



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

LEADER'S REPORT

For the period covering: 12 September – 23
October 2022

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

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LIVING WAGE ANNOUNCEMENT, 22 September

On 22 September, I was delighted to announce that North Ayrshire Council will pay the new Living Wage rate of £10.90 per hour, a 10 per cent increase on the previous figure of £9.90. This is seven months earlier than usual with many other organisations and businesses not adopting the new figure until April 2023.

With many families throughout North Ayrshire struggling with the cost-of-living crisis, North Ayrshire Council has introduced a series of measures that will help many in our community. Ensuring the lowest earners get the support they need, when they need it most, is important and this new improved rate will help make a difference to Council staff earning the Living Wage.

1st TIER JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING, 22 September

I attended a meeting of the 1st Tier Joint Consultative Committee on 22 September followed by the Health and Safety Group meeting. It was proposed and agreed that the Leader of the Council will continue to chair future meetings.

Attendees received an overview on Health and Safety from James Walls (Team Manager, Health and Safety) followed by quarterly Health and Safety reports from various directorates in North Ayrshire Council.

AYRSHIRE ECONOMIC JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING, 26 September

On 26 September I attended a meeting of the Ayrshire Economic Joint Committee where attendees discussed two Ayrshire Growth Deal Audit Reports.

IRVINE LOCALITY PARTNERSHIP MEETING, 26 September

I attended a meeting of the Irvine Locality Partnership on 26 September at Irvine Town House. It was a full agenda with attendees receiving updates on the Child Poverty Action, Local Outcomes Improvement Plan, Irvine Youth Forum and Active Schools. The Partnership also received applications for Community Investment Funding. I am delighted to say that the sum of £100,00 was approved by the Partnership, and subsequently Cabinet, to Irvine Tennis Club towards upgrading works to the current tennis courts which are in a state of disrepair. This will

promote mental and physical wellbeing for many in the area as well as creating volunteering opportunities for individuals.

CHILD POVERTY ACTION BOARD MEETING, 28 September

I was delighted to chair a meeting of the Child Poverty Action Board on 28 September. Attendees received updates on the Fairer Food Network, a presentation on Maximising Income from Benefits, the Child Poverty Report 201-22 and Action Plan 2022-23 and the NHS Ayrshire and Arran Child Poverty Action Plan.

The Board also considered the Output report from the “No Wrong Door” Workshop held on 30 August at Redburn Community Centre and agreed future strategic themes which will include, Employability, Childcare and Food.

The next Board meeting will be held on 16 November.

COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING EXPERT PANEL MEETING, 28 September

On 28 September I attended a meeting of the CWB Expert Panel where attendees received a North Ayrshire CWB Progress Update, an update on CWB and Plural Ownership, a discussion regarding the opportunities and challenges and a CWB and Cost of Living Crisis Update.

The Panel were also updated on general CWB activity in North Ayrshire including a visit to Ayrshire on 31 August by the Scottish Government Minister for Public Planning, Finance and Wealth, Tom Arthur MSP. He visited the Lochshore site and a local company, Ayrshire Blinds, a family-run business in Irvine which has been supported by the Ayrshire Growth Deal CWB fund.

My thanks again to the Panel for their invaluable input and to Sarah Deas from the Wellbeing Economy Alliance for chairing the meeting.

OPENING OF NHS STAFF WELLBEING HUB, AYRSHIRE CENTRAL HOSPITAL, 29 September

I was delighted to be invited along to the opening of the NHS Staff Wellbeing Hub at Ayrshire Central hospital on 29 September. Guests were also given a tour of the centre, which will provide excellent facilities in looking after the mental and physical wellbeing of our valued NHS staff.

COSLA LEADERS, 30 September

On 30 September I attended a meeting of COSLA Leaders to discuss a packed Agenda including the following items:

Local Government Finance Update
COSLA Plan 2022-2027
National Care Service
Winter Planning
Programme for Government 2022
Disabled Children and Young People (Transitions to Adulthood) (Scotland) Bill

The Draft COSLA Plan 2022-27 represents a high-level framework setting out the strategic direction and ambitions for COSLA during the current Local Government term (2022-27). Work has focused on further developing the six priorities in the Draft Plan, taking account of the ongoing challenges facing Local Government, including the impact the 'cost-of-living' crisis is having on low-income families and the overall 'cost crisis' that is increasing costs across all services that Local Government provide. The six priorities for COSLA will be:

- Strengthen Local Democracy
- Secure Sustainable Funding
- Improve the Wellbeing of Individuals, Families & Communities
- Enhance Education & Support for our Children & Young People
- Deliver a Just Transition to a Net Zero Economy
- Support the Most Vulnerable in our Communities

NHS BOARD MEETING, 3 October

I attended an NHS Ayrshire and Arran Board meeting on 3 October where attendees received updates on the following committees:

Corporate Governance – Board committees
Healthcare Governance
Information Governance
Performance Governance

There was also discussion around various reporting relating to performance and financial management. The Board also received an update on child poverty issues and assurance that the Board is meeting its statutory duty.

OPENING OF LOCHSHORE VISITOR HUB, 4 October

On 4 October, I was delighted to attend the official opening of the wonderful Lochshore Visitor Hub. The project has been a long-term and strategic regeneration project which seeks to bring 65 hectares of vacant and derelict land back into productive use. It was the site of a former steelworks and was purchased by the Council from Scottish Enterprise in 2021.

In addition to a new active travel route, the new hub will facilitate a wide range of activities for everyone to enjoy, including the establishment of the Friends of Lochshore Park Group, which will carry out practical conservation tasks in and around Lochshore Park. It is hoped that participation by the group will create opportunities for training and encourage confidence in the volunteers through development of skills and working together as part of a community.

Congratulations to the Economic and Regeneration Team for all their hard work in delivering this excellent project.

TACKLING CHILD POVERTY, NO WRONG DOOR MINI PUBLIC ENQUIRY, 5 October

On 5 October I went along to Redburn Community Centre in Irvine for the first in a series of Mini Public Enquiries as part of the work by the Tackling Child Poverty Board. This session followed on from previous work undertaken by partners, where they previously discussed how we can join up the support we have available. The aim is that no matter which way our residents choose to contact our Council, the NHS and our partners, they will be confidently directed to all relevant help and supported to access it. In addition, our partners will share information so we can better understand how best to support all our residents.

It was a successful event and I would like to thank all the partners, community groups, Elected Members and officers who attended and contributed to the discussions to identify which areas we can improve on.

COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING CONFERENCE, 7 October

On 19 October, it was a pleasure to welcome a range of invitees, including the Scottish Government Minister for Public Finance, Planning and Community Wealth, Mr Tom Arthur MSP, to Scotland's first Community Wealth Building Conference held at Saltcoats Town Hall.

In May 2020 North Ayrshire Council became the first CWB Council in Scotland and since launching the strategy there has been significant interest in our approach from a range of

individuals and organisations including other Scottish local authorities, Anchor Institutions and the Third Sector, demonstrating that CWB is gaining more attention both locally and nationally.

The conference provided the opportunity to hear first hand about some of the Community Wealth Building activities underway in North Ayrshire and the wider Ayrshire region as well as ask questions and speak to officers and community groups involved in these projects.

Attendees were also fortunate to hear from a range of speakers including the SG Minister, Mr Tom Arthur, followed by a recording from Ted Howard, Co-Founder and President of the Democracy Collaborative, an organisation who have been pioneering Community Wealth Building for almost two decades. Other participants included Sarah Deas from the Wellbeing Economy Alliance and Chair of the North Ayrshire Community Wealth Building Expert Advisory Panel who chaired a session on how CWB can be used by policymakers to help address some of the challenges facing local economies. A separate session was also chaired by Sarah McKinley from the Democracy Collaborative about the importance of seeing Community Wealth Building as an economic development model. Thanks also to speakers Stuart MacDonald from the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) and of course, to Neil McInroy from the Democracy Collaborative, who has been on North Ayrshire Council's CWB journey from day one.

The Conference was well received by delegates who found it hugely interesting and productive. I would like to say a special thanks to Caitriona McAuley, Head of Economic Development and Regeneration at North Ayrshire Council and her team of officers for planning and executing such a successful event.

CHALLENGE POVERTY WEEK, 5 – 11 October

This was the seventh consecutive year that North Ayrshire Council supported the Poverty Alliance's national "Challenge Poverty Week" campaign. I would like to thank the Locality Chairs for taking time to do short videos highlighting some of the great work that is taking place within their respective Localities to combat poverty.

I would also like to thank partners and teams who helped to promote the range of services that are available to those seeking help.

I am pleased to say that the Council has now set up a designated page on our website which contains all the information and links to websites and organisations that can help if you are struggling with the cost-of-living. It has sections on energy, benefits, food and clothing, health and wellbeing and a section dedicated to our business community.

The website is now up and running and can be found here:

www.northayrshire.gov.uk/CostOfLiving

***ELECTED MEMBER DEVELOPMENT SESSION, NATIONAL CARE SERVICE,
20 October***

On 20 October I attended a development session for North Ayrshire Elected Members to receive an update on the National Care Service Bill.



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Marie Burns". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Marie" and the last name "Burns" clearly legible.

Councillor Marie Burns
Leader of North Ayrshire Council