

Cabinet
10 February 2015

Irvine, 10 February 2015 - At a meeting of Cabinet of North Ayrshire Council at 2.30 p.m.

Present

Willie Gibson, Alan Hill, Marie Burns, Anthea Dickson, Tony Gurney and Ruth Maguire; Very Reverend Matthew Canon McManus and Mr Mark Fraser (Church Representatives) (Agenda Items 1 - 5) and John Shekleton and Courtney Gemmell (Youth Representatives) (Agenda Items 1 - 10).

Also Present

Ian Clarkson (Agenda Items 1 - 8.4).

In Attendance

E. Murray, Chief Executive; L. Friel, Executive Director and A. Blakely, IT Manager (Finance and Corporate Support); J. Butcher, Executive Director, S. Quinn, Head of Service (Schools) and L. Cook, Education Development Co-ordinator (Education and Youth Employment); C. Hatton, Executive Director (Place); K. Yeomans, Executive Director, A. Sutton, Head of Service (Connected Communities) and J. McHarg, Community Engagement Manager (Economy and Communities); N. Shearer, Team Manager (Legal), R. Moore, Communications Officer (Media and Internal Communications) and A. Little, Committee Services Officer (Chief Executive's).

Chair

Councillor Gibson in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

John Bruce and Elizabeth Highton.

1. Chair's Remarks

The Chair welcomed John Shekleton and Courtney Gemmell (Youth Representatives) to their first Cabinet meeting.

2. 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.

3. Minutes

The accuracy of the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2015 were confirmed and the Minutes signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

4. School Leaver Destination Return 2013/14

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Education and Skills) which provided information on (a) the destination of young people who left school between 1 August 2013 and 31 July 2014; (b) a range of supports and resources in place to improve outcomes for young people; and (c) changes to the way the annual statistics will be produced.

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

- the national measurement in respect of employment, which includes Modern Apprentices; and
- a review of the methodology used by Skills Development Scotland to produce the annual school leave destination statistics.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note the information set out in the School Leaver Destination Return; and (b) support the continued focus of schools and Education and Youth Employment on improving outcomes for young people.

5. Self Evaluation and Quality Assurance Procedures in North Ayrshire Schools

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Education & Youth Employment) on the revised self evaluation and quality assurance procedures that will deliver a sustainable model and meet the aims of Education Scotland's (HMI) priority of ensuring schools are able to evaluate their own performance against national and other relevant benchmarks.

Noted.

6. ICT Strategy for Educational Establishments Update February 2015

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on (a) the development of an Education ICT Strategy to ensure the development and use of ICT is embedded within the curriculum; (b) the key recommendations of the Strategy; and (c) the Action Plan detailing progress of the actions and next steps required to implement the Strategy.

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

- the introduction of Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) within schools and the provision of devices by schools to those who require a device;
- the identification of security risks associated with BYOD and work that will be done to mitigate these risks;
- a contract that is in place to dispose of outdated ICT equipment; and
- outdated equipment that can continue to be use, outwith the network, on a stand alone basis.

Noted.

7. Empty Homes Strategy: Empty Homes Loan Fund

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Place) which provided information on (a) funding of £200,000 secured from the Empty Homes Loan Fund; and (b) alternative methods explored by the Scottish Government for utilising money from the Fund.

The Cabinet agreed that income secured from the Scottish Government's Empty Homes Loan Fund may also be used for (i) the purpose of offering loans to owners to allow them to sell their properties on the open market; and (ii) purchasing empty homes, which were previously subject to right to buy, and which will then become part of the overall Council housing stock.

8. Kirktonhall, West Kilbride

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on (a) the progress made by the Kirktonhall Creative Media Group toward the preparation of a business plan; (b) funding information that is expected by the end of financial year 2014/15; and (c) a report that will be presented once funding information has been received on the future use of the building.

The Cabinet agreed to approve continuation of the preferred bidder status for Kirktonhall Creative Media Group until a decision has been made by the external funders (Historic Scotland and Heritage Lottery Fund) in respect of future funding, expected by the end of the financial year 2014/5, at which time a determination on the future for Kirktonhall can be made.

9. Community Asset Transfer

9.1 Community Asset Transfer Application: Irvine Bay Gymnastics Club, Blacklands Hall, Kilwinning

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on the application by Irvine Bay Gymnastics Club to have the lease of Blacklands Hall, Kilwinning transferred to them within the terms of the Council's Community Asset Transfer arrangements.

The Cabinet agreed to approve in principle the transfer of the Blacklands Hall with associated grounds, subject to the satisfactory conclusion of Stage 4 of the North Ayrshire Council asset transfer process to agree the terms and conditions of lease or prospective purchase.

9.2 Community Asset Transfer Application: ANCHO, Redburn Community Centre

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on ANCHO's application to have the lease of Redburn Community Centre, Dickson Drive, Irvine transferred to the organisation within the terms of the Council's Community Asset Transfer arrangements.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to consultation that will take place with stakeholders, including Elected Members, as part of Stage 4 of the community asset transfer process.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) approve in principle the transfer of the Redburn Community Centre to ANCHO, subject to the satisfactory conclusion of Stage 4 of the North Ayrshire Council asset transfer process to agree the terms and conditions of lease or prospective purchase; and (b) authorise Legal Services to petition Kilmarnock Sheriff Court for authority to grant the lease.

9.3 Community Asset Transfer Application: Coastwatch (Scotland) Irvine, Irvine Pilot House (Boyd's Patented Tower, Grade B Listed Building)

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on the application by Coastwatch (Scotland), Irvine to have the lease of the Irvine Pilot House transferred to them within the terms of the Council's Community Asset Transfer arrangements.

The Cabinet agreed to approve in principle the transfer of the Pilot House with associated grounds, subject to the satisfactory conclusion of Stage 4 of the North Ayrshire Council asset transfer process to agree the terms and conditions of lease or prospective purchase.

9.4 Community Asset Transfer Application: North Ayrshire Staff Association, Littlestane Hall, Irvine

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on the North Ayrshire Staff Association application to have the lease of Littlestane Hall, transferred to them within the terms of the Council's Community Asset Transfer arrangements.

The Cabinet agreed to approve in principle the transfer of the Littlestane Hall, Irvine with associated grounds, subject to the satisfactory conclusion of Stage 4 of the North Ayrshire Council asset transfer process to agree the terms and conditions of lease or prospective purchase.

10. ICT Strategy Update February 2015

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on (a) the key areas of progress to date in relation to the ICT Strategy; and (b) the Action Plan detailing the progress of the actions and next steps required to implement the Strategy.

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

- work that is underway for a Scottish Wide Area Network (SWAN) to host value added services in the Cloud; and
- monitoring of progress and availability of SWAN to deliver shared resources and secure cloud hosting.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note progress to date; and (b) receive 6 monthly progress reports.

The meeting ended at 3.35 p.m.