory Panel held on 29 September 2014.

Noted.

The meeting ended 4.20 p.m.