

Cabinet  
24 March 2015

**Irvine, 24 March 2015** - 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; Very Reverend Matthew Canon McManus and Elizabeth Higton (Church Representatives) (Agenda Items 3 - 5) and Gordon Smith (Teaching Representative) (Agenda Items 3 - 5).

**Also Present**

Donald Reid.

**In Attendance**

E. Murray, Chief Executive; J. Butcher, Executive Director and S. Quinn, Head of Service (Schools) (Education and Youth Employment); C. Hatton, Executive Director, D. Tate, Senior Manager (Property Management and Investment) and K. Campbell, Facilities Manager (Place); K. Yeomans, Executive Director and M Strachan, Senior Manager (Business Development) (Economy and Communities); L. Friel, Executive Director, G. Macgregor, Head of Customer, People and Corporate Support, M. Hogg, Senior Manager (Financial Management), P. Doak, Senior Manager (Internal Audit, Risk and Performance) and A. Dunsmore, Accountant, (Finance and Corporate Support); I. Colvin, Director (North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership); A. Fraser, Head of Democratic Services, R. Sharp, Information Governance Manager, R. Moore, Communications Officer (Media and Internal Communications) and A. Little, Committee Services Officer (Chief Executive's).

**Also In Attendance**

T. Stewart, Headteacher (Irvine Royal Academy).

**Chair**

Councillor Gibson in the Chair.

**Apologies for Absence**

Anthea Dickson.

**1. Chair's Remarks**

The Chair, in terms of Standing Order 9.4, agreed to accept two items of urgent business relating to the Implementation of Living Wage increase for 2015/16 and Kirktonhall, West Kilbride. These would be considered under item 17.

The Chair further agreed, in terms of Standing Order 9.1, to vary the order of business to allow earlier consideration of Agenda Item 4 (Irvine Royal Academy: Education Scotland Continuing Engagement Report) and prior to exempt item to take Agenda Item 17 (Urgent Items: Implementation of Living Wage increase for 2015/16 and Kirktonhall, West Kilbride).

## **2. Declarations of Interest**

In terms of Standing Order 16 and Section 5 of the Code of Conduct for Councillors, Councillor Gurney, as an employee of the University of the West of Scotland, declared a interest in Agenda Item 10 (Review of Business Support) and withdrew from the meeting for that item of business.

## **3. Minutes**

The accuracy of the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2015 were confirmed and the Minutes signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

## **4. Irvine Royal Academy: Education Scotland Continuing Engagement Report**

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Education and Youth Employment) on the findings of HM Inspectors from Education Scotland in November 2014, including details of the good progress made towards addressing the main points for action that had been identified in the original inspection report. The Cabinet also received a presentation from the Headteacher of Irvine Royal Academy.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) offer congratulations to the Headteacher and her staff and the pupils and parents of Irvine Royal Academy for the transformational changes made at the school and the continued progress towards further improvements; and (b) to otherwise note the report.

## **5. Education and Youth Employment: Accessibility Strategy 2015 - 2018**

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Education and Youth Employment) which provided information on (a) the Education (Disabilities Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) (Scotland) Act 2002, (b) recent Scottish Government guidelines to improve disabled pupils' access to education; and (c) the development of a draft Accessibility Strategy 2015 – 2018 (Appendix 1) to meet legislative requirements.

The Cabinet agreed (a) to note and approve the content of the draft Accessibility Strategy; (b) that officers continue to work to enhance the equality of access to education; and (c) that officers consult with key stakeholders, developing a revised Accessibility Strategy that takes into account the new guidance and meets legislative requirements.

## **6. Toilet Provision in North Ayrshire Council Schools**

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Education and Youth Employment) on the progress made to improve toilet provision in schools across North Ayrshire that included details of (a) the consultation process that has taken place with teachers and pupils; (b) a standard specification for toilet refurbishment projects that will be used in all future refurbishment projects, where appropriate; (c) condition surveys completed across the school estate; and (d) planned refurbishment projects and upgrade works.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to a future visit to North Ayrshire by the Scottish Children's Commissioner that could also include his attendance at a Youth Council meeting.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note the progress made to date to improve toilet provision in schools; and (b) the further improvements as outlined in the report.

## **7. Records Management Plan**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the draft Council and Licensing Board's combined Records Management Plan, in accordance with the Council's obligations under the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 that requires to be submitted to the Keeper of the Records of Scotland by 31 March 2015.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) approve the Records Management Plan as outlined at Appendix 1; and (b) delegate authority to the Chief Executive to make such changes to the Plan as are required by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland prior to its approval.

## **8. Revenue Budget 2014/15 : Budgetary Control Statement to 31 January 2015**

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) which (a) set out the revenue budgetary control position for the Council at 31 January 2015; (b) provided a brief explanation of Services' major variances at Appendices 1 - 9; (c) detailed the proposed virements at Appendix 10; and (d) the Housing Revenue account budgetary control position at 31 January 2015 at Appendix 11.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to an increase in the Council Tax base as a result of an increase in the number of households.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note the information and financial projections outlined in the report; (b) note the action plan being developed by the Health and Social Care Partnership to bring expenditure in line with budgets for 2015/16; (c) approve the virements detailed in Appendix 10; (d) approve the new carry forwards identified at section 2.3 (viii); and (e) approve the new charge proposed for Environmental Information Requests detailed at section 2.9 of the report.

## **9. Capital Monitoring to 30 January 2015**

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) which provided information on (a) the progress in delivering the Capital Investment Programme as at 31 January 2015; (b) progress of all projects, with explanations for the carry forwards detailed in Appendix 1; and (c) the programme for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), as detailed in Appendix 2.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) approve the revisions to budgets outlined at Sections 2.1 - 2.2 and 2.10 - 2.11 of the report; and (b) note (i) the actual General Services and HRA expenditure to 31 January 2015; and (ii) the forecast of expenditure to 31 March 2015.

## **10. Local Governance (Scotland) Act 2004 (Remuneration and Severance Payments) Amendment Regulations 2015**

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on the Local Governance (Scotland) Act 2004 (Remuneration and Severance Payments) Amendment Regulations 2015 in relation to Councillors' salaries which provides for a 1% increase in the basic Councillor salary, the Leader's salary and the salary of the Civic Head or Provost.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note the terms of the Local Governance (Scotland) Act 2004 (Remuneration and Severance Payments) Amendment Regulations 2015 in relation to the level of Councillors' salaries; (b) set the Provost's salary at the level detailed in the regulations; (c) the same percentage increase to the Senior Councillor component of salary; and (d) that implementation of the Councillor pay award should be made at the same point in time as the forthcoming local government employee pay award.

## **11. Review of Business Support**

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) which set out (a) the provision of business support in North Ayrshire; (b) an options appraisal for the delivery of the Business Gateway Programme undertaken on behalf of the three Ayrshire authorities; (c) the proposal to terminate the Business Gateway contract with Lanarkshire Enterprise; and (d) the proposal to bring the Business Gateway service in-house.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to the Crichton Institute which is a collaborative venture bringing together a number of academic and business partners, local government and regional development bodies to support economic development.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) approve bringing in-house the Business Gateway service; (b) note the review of The Hatchery; and (c) the development of the concept of North Ayrshire becoming an Entrepreneurial Hotspot.

## **12. Neighbourhood Vision – Remodelling of the Council’s Operational Property Portfolio**

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Place) which set out (a) the range of operational and non-operational properties owned or leased by the Council; (b) future property requirements; and (c) the key principles identified to support remodelling of the Council's Property Estate.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the key principles to support remodelling of the Council's Property Estate.

## **13. Draft Local Biodiversity Action Plan for North Ayrshire 2015-18**

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Place) on (a) the Draft Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) for North Ayrshire 2015-18 (Appendix 1); and (b) the proposed consultation process, including the publication of the LBAP on the Council's website.

That Cabinet agreed to (a) approve the Draft Local Biodiversity Action Plan for North Ayrshire (Appendix 1) for public consultation; and (b) receive a report on the findings of the consultation at a future date.

## **14. General Services Revenue Estimates 2015/16: Update**

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on the General Services Revenue Budget for 2015/16, analysed by service and expenditure type. The General Services Revenue Estimates matrix was set out at Appendix 1 to the report.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note the 2015/16 General Services matrix outlined at Appendix 1; and (b) note the Non Domestic Rates poundage for 2015/16 .

## **15. Strategic Risk Register 2015/2016**

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) which set out (a) the key strategic risks facing the Council; and (b) provided an executive summary of the Strategic Risk Register 2015/16 at Appendix 1 to the report.

The Cabinet agreed to note the Strategic Risks for the Council contained in Appendix 1 to the report.

## **16. Minutes of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan Implementation Group: 12 February 2015**

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Place) on minutes of the meeting of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan Implementation Group held on 12 February 2015.

Noted

## **17. Urgent Items**

The Chair agreed that the undernoted items be considered as a matter of urgency to allow the proposed actions to be taken without delay.

### **17.1 Implementation of Living Wage Increase for 2015/16**

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on the proposed implementation of the Living Wage at the revised rate of £7.85 with effect from 1 April 2015.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to the final agreement on the overall pay settlement that has yet to be confirmed and formally agreed through COSLA.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the payment of the new Living Wage rate of £7.85 from 1 April 2015, in advance of the overall Local Government pay settlement being finalised.

### **17.2 Kirktonhall, West Kilbride**

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on (a) the current position in relation to the external funding bids by the Kirktonhall Creative Media Group; and (b) the proposed review of the position of the Group as preferred bidders for the Kirktonhall building.

The Cabinet agreed (a) to continue to support the work of the Kirktonhall Creative Media Group to progress its business objectives; (b) withdraw the preferred bidder status from the Kirktonhall Group in the light of lack of progress to secure external funding within the timescale proposed by previous Cabinet report; and (c) that the building be offered for sale on the open market in order that the Council might pursue any opportunities to identify a future use for the building.

## **18. Exclusion of the Public and Press**

The Cabinet resolved, in terms of Section 50(A)4 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude from the Meeting the press and the public for the following items of business on the grounds indicated in terms of Paragraph 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

### **18.1 Surplus Property - Perceton House complex, Irvine**

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Place) which sought approval to dispose of the Perceton House complex, Irvine.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the disposal of the Perceton House complex, Irvine, in the terms detailed in the report.

The meeting ended at 3.45 p.m.

