

Cunninghame House,  
Irvine.

3 March 2016

### **Scrutiny and Petitions Committee**

You are requested to attend a Meeting of the above mentioned Committee of North Ayrshire Council to be held in the Council Chambers, Cunninghame House, Irvine on **WEDNESDAY 9 MARCH 2016** at **2.00 P.M.** to consider the undernoted business.

Yours faithfully

Elma Murray

Chief Executive

**1. Declarations of Interest**

Members are requested to give notice of any declarations of interest in respect of items of business on the Agenda.

**2. Minutes (Page 5)**

The accuracy of the Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Committee held on 27 January 2016 will be confirmed and the Minutes signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (copy enclosed).

**3. Q2 2015 Complaint Report (Page 9)**

Submit report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on the volume and trend of complaints in Q2 2015 and the improvement actions undertaken by Services (copy enclosed).

**4. Community Centres North Ayrshire (Page 37)**

Submit report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on the outstanding matters in relation to the range of activities being delivered from community centres, the added value provided by volunteers and the savings made with regard to Council run facilities (copy enclosed).

**5. AJVB : Minutes of Meeting held on 1 September 2015 (Page 47)**

Submit report by the Chief Executive on the Minutes of the meeting of the Ayrshire Joint Valuation Board held on 1 September 2015 (copy enclosed).

**6. Urgent Items**

Any other business that the Chair considers urgent.

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## Scrutiny and Petitions Committee

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Sederunt: John Hunter (Chair)  
Alex Gallagher (Vice Chair)  
Robert Barr  
Matthew Brown  
Grace McLean  
Catherine McMillan  
Alan Munro

Chair:

Attending:

Apologies:

Meeting Ended:



Scrutiny and Petitions Committee  
27 January 2016

**IRVINE, 27 January 2016** - At a Meeting of the Scrutiny and Petitions Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

**Present**

John Hunter, Robert Barr, Matthew Brown, Alex Gallagher, Grace McLean, Catherine McMillan .

**In Attendance**

L. Friel, Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support); C. Hatton, Executive Director (Place); C. McAuley, Head of Service (Economic Growth) (Economy and Communities); S. Quinn, Head of Service (Schools) (Education and Youth Employment); J. Gibson, Principal Manager (Planning and Performance) (Health and Social Care Partnership); A. Fraser, Head of Democratic Services, A. Todd, Senior Performance Officer and A. Little, Committee Services Officer (Chief Executive's Service).

**Chair**

Councillor Hunter in the Chair.

**Apologies for Absence**

Alan Munro.

**1. Declarations of Interest**

In terms of Standing Order 10 and Section 5 of the Code of Conduct for Councillors, Councillor Brown and McMillan, as members of the Ayrshire Valuation Joint Board (AVJB), declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 5 (AVJB Minutes).

**2. Minutes**

The accuracy of the Minutes of (i) the ordinary meeting of the Committee held on 25 November 2015, (ii) the special meeting held on 7 December 2015; and (iii) the special meeting held on 22 December 2015 were confirmed and the Minutes signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

**3. Performance Management Update**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on progress on the Performance Management Forum (PMF) work plan under the PMF key performance areas, and in terms of Recognised for Excellence. Detailed progress on the PMF work plan were attached at Appendix 1 to the report. Appendix 2 contained details of R4E areas which the Assessors identified for improvement, as well as activity to date and activity planned to address these points.

Members asked questions, and received further information, on the following:-

- feedback provided by Quality Scotland on Recognised for Excellence (R4E) following their 2015 assessment which highlighted a large range of areas for improvement;
- proposals to meet the R4E improvement plan that were reported to Cabinet in January 2016, that will be implemented in three phases and include performance measures, performance staff and knowledge hub; and
- the score of the Council that was within the 300 - 400 band.

The Committee agreed (a) that Members be provided with (i) the Recognised for Excellence Improvement Plan report that was presented to Cabinet on 16 January 2016; and (ii) the letter from Quality Scotland that accompanied the R4E assessment; and (b) to otherwise note the report.

#### **4. Directorate Plan 2015/16 Performance Reports as at 30 September 2015**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on an update on the performance of all Directorates as at 30 September 2015.

Members asked questions, and received further information, on the following:-

##### Democratic Services

- A review of performance management that is underway.

##### Finance and Corporate Support

- the performance indicators for the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) that match those of SOLACE; and
- Mid year Council Tax collections for 2015/16 that are on target and forecasting that indicates that the annual target will be achieved.

##### Education and Youth

- the Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included (SHANARRI) interactive toolkit that is used to help assess wellbeing needs; and
- the national performance evaluation and benchmarking tool (INSIGHT) that is centred on the idea of a "virtual comparator" and matches ten leavers from across Scotland to every one of the leavers in each school/authority and treats this matched group as the virtual school/authority.

##### Economy and Communities

- management discretion that can be applied as part of the Maximising Attendance Procedure and halts progression to the next stage of the process;

- work to design and develop an Ayrshire Growth Deal that will deliver significant economic growth and consultation that will take place with a number partners and Elected Members;
- data that has not been available/validated in respect of Job Seekers Allowance; and
- the recruitment of an Performance Officer to review performance measures and to drive service performance

#### Place

- the move away from temporary road repairs to the 'Right First Time' approach to ensure first time quality road repairs are undertaken.

#### Health and Social Care Partnership

- dementia training that has been provided across the Health and Social Care Partnership and links that have been made with colleagues in acute services;
- the continuing work towards full integration between health and social care that is progressing well; and
- engagement that has taken place with GPs in working towards a new model for primary contact.

Noted.

#### **4. AVJB Minutes**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the Minutes of the Meeting of the Ayrshire Valuation Joint Board (AVJB) held on 10 November 2015.

Noted.

The meeting ended at 3.25 p.m.





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## **NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **Agenda Item 3**

**9 March 2016**

#### **Scrutiny and Petitions Committee**

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**Title:** **Q2 2015 Complaint Report**

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**Purpose:** To inform the Scrutiny and Petitions Committee of the volumes and trends of complaints in Q2 2015 and the improvement actions undertaken by Services

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**Recommendation:** That the Committee notes the report and improvement actions undertaken

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#### **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This report details complaint information relating to North Ayrshire Council (NAC) in Q2 2015, covering the period 1 July 2015 to 30 September 2015.
- 1.2 The report details the number of expressions of dissatisfaction received from North Ayrshire customers and residents that are then classified and actioned as corporate complaints, service requests or enquiries.
- 1.3 In order to allow a year on year comparison, the report also details complaint data covering the first 6 months of 2015, 2014 and 2013 (referred to in the report as Q2 2015 YTD, Q2 2014 YTD and Q2 2013 YTD).

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1 This section contains statistical information and commentary on some of the key complaint performance indicators devised by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) in conjunction with all 32 Scottish councils. Full details for each indicator can be found in the attached report.

## 2.2 Volume of cases received and closed

	Total expressions of customer dissatisfaction	Volume classified and closed as complaints	% classified as complaints	% actioned as something else
<b>Q2 2015 YTD</b>	796	692	87%	13%
<b>Q2 2014 YTD</b>	1,488	1,363	92%	8%
<b>Q2 2013 YTD</b>	998	832	83%	17%

2.2.1 A 49% reduction in complaints received Q2 2015 YTD compared to the same period last year and a 17% reduction when compared to 2013. The high volume last year can be attributed to a significant uplift in complaints for Waste Services as a result of changes made to kerbside bin collections in early 2014. As the changes became embedded throughout the year, complaints for the Service steadily reduced and is reflective in the volume recorded for Q2 2015 YTD.

## 2.3 Analysis by channel

Period	Channel				
	Contact Centre	On-Line /Email	Letter	Complaint Line/Telephone	Face to Face
<b>Q2 2015 YTD</b>	53%	33%	5%	6%	2%
<b>Q2 2014 YTD</b>	70%	20%	4%	4%	2%

- 2.3.1 Whilst we cannot compare like for like given the variance in complaint volumes between the two periods, it should be noted more customers used alternative channels to the Contact Centre when raising their complaints in the last 6 months compared to the same period last year.

## 2.4 Complaints closed at each Stage

	Stage One	Stage One (%)	Stage Two	Stage Two (%)
Q2 2015 YTD	634	92%	58	8%
Q2 2014 YTD	1,288	94%	75	6%
Q2 2013 YTD	718	86%	114	14%

- 2.4.1 Services closed the majority of all complaints at Stage One in Q2 2015 YTD. This is in line with expectations given most complaints will be non-complex in nature and is consistent with previous periods.

## 2.5 Complaint outcomes

	Upheld / Partially Upheld		Not Upheld					
			Quality of complaint	%	Policy	%	Regulatory	%
Q2 2015 YTD	381	55%	233	34%	60	9%	18	2 %
Q2 2014 YTD	1,064	78%	193	14%	93	7%	13	1 %
Q2 2013 YTD	603	72%	123	15%	76	9%	30	4 %

- 2.5.1 Many complaints not upheld due to “Quality of complaint” can be attributed to customers raising complaints that were unsubstantiated or were poor quality anonymous submissions.

## 2.6 Average time in working days for a full response under each Stage

YTD	Stage One (Average Days)	Stage Two (Average Days)
2015	3	14.6
2014	2.7	11
2013	4.9	10.5
Target (Actual days)	5	20

2.6.1 The average time in working days for a response under both Stages are within the SPSO target response times since the procedure went live in April 2013.

2.6.2 Although there is an increase in the average days when comparing Stage Two complaints over the periods, full investigations have to be completed before the Council can state its position. Services are therefore not encouraged to resolve these quickly and focus on the quality and not the speediness of the response.

## 2.7 Upheld / Partially Upheld Complaints

2.7.1 The table below shows the percentage of upheld/partially upheld complaints per Directorate Q2 2015 YTD:-

Directorate	% Upheld/Partially Upheld
Place	75%
Finance & Corporate Support	18%
Education & Youth Employment	5%
Economy & Communities	1%
Chief Executive/Democratic Services	<1%

2.7.2 Analysis shows that Waste Services in Place had the highest volume of upheld complaints, however they averaged less than 2 upheld complaints per working day in Q2 2015 YTD. This is a much improved average compared to the average of 7 upheld complaints per day in the same period last year.

## 2.8 Complaints closed within timescale

	Stage One			Stage Two		
	Volume	Closed on time	% closed on time	Volume	Closed on time	% closed on time
<b>Q2 2015 YTD</b>	634	584	<b>92%</b>	58	51	<b>88%</b>
<b>Q2 2014 YTD</b>	1,288	1,118	<b>87%</b>	75	65	<b>87%</b>
<b>Q2 2013 YTD</b>	718	584	<b>81%</b>	114	103	<b>90%</b>

2.8.1 The majority of Stage One complaints in Q2 2015 YTD were resolved within timescale. The volume closed is a 5% improvement on the volume closed within timescale during the same 6 month period in 2014 and an 11% improvement on the year before.

2.8.2 A small number of Stage Two complaints did not meet timescale in Q2 2015 YTD, but overall there was a 1% increase in the percentage resolved on time compared to the same period last year.

### 3. Proposals

#### 3.1 Improvement Actions.

A range of improvements across Services were introduced in Q2 2015, including the following:

- Introduction of new technology
- Procedure reviews
- Procedure enhancements

#### 3.2 Further information on the improvements are detailed in the attached report.

### 4. Implications

<b>Financial:</b>	There are no Financial implications
<b>Human Resources:</b>	There are no Human Resources implications
<b>Legal:</b>	There are no Legal implications
<b>Equality:</b>	There are no Equality implications
<b>Environmental &amp; Sustainability:</b>	There are no Environmental implications
<b>Key Priorities:</b>	<p>The Two Stage CHP supports the Council's key priority of delivering more effective and efficient service provision.</p> <p>Timely reports are available with a focus on analysing trends and identifying improvements.</p> <p>Support and guidance from the centralised Complaint Team ensures greater consistency in complaint handling, improvements in response times and a reduction in the duplication of effort.</p>
<b>Community Benefits:</b>	The Two Stage CHP demonstrates a commitment to improve service delivery for North Ayrshire customers and residents

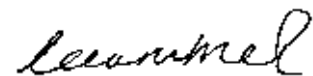
### 5. Consultation

#### 5.1 Complaint Handling Satisfaction Surveys are issued quarterly to customers who had cause to complain to capture their views on the Two Stage CHP and how Services handled their complaints.

5.2 The survey questions have been revised to ensure feedback is based on a user-led concept and the first survey was issued at the end of September 2015. Key points to note from the survey are:-

- 60% of all respondents said they felt they should raise a complaint because something had gone wrong
- 51% said they would complain again as it is important to raise issues
- 45% said they felt raising a complaint would enable the Council to make things better
- 53% said they felt confident raising their complaint
- 44% said they felt the staff handling their complaint were empowered to resolve it
- 81% said they would complain again if it was necessary

5.3 The full survey results are contained within the attached report under Appendix 4.



LAURA FRIEL  
Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support)

Reference :

For further information please contact Esther Gunn-Stewart, Customer Services Manager on 01294 323960

**Background Papers**

Q2 2015 Complaint Report







North Ayrshire Council  
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

## Corporate Complaints Q2 2015 YTD Report

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## Background

This report details complaint information relating to North Ayrshire Council (NAC) in Q2 2015, covering the period 1 July 2015 to 30 September 2015.

In order to allow a year on year comparison, the report also details complaint data covering the first 6 months of 2015, 2014 and 2013 (referred to in the report as Q2 2015 YTD, Q2 2014 YTD and Q2 2013 YTD).

The report details the number of expressions of dissatisfaction received from North Ayrshire customers and residents that are then classified and actioned as corporate complaints, service requests or enquiries.

The statistics gathered are based on key performance indicators devised by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) in conjunction with all 32 Scottish councils.

Social Services continue to manage a Three Stage Complaint Handling Procedure (CHP) in line with the rest of Scotland and complaint data relating to this Service is detailed separately in the report. The Scottish Government has been undertaking a review of Social Services complaints and actions are expected late next year.

All other complaints detailed in the report were handled under the Two Stage CHP which commenced in NAC on 1 April 2013.

## Executive Summary

There was a 49% reduction in complaints received in the first 6 months of 2015 compared to the same period in 2014 and a 17% decrease when compared to the same period in 2013.

The reduction between 2015 and 2014 was due mainly to a drop in the volume of complaints received relating to Waste Services. As reported in previous quarterly reports, the high volume in 2014 was due to changes to kerbside collections in early 2014 resulting in an increase in customer complaints. As the changes became embedded, complaint volumes for Waste Services decreased over time to the levels as detailed in this report.

Fewer customers raised their complaints in Q2 2015 YTD through the Contact Centre and instead chose to raise via alternative channels when compared to the same period last year.

The vast majority of complaints were resolved at Stage One (Frontline Resolution), meaning most customers received a response within 5 working days.

Over half of all complaints received were upheld or partially upheld, highlighting genuine issues were often being raised by customers/residents.

The average time in working days to close all complaints under both Stages were within SPSO target timescales.

Improvements seen in the volume of complaints closed on time for both Stages when comparing Q2 2015 YTD with Q2 2014 YTD.

The Complaint Handling Satisfaction Survey was revamped to allow more meaningful feedback through a user-led concept. Feedback from the new survey that was recently issued is detailed in this report.

An exercise recently took place where complaint data across all 32 Scottish councils for 2014/15 was analysed and benchmarked. Feedback was provided on the report that was produced and is currently being finalised. Once the final version of the report has been distributed, information from it will be shared in a future NAC complaint report.

### 1(a) – Volume of cases received and closed

	Total expressions of customer dissatisfaction	Volume classified and closed as complaints (1)	% classified as complaints	% actioned as something else
Q2 2015 YTD	796	692	87%	13%
Q2 2014 YTD	1,488	1,363	92%	8%
Q2 2013 YTD	998	832	83%	17%

- A 49% reduction in complaints received Q2 2015 YTD compared to the same period last year and a 17% reduction when compared to 2013. The volume last year can be attributed to a significant uplift in complaints for Waste Services as a result of changes made to kerbside bin collections in early 2014. As the changes became embedded throughout the year, complaints for this Service steadily reduced and is reflective in the volume of complaints recorded for Q2 2015 YTD.
- More closure outcome options were added during 2015 which resulted in a greater number of complaints being classified and actioned as something else. This included complaints subsequently withdrawn by customers and complaints that did not relate to NAC which had to be sign-posted to the appropriate organisation.

### 1(b) – Complaints received per thousand population

	Based on 136,450 residents*
Q2 2015 YTD	5 per 1,000
Q2 2014 YTD	10 per 1,000
Q2 2013 YTD	6 per 1,000

\*Source [gro-scotland.gov.uk](http://gro-scotland.gov.uk) mid-2014 estimate

- The decrease in the number of complaints received per thousand population Q2 2015 YTD when compared to the same period the previous year is due to a lower volume of Waste Services complaints now being received.

(1) The Glossary page details the 6 complaint criteria.

### 1(c) – Analysis by geographical area

Area	% of Population	% of complaints Q2 2015
Irvine	29%	26%
Kilwinning	14%	11%
Largs (including Fairlie)	8%	10%
Ardrossan	8%	8%
Stevenston	7%	7%
Beith	5%	6%
Saltcoats	8%	5%
Kilbirnie	5%	5%
Dalry	4%	5%
West Kilbride	3%	5%
Millport	1%	2%
Isle of Arran	3%	<1%
Skelmorlie	1%	<1%
Anonymous/Unknown	N/A	7%
Outwith North Ayrshire	N/A	3%

- In Q2 2015, Beith raised a higher proportion of complaints than the population size would suggest. Analysis shows the complaints from this locale related to multiple Services and no trends or themes were identified.
- Fewer complaints were received from Saltcoats in Q2 2015 when considering their population size.
- 7% of complainants chose to remain anonymous when logging their complaints using the online facility. The substance of each anonymous complaint was investigated where applicable.
- 3% of all complaints were made by individuals outwith North Ayrshire. Again, the substance of each complaint was fully investigated, where possible, in line with the Two Stage CHP.

### 1(d) – Analysis by channel

Period	Channel				
	Contact Centre	On-Line/Email	Letter	Complaint Line/Telephone	Face to Face
Q2 2015 YTD	53%	33%	5%	6%	2%
Q2 2014 YTD	70%	20%	4%	4%	2%

- Whilst we cannot compare like for like given the variance in complaint volumes between the two periods, it should be noted more customers used alternative channels to the Contact Centre when raising their complaints in the last 6 months compared to the same period last year.
- No comparison can be made with Q2 2013 YTD as complaint channels were not recorded at that time.

## 2 – Complaints closed at each Stage

	Stage One (Frontline Resolution)	Stage One %	Stage Two (Investigation)	Stage Two %
Q2 2015 YTD	634	92%	58	8%
Q2 2014 YTD	1,288	94%	75	6%
Q2 2013 YTD	718	86%	114	14%

- Services closed the majority of all complaints at Frontline Resolution in Q2 2015 YTD. This is in line with expectations (given most complaints will be non-complex in nature) and is consistent with previous years.

## 3(a) – Complaint outcomes

	Upheld / Partially Upheld		Not Upheld					
			Quality of complaint	%	Policy	%	Regulatory	%
Q2 2015 YTD	381	55%	233	34%	60	9%	18	2%
Q2 2014 YTD	1,064	78%	193	14%	93	7%	13	1%
Q2 2013 YTD	603	72%	123	15%	76	9%	30	4%

- Many complaints not upheld due to “Quality of complaint” can be attributed to customers raising complaints that were unsubstantiated or were poor quality anonymous submissions.
- When comparing the periods, a greater percentage of complaints were upheld or partially upheld in Q2 2014 YTD due to the high volume of missed bin complaints in early 2014.

## 3 (b) - Average time in working days for a full response at each Stage

YTD (Avg)	Stage One (Frontline Resolution)	Stage Two (Investigation)
2015	3	14.6
2014	2.7	11
2013	4.9	10.5
Target (Actual days)	5	20

- The average time in working days for a response under both Stages are within the SPSO target response times since the procedure went live in April 2013.

- Although there is an increase in the average days when comparing Stage Two complaints over the periods, full investigations have to be completed before the Council can state its position. Services are therefore not encouraged to resolve these quickly and focus on the quality and not the speediness of the response.

### 3 (c) – Average time in working days for a full response per Service

- The table below provides a Directorate breakdown for Q2 2015 which details the average time in working days for a response under Stage One and Stage Two.
- The Notes section provides further information where the average days did not meet (actual) target timescales.
- To assist with interpreting the table, Stage One complaints have an timescale to resolve of 5 working days and Stage Two complaints have a timescale to resolve of 20 working days.

Chief Executive	Stage	Average days to resolve	Total number of complaints	Notes
Chief Executive Service (including Member Services)	One	12	1	1 Committee and Member Services Stage One complaint breached timescale as a result of a system training issue. Actions to mitigate this happening again will be agreed between the Complaint Team and the Service.
	Two	Nil	Nil	
Legal	One	1	1	
	Two	Nil	Nil	
Education & Youth Employment	Stage	Average days to resolve	Total number of complaints	Notes
Education - HQ	One	5	7	No issues
	Two	Nil	Nil	
Education - Schools	One	2.7	13	
	Two	Nil	Nil	
Finance & Corporate Support	Stage	Average days to resolve	Total number of complaints	Notes
<b>Finance</b>				No issues
Benefits	One	2	7	
	Two	2	1	
Revenues	One	2	5	
	Two	Nil	Nil	
Finance - Other	One	5	2	
	Two	11	1	
<b>Customer, People &amp; Corporate Support</b>				No issues
Customer Services	One	3	24	
	Two	17	9	
HR	One	Nil	Nil	
	Two	12	1	



Place	Stage	Average days to resolve	Total number of complaints	Notes
<b>Commercial Services</b>				No issues
Building Services	One	3	20	
	Two	Nil	Nil	
Facilities Management	One	3	6	
	Two	Nil	Nil	
Transport	One	Nil	Nil	
	Two	20	1	
Waste Services	One	3	123	
	Two	Nil	Nil	
<b>Physical Environment</b>				No issues
Housing	One	2	11	
	Two	16	9	
PMI	One	3	17	
	Two	Nil	Nil	
Roads	One	4	29	
	Two	Nil	Nil	
Streetscene	One	4	63	
	Two	9	3	
Economy & Communities	Stage	Average days to resolve	Total number of complaints	Notes
<b>Economic Growth</b>				1 SPI Stage Two complaint was closed just outside timescale. The complaint was a complex matter concerning Fairlie Castle and considerable investigation was required before the response could be issued. This complaint could have had an extension applied that would have resulted in the complaint meeting timescale.
Planning	One	Nil	Nil	
	Two	13	1	
Protective Services	One	3	4	
	Two	11	2	
Strategic Planning & Infrastructure	One	3	2	
	Two	22	1	
<b>Connected Communities</b>				1 Community Development Stage One complaint did not make timescale as numerous attempts to invite the customer to a meeting with the Head of Service went unheeded. As these attempts were unsuccessful, a letter was eventually issued to the customer. The complaint should not have remained open for 19 days and discussions around this will take place between the Complaint Team and the Service.
Community Development	One	19	1	
	Two	Nil	Nil	
Community Facilities	One	Nil	Nil	
	Two	Nil	Nil	
Information & Culture	One	Nil	Nil	
	Two	Nil	Nil	
Outdoor Education & Parks	One	Nil	Nil	
	Two	Nil	Nil	

#### 4 – Upheld / Partially Upheld Complaint percentage volumes by Service

The table below shows the percentage of upheld/partially upheld complaints per Directorate Q2 2015 YTD:

Directorate	% Upheld/Partially Upheld
Place	75%
Finance & Corporate Support	18%
Education & Youth Employment	5%
Economy & Communities	1%
Chief Executive/Democratic Services	<1%

The table below details the department breakdown:

	Total Volume received	Volume Upheld	% Upheld
HR	1	1	100%
Chief Executive Service (including Member Services)	3	3	100%
Transport	2	2	100%
Finance – Benefits	18	13	72%
Waste Services	227	156	69%
Finance – Revenues	18	12	67%
Streetscene	99	63	64%
Finance – Other	8	5	63%
Customer Services (including Contact Centre, Customer Service Centres, Complaint Team & Registrations)	65	38	58%
Building Services	40	22	55%
PMI	35	16	46%
Facilities Management	9	4	44%
Education – HQ	22	9	41%
Protective Services	11	4	36%
Education – Schools	30	10	33%
Roads	54	14	26%
Strategic Planning & Infrastructure	4	1	25%
Housing	42	8	19%

- Although Waste Services had the highest volume of upheld complaints, they averaged less than 2 upheld complaints per working day in Q2 2015 YTD, which is a much improved average compared to the average of 7 upheld complaints in the same period last year.

## 5 – Complaints closed at each Stage within 5 and 20 working days

	Stage One (Frontline Resolution)			Stage Two (Investigation)		
	Volume	Closed on time	% closed on time	Volume	Closed on time	% closed on time
<b>Q2 2015 YTD</b>	634	584	<b>92%</b>	58	51	<b>88%</b>
<b>Q2 2014 YTD</b>	1,288	1,118	<b>87%</b>	75	65	<b>87%</b>
<b>Q2 2013 YTD</b>	718	584	<b>81%</b>	114	103	<b>90%</b>

- 92% of Stage One complaints in Q2 2015 YTD were resolved within timescale. This is a 5% improvement on the volume closed within timescale during the same 6 month period in 2014 and 11% improvement on the year before.
- A small number of Stage Two complaints did not meet timescale in Q2 2015 YTD but overall there was a 1% increase in the percentage resolved on time compared to Q2 2014 YTD.

A total of 57 complaints did not meet timescale during Q2 2015 YTD. A breakdown of these is noted in the table below:

Department	Volume not closed on time	Total volume of complaints	% breached
Community Learning & Development	1	1	100%
Chief Executive Office	1	3	33%
Strategic Planning & Infrastructure	1	3	33%
Education – HQ	5	22	23%
Facilities Management	2	9	22%
Streetscene	21	99	21%
Finance - Other	1	8	13%
Building Services	3	40	8%
Customer Services	5	65	8%
Education – Schools	2	30	7%
Roads	4	54	7%
Waste Services	11	227	5%

- Whilst there may be valid reasons for complaints not meeting timescale, complaints not closed on time is a standing agenda item at internal Complaint Forums.

## **6 – Complaints where an extension to the timescale has been authorised**

- There were no requests to extend the Stage One or Stage Two timescales in Q2 2015. Extending timescales is not normal practice and are considered on an exceptional basis only.
- Some complaints in Q2 2015 breached their timescale because of the complexity of the issues being investigated and extensions may have been approved for these. A communication reminder regarding extending timescales has therefore been issued from the Complaint Team to all key complaint contacts.

## **7 – Customer satisfaction with complaints handling**

- Complaint Handling Satisfaction Surveys are issued quarterly to customers who had cause to complain to capture their views on the Two Stage CHP and how Services handled their complaints.
- The survey questions have been revised to ensure feedback is based on a user-led concept and the first survey was issued at the end of September 2015. Key points to note from the survey are:-
  - 60% of all respondents said they felt they should raise a complaint because something had gone wrong
  - 51% said they would complain again as it is important to raise issues
  - 45% said they felt raising a complaint would enable the Council to make things better
  - 53% said they felt confident raising their complaint
  - 44% said they felt the staff handling their complaint were empowered to resolve it
  - 81% said they would complain again if it was necessary
- The full survey results are contained in Appendix 4.

## **8 – Changes or improvements as a result of complaints**

- Complaint reports are issued to key contacts in each Service on a monthly basis. The reports are reviewed for accuracy and remedial action undertaken if incorrect complaint information or data is identified. Reports are also issued to each Service quarterly, together with a quarterly report submitted to the Council's Corporate Management Team.
- Actions and improvements as a result of complaints received are published on the NAC website under the banner "You Said, We Did".
- Not all Services can implement improvements due to a number of factors, including the substance of the complaint, the feasibility of implementing changes and resource/budget considerations.

Improvements (specific or general) as a result of complaints in Q2 2015 are listed below:

Service	Improvements made / anticipated
<b>Customer Services</b>	The Contact Centre introduced a new phone system in July that reduces the need to manually search for customers, provides voice recognition and also enhanced call routing. Since implementation, the volume of call waiting time complaints has reduced by 42% and the average waiting time has halved.
<b>HR</b>	One recruitment complaint resulted in the employing Service being reminded of the correct procedures to follow post-interview.
<b>Finance</b>	<p>As part of a complaint, Scottish Water confirmed information had been sent to the Council but it had not been received. An investigation identified an incorrect email address was being used for replies to enquiries. This was highlighted to Scottish Water and the correct email address will be used in future.</p> <p>A complaint was received regarding the timing of issuing bills for Direct Debit payers. During the investigation, it was identified that the Direct Debit timetable provided to Customer Services by Revenues was wrong. This was corrected and the right cut off dates for bills provided, reducing the reoccurrence of such complaints going forward.</p>
<b>PMI</b>	<p>As a result of a complaint concerning a customer being on the Kitchen program where no works were carried out, address lists for the Capital Programmes are now issued to Building Services electronically which should reduce complaints in this area.</p> <p>Due to a complaint regarding scaffolding being erected in a customer's garden, processes and procedures are being reviewed by our Roofing/Render Contractor and the Contract Officer will consider the practicality of including a delivery date of the scaffolding in the notification letter.</p>

### Customer Complaint Team

In June 2015 the Complaint Team scooped Silver for Complaint Management Team of the Year in the European Contact Centre and Customer Services Awards 2015, beating stiff competition including Barclays, MBNA and DHL International. The team also reached the final of the Complaint Team of the Year in the Contact Centre Awards 2015 and shared a platform with Virgin, Tesco and Barclays.

The Team was responsible for the following activities in Q2 2015 outwith business-as-usual activity:

Assisted/facilitated Corporate Complaint Workshops. These Workshops will be reviewed in 2016 to ensure they are fit for purpose.	PowerPoint presentation delivered at a Head Teacher conference in late August, resulting in more school complaints now being logged.
Complaint pages updated in Connects to ensure up to date and relevant information available.	Supported Directorate Support with Elected Member request logging in Lagan.
Compliment process enhanced to support new Performance Review meetings between Executive Directors and the Chief Executive.	Commenced Health & Social Care Partnership complaint pilot (see section 9)
The team have recently taken ownership of Customer Satisfaction in Customer Services and have begun reviewing and enhancing existing processes.	Produced complaint and feedback data to include in the 6 monthly Performance Reports for Executive Directors.
Inverclyde Council and Fife Council asked for help and support in respect of our complaint processes and systems.	Attended the first SPSO cross-sector conference and obtained several best-practice ideas to implement.

As a result of successful collaboration between the Complaint Team and Waste Services when addressing the recent spike in missed bin complaints, the team will be undertaking similar process improvement reviews in 2016. These will be identified through complaint analysis or the result of Services identifying a trend or theme that require the Complaint Team's assistance to address.

## 9 – Health & Social Care Partnership complaints

	Q2 2015 Volume
Total volume of formal complaints received	34
Volume closed on time (under existing Three Stage process)	18
Volume Upheld / Partially Upheld	12
Volume Not Upheld	21

- 53% of all formal complaints handled in Health & Social Care Partnership (H&SCP) were closed on time in Q2 2015. Complaints that did not meet timescale were due to the complexity and sensitivity of the issues being investigated.
- Although most complaints are handled on a case by case basis and Service-wide improvements are not applicable, 2 specific improvements were made as a result of complaints received in Q2 2015 and these are noted below:
  - Process changes within Community Care (Mental Health and Learning Disabilities) to ensure enquiries regarding Mental Health Officers are fielded to employees who have received the appropriate training
  - A review to be carried out with the Council's litigation team to improve the processes and procedures for employees handling enquiries from solicitors in relation to private AWAI (Adults With Incapacity Act) applications
- As noted in the Q1 2015 complaint report, our H&SCP currently use a Three Stage CHP and it is likely Social Services departments across Scotland will align with the model Two Stage CHP in late 2016. To support this move, a pilot commenced within our H&SCP Directorate in July 2015 to capture Stage One (Frontline) complaints under the model Two Stage CHP used by the rest of the Council. Complaint data is currently being collected in support of this pilot and analysis of the outputs will be shared in a future quarterly report.
- Temporary project funding was secured from H&SCP for additional resource within the Complaint Team to support the pilot until the end of the 2015 financial year. Consideration will need to be given by H&SCP to providing additional funding in 2016 to secure the same resource again as the pilot is rolled out by the Complaint Team across the wider Directorate.
- The process and current response timescales for H&SCP complaints are detailed in Appendix 1.

## 10 – Glossary

Term	Explanation
<b>Stage One (Frontline Resolution)</b>	Stage One (aka Frontline Resolution) aims to resolve straightforward customer complaints that require little or no investigation. Any employee may deal with complaints at this stage and they can be resolved via any channel. The main principle is to seek resolution at the earliest opportunity and as close to the point of service delivery as possible. Stage One complaints must be responded to within 5 working days unless an extension (a maximum of 5 additional working days) is requested and approved by a senior manager. We should, however, always aim to resolve these types of complaints within 5 working days.
<b>Stage Two (Investigation)</b>	Not all complaints are suitable for Frontline Resolution and not all complaints will be satisfactorily resolved at that stage. Complaints therefore handled at Stage Two (aka Investigation stage) typically require a detailed examination before we can state our position. These complaints may already have been considered at the Frontline Resolution stage, or they may have been identified from the outset as being complex, serious or high risk and needing immediate investigation. Any Investigation aims to establish all the facts relevant to the points made in the complaint and to give the customer a full, objective and proportionate response that represents our final position. Stage Two complaints must be responded to within 20 working days unless an extension is approved by a senior manager in conjunction with the customer. Investigation complaints require a written response, signed by a senior manager.
<b>Complaint criteria</b>	<p>When expressions of dissatisfaction are received, the Council must determine if the issue falls into one of 6 complaint categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A service that should have been provided was not</li><li>• A service was not provided to an appropriate standard</li><li>• A service request has not been answered or actioned</li><li>• A staff member was rude or unhelpful</li><li>• A staff member did not attend an appointment/call-out</li><li>• The complaint relates to a policy (internal or external)</li></ul> <p>If the issue being raised relates to one or more of the above, the matter is considered a corporate complaint and should be recorded and handled as such in Lagan. If not, it is not a complaint and should be actioned as a Service Request or enquiry accordingly.</p>

## Appendix 1 – H&SCP complaint process

The Health & Social Care Partnership (H&SCP) continue to adopt a Three Stage CHP and the processes followed are detailed below:

- An acknowledgement in writing issued to the complainant within 5 days of receipt
- A response in writing issued as soon as reasonably practicable and within 28 days of receipt
- The CRC make recommendations in writing to the appropriate committee as soon as practicable and within 56 days after the complainant has requested an CRC
- NAC decide what action to take and notify the complainant of any decision within 42 days of receiving the CRC recommendations
- Any extension of the above periods should be agreed by both NAC and the complainant.



## **Appendix 2 – Complaint Case Studies**

Below are examples of some complaints received in North Ayrshire Council in Q2 2015 that illustrate positive outcomes and/or improvements.

### **Example 1**

A customer contacted the Council to complain of the poor condition of a number of pavements in the local area due to a contractor replacing old lampposts with new ones. As part of our investigations, an NAC lighting engineer visited the site and agreed with the customer's assessment.

A meeting was held with the manager of the contractor, who was instructed to remedy the situation immediately and ensure that the standard of workmanship be maintained at an acceptable level for the remainder of the contract. To support this, we also instructed our inspector to increase the frequency of his visits to the site to ensure that the condition of the sites does not revert to an unacceptable level.

### **Example 2**

A customer raised a complaint wanting to know why her waste collection bins were being missed on a regular basis. Waste Services investigated the complaint and identified that access to the street for waste collection vehicles was often restricted due to the locations of parked vehicles.

The customer who raised the complaint was advised of this and to ensure waste collection vehicles can access the street when required, the Waste Awareness Team issued letters to all residents of the street requesting cars be parked in driveways on collection days.

### **Example 3**

A resident contacted the Council to complain about wooden bollards that had been erected on a grassy area to the rear of their home. The resident advised they did not know that the bollards had been put there and that an accident had happened because of one of them. The resident also advised that the location of one of the bollards made it difficult to access their garden gate.

Investigations discovered that the Council did not consult with the residents before proceeding to erect the bollards. A full apology was offered to the customers and the siting of one of the bollards will be moved to another location to allow the customers access to their garden.

### Appendix 3 – Compliments

Around 100 compliments were logged in Lagan in Q2 2015 and a selection is noted below. Compliments raised by customers themselves using the on-line compliment facility are in italics:-

<i>I would like to compliment your Waste department for the speedy delivery of my new blue bin – it was delivered next day and was taken right up to my front door. Much appreciated!</i>	Customer called to say thank you to Roads for the speedy service in painting fresh bay markings on a carpark, as well as adding disabled parking lines to a road.
<i>Compliments to Streetscene for planting the lovely wild flowers at the new Caledonia Car park in Irvine. They are beautiful.</i>	<i>Lighting fault reported on 11th and fixed on 13th. Excellent response time!</i>
Customer called to compliment the tradesmen who attended her property to repair her windows. They did an excellent job, acted like gentlemen and the customer was really happy with the service provided.	<i>On attending Bridgegate House to re-register my daughter's birth, I must commend the whole process from the Receptionist and the ticket system, to the efficient gentleman who issued the new certificate in some 10/15 minutes in a friendly and efficient manner.</i>
Customer called to say path was very overgrown and the Streetscene crew had been out to do the work. They have done an excellent job and is a big improvement to what it was.	<i>Thank you very much to all the staff at Saltcoats library. They are an amazing team and always make sure we enjoy our visits there.</i>
<i>I reported I was having difficulty using a cycle path when I was on my Electric Disability Scooter. I was along the pathway last weekend and was very pleased to find that you have moved the barriers further apart which allows me greater manoeuvrability. Thank you very much.</i>	Customer would like to send on her regards and thanks to the men who did her special uplift. They went above and beyond by helping her to lift the items as the customer is elderly. Customer thrilled with the service.
<i>We have just had a two day job done and would like to commend the Building Services tradesman who carried out the work. The guy was punctual, polite and courteous but above all, the work was to the highest standard and we could not believe the minimal disruption considering what the job entailed.</i>	<i>I would like to compliment the excellent staff and community room facilities at Largs library. I run a weekly service from the community room and I can't praise the staff highly enough for the first class that our team receive. I love everything about this library. Keep up the great work.</i>
<i>We want to say a GREAT BIG THANK YOU to David, Kyle and all the people involved in fitting our new kitchen. We are looking forward to many years of pleasure from the usable space that has been created. Once again a great big thank you all.</i>	A Landlord called to feedback that the service she gets from our Council Tax department is like a breath of fresh air compared to the service she receives from another local authority.
<i>Thanks to all the lovely ladies in the Ardrossan Library who are always friendly, efficient and patient with me when I forget how to log onto the computers!</i>	Customer would like to thank Streetscene for coming out to clean some mess that was outside a shop in Largs so promptly. He is very pleased with this service.
<i>I would just like to say Blair Kerr is one of the nicest travelling site managers I have ever met. He really is in the perfect job - he works very well with the travelling community and is always friendly and happy to help. Overall a great guy.</i>	<i>I phoned to request the trees and grass in the spare ground at the back of my house be cut back. The next day, I was delighted to find your guys in action getting the job done. A great big thank you from both myself and my neighbours</i>
Customers wanted to thank Brodie Pearcey, Arran Registrar, for a very special and personal wedding ceremony. It was exactly what they were looking for.	Customer complimented Kevin Barr, Contact Centre Adviser, on the helpful information he provided when she booked a death registration. She said he was very professional and wanted to pass on her thanks.

## Appendix 4 – Complaint Handling Satisfaction Survey results

In September 2015, a Complaint Handling Survey was emailed to customers who had reason to complain in Q2 2015. The survey captured customer views on the Two Stage CHP and how Services handled their complaints.

The questions in the survey were recently redesigned along a user-led concept and 163 surveys were issued. 47 customers (29%) responded but not all respondents answered every question.

As the survey questions now fall under specific headings, the key themes identified are listed below.

### ***“Considering a complaint”*** (what did the customer consider when making their complaint)

- Under this section, 60% of respondents said they felt they should raise a complaint because something had gone wrong
- 45% said they felt raising a complaint would enable the Council to make things better
- 27% of respondents said they knew the Council had a complaint procedure
- 20% said they knew the Council would act on their complaint

### ***“Making your complaint”*** (how did the customer feel when making their complaint)

- 53% of respondents said they felt confident raising their complaint
- 53% said they knew there would be a formal record of their complaint
- 38% said they knew their complaint would be passed to the appropriate person/department to resolve
- 25% said they felt they would be listened to when making their complaint

### ***“Staying informed during your complaint”*** (how did the customer feel during the complaint process)

- Under this section, 44% of respondents said they felt the staff handling their complaint were empowered to resolve it
- 31% said they felt their concerns were understood and that staff empathised with their situation
- 28% said they knew what Stage their complaint was being handled under
- 8% of respondents said they received regular updates about the progress of their complaint

### ***“Resolving the complaint”*** (what happened when the complaint was resolved by the Service)

- 32% of respondents said they were contacted with the outcome to their complaint
- 18% said the response from the Service directly addressed their complaint

### ***“Reflecting on your complaint experience”*** (how did the customer feel about making a complaint again)

- Under this section, 81% of respondents said they would complain again and 54% said they would advise and encourage others to make a complaint
- 51% of respondents said they would complain again as it is important to raise issues
- 32% said they would complain again as complaints help improve service delivery

- 11% of respondents said they would complain again as they see the difference their complaint has made (to their own situation and/or to others)

The survey results suggest that more effort is required to address the perception that raising complaints is a wasted exercise. It is extremely important that we seriously the complaints we receive, together with any additional feedback customers provide, so we can identify and make changes or improvements to our services.

As the feedback also suggests that the complaint procedure is not always being adhered to and some Services are falling short in its application, these issues will be discussed and addressed through future NAC Complaint Forums.

## **End of Report**

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## **NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **Agenda Item 4**

**9 March 2016**

#### **Scrutiny and Petitions Committee**

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**Title:** **Community Centres North Ayrshire**

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**Purpose:** To further report on the outstanding matters in relation to the range of activities being delivered from community centres, the added value provided by volunteers and the savings made with regard to Council run facilities.

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**Recommendation:** Committee are asked to note the content of the report.

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#### **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 Following the decision of the Special Council meeting of 17 February 2016 to approve the budget and the subsequent adjustments required, the Economy and Communities Directorate are currently designing a Community Engagement process, which will be implemented by the new Locality Planning Partnerships and Community Planning Partners. The decision to approve the transfer of Community Centres and Halls to a Trust will move all of these properties over into the “not for profit” sector, with the benefit of an immediate saving against rates which will contribute to the overall saving to the Council of the transfer of a range of properties of c. £450,000. The impact of this transition will bring the costs of operating Halls and Community Centres more in line with the current arrangements we have with our partners who have Service Level Agreements, all of which are charitable organisations for public benefit.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1 Economy and Communities play a significant role within North Ayrshire, in creating the environment for and enabling economic growth, including inclusive growth and building the capacity for increased community economic activity.
- 2.2 Our communities have opportunities to be equal partners in identifying local priorities within the Locality Planning approach in consultation with our CPP Partners and Community Councils and other representative community groups are core members of the Locality Planning partners.

- 2.3 We are promoting and increasing opportunities to support capacity and resilience in communities and to nurture civic pride, through our partnership with Community Associations, the Community Learning Plan, cultural, literacy and arts opportunities and our support for community sports hubs, environmental projects and the Community Asset Transfer of local facilities all add considerable community benefit.
- 2.4 The Council is currently rethinking the level and quality of engagement with communities, including a review of the Community Contract with Community Associations, the introduction of participatory budgeting and emphasising the role of young people in shaping service delivery, through innovative youth citizenship and participation activities. We are looking at how to engage young people as volunteers within community representative structures, to make them more inclusive and relevant to local need and we want to enhance the quality of our partnership with communities.
- 2.5 Economy and Communities are focused on taking the lead on the Council's Strategic Priorities 1 and 2 and staff are working within an interdisciplinary framework that creates the synergy required to achieve economic growth and build the communities capacity to help deliver our strategic vision
- Directorate Priority 1 - Growing our economy, increasing employment and regenerating towns
  - Directorate Priority 2 - Working together to develop strong communities
- 2.6 **Partnership With Communities through local Community Associations**
- 2.6.1 North Ayrshire Council values its links to local Community Associations and has sought to maintain a close link between Community Assets and local resident control over assets.

- 2.6.2 As one of a few Councils across Scotland that has encouraged this level of local community collaboration and partnership, it now finds the Authority well placed and attuned to current Scottish Government policy as detailed within the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. There are currently 27 Community Associations representing a wide range of groups, organisations and interests across North Ayrshire.
- 2.6.3 The following list, details the number of Associations and the Locality Planning area within which they will fall. There are over 290 executive and committee members undertaking voluntary work on behalf of their local neighbourhood, this number does not include the volunteers who work to provide the wide programme of activities which includes, work with children, young people, elderly, sports associations, arts, cultural and drama groups, provision of educational courses and classes, social welfare provision including advocacy, benefits advice, access to food banks, credit unions and assistance with increasing personal skills which increase employability.

Association	Locality	Volunteer Committee
Springside CA	Irvine	12
Dreghorn CA		9
Drybridge CA		11
Broomlands and		10
Bourtreehill CA		5
Lanfine and Braehead		10
CA		14
Fullarton CA		10
Vineburgh CA		8
Redburn CA*		
Castlepark and Eglinton	Kilwinning	8
CA		11
		8
Blacklands CA		14
Pennyburn CA		14
Whitehirst Park and	Three Towns	
Woodside CA		20
Corsehill CA		4
Woodwynd CA		20
Ardrossan Whitlees CA	Arran	8
Argyle CA	North Coast and Cumbrae	
Stevenston CA		15
		8
Brodick Hall CA		9
		9
Skelmorlie CA		6
Largs CA	Garnock Valley	
Fairlie CA		16
West Kilbride CA		16
West Kilbride Village		8
Hall		6
Kilbirnie and		
Glengarnock CA		
Dalry CA		
Beith CA		
Barmill CA		
<u>27 (Associations)</u>		<u>290 (Volunteer Committee members)</u>



## **2.7 The Added Value of Community Associations**

- 2.7.1 Using the European Social Fund rate for a standard volunteer, which equates to a monetary value per hour of £9.38, the estimated value of the combined volunteer force within Community Association Committees is 10 hrs per week x 46 weeks x 290 individuals x 9.38 = £ 1,251,292 (this does not include the volunteer value of those involved in the direct provision of other activities within each centre).

## **2.8 The Objectives of Community Associations**

- 2.8.1 Community Associations exist to promote the benefit of the inhabitants of the community in association with the Local Authority, voluntary organisations and inhabitants in common effort for the advancement of education, and to provide facilities in the interests of social welfare, for recreation and for leisure time occupation, so the conditions of life of the inhabitants may be improved.

### **2.8.2 Associations shall:**

1. Co-operate with North Ayrshire Council in the maintenance and management of a Community Centre where applicable for activities promoted by the Association in furtherance of the above objectives; and
2. Foster a community spirit for achievement of these and other such objectives as may by law be deemed charitable.

- 2.8.3 The Association shall be non-party in politics, non-sectarian in religion and non-racist, and will promote its Aims and Objectives without distinction of sex, or political, religious or other opinions. In advancement of its Aims and Objectives, the Association may affiliate to North Ayrshire Federation of Community Associations. It is essential that Associations are socially inclusive and meet the requirements of equalities legislation.

- 2.8.4 Whether the Community Association manages a property on behalf of the Council or whether it leases a property from the Council, there are a range of benefits which accrue that add value, namely:

- An increase in social capital with skills which are transferable
- A conduit for Community Planning Partners to consult and engage with communities
- A skilled pool of local volunteers
- The considerable hours of voluntary work given freely by the volunteers
- Improved social cohesion
- A socially inclusive approach to community development

- The involvement of people within a participative structure that empowers communities and strengthens civic and democratic engagement
- The potential to develop an intergenerational approach that brings people and community structures more closely together for the benefit of all residents.

## 2.9 **Definition of a Community Association**

- 2.9.1 An Association may be defined as a voluntary association of neighbours democratically organised and accountable within a geographical area which constitutes a natural community or neighbourhood, who have come together either as members of existing organisations or as individuals, or in both capacities, to provide for themselves and their community, the services which the neighbourhood requires. It need not be responsible for a specific Community Centre and may use Schools and other accommodation within the geography, to fulfil its needs and expressed requirements.

### **Definition of a Community Centre**

- 2.10 A Community Centre may be defined as a building which (1) serves a community organised in an association which is responsible for the management of the building; and (2) provides facilities for the development of the educational, recreational, cultural and personal welfare of members of that community; and (3) constitutes a meeting place for voluntary organisations or other groups in the community which need accommodation. A Community Centre is distinguished from a Community Hall by the regular and accessible nature of its programme, which ordinarily is managed by a committee or Committee with assistance from Community Development staff and must be available from morning to evening for its resident population to access. Its programme should be in direct response to the expressed need of the residents and provide a range of services which enhance quality of life and may include, provision for the elderly, youth work, and support for those most vulnerable in the community e.g. credit union, food bank, access to learning, advocacy services and advice services.
- 2.11 Across North Ayrshire, the diverse range of properties which have been drawn together from the former District and Regional Authorities, create a mix of provision which makes it difficult to present a direct comparison. Halls are managed by our in-house team and can be booked by anyone from within or out with the North Ayrshire community, whilst community centres are managed by Community Associations and are expected to meet the needs of those residents within the geographic neighbourhood or locality which they serve.

2.12 Every property is different in terms of condition, age, type of accommodation and whether the design is fit for purpose and the recent need to reduce costs across the range of properties has resulted in a blurring of purpose, with few properties functioning within the recognised definition of a community centre as they are subject to “scheduling” and only open when a let has been confirmed.

2.13 It is not possible to produce a report which offers an honest comparison but we can compare three properties which receive support within a Service Level Agreement and three similar sized properties directly managed or managed in partnership with a Community Association.

#### 2.14 **Comparator Information**

2.14.1 The three properties which we fund within Service Level Agreements are: Vineburgh Community Centre, Fullarton Community Centre and West Kilbride Village Hall, the three directly managed properties for comparison with the SLAs are Brodick Hall, Whitlees CC and Lanfine CC.

2.14.2 The Following tables outlines the key figures for the three Centres funded via the Service Level Agreement.

<b>Venue</b>	<b>Cost of SLA to NAC £</b>	<b>Annual Turnover £</b>
West Kilbride Village Hall	19,933	41,303
Vineburgh	33,880	117,330
Fullarton	30,300	87,273
<b>Total cost to NAC</b>	<b>84,113</b>	<b>(245, 906)</b>

<b>Venue</b>		<b>£</b>
Brodick Hall	Cost of Direct Management (includes administration cost which is not reflected in a Volunteer committee)	113,467
Whitlees	Cost of Direct Management	150,769
Lanfine	Cost of Direct Management	91,374
<b>Total cost of direct management to NAC</b>		<b>355,610</b>

### 3. Proposals

- 3.1 Following the decision of Council to transfer the currently managed halls and centres to a Trust, work will begin with Community Associations, lessees and other stakeholders to begin the work of detailing the future relationship between the Trust and its Community partners.
- 3.2 This work will include a review of all management and cost arrangements for these properties with Stakeholders and the successor Trust and should result in arrangements more comparable with those experienced in partnership with communities.

### 4. Implications

<b>Financial:</b>	The transfer of properties to a Trust will enable a review of the management of the Halls and Centres portfolio and enable a refresh of the current relationship between local communities, localities and neighbourhoods to work within the spirit of the Community Empowerment legislation  Significant cost benefits will accrue from the transfer with no loss of benefit for staff within T.U.P.E. arrangements.
<b>Human Resources:</b>	Staff will be subject to T.U.P.E arrangements and negotiation will be required with the appropriate Trades Unions and staff representatives.
<b>Legal:</b>	There will be a need to discuss TUPE , Lease and other arrangements with the successor Trust.
<b>Equality:</b>	There are no implications.
<b>Environmental &amp; Sustainability:</b>	There are no implications.
<b>Key Priorities:</b>	The recommendations fit with the Council's priorities to growing our economy, increase employment and regenerate towns and ensure people have the right skills for learning, life and work.
<b>Community Benefits:</b>	There are no implications.

## **5. Consultation**

- 5.1 A formal consultation will now take place within the best practice framework of the Consultation Institute to implement the Council's decision regarding the transfer of property to the Trust. North Ayrshire Council is the first local Authority in Scotland to be given accreditation by the Institute for its best practice in Community Consultation and Engagement.



KAREN YEOMANS  
Executive Director (Economy and Communities)

Reference : JM/JP

For further information please contact James McHarg, Senior Manager, Participation and Empowerment on (01294) 324424.

### **Background Papers**

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## **NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **Agenda Item 5**

**9 March 2016**

#### **Scrutiny and Petitions Committee**

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**Title:** **Ayrshire Valuation Joint Board Minutes**

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**Purpose:** To submit the Minutes of the Meeting of the Ayrshire Valuation Joint Board (AVJB) held on 10 November 2015.

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**Recommendation:** That the Committee notes the Minutes.

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#### **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The Scrutiny and Petitions Committee previously agreed that the Minutes of the meetings of the Ayrshire Valuation Joint Board be submitted for to the Committee for information.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Minutes of the Ayrshire Valuation Joint Board meetings held on 10 November 2015 are attached as Appendix 1.

#### **3. Proposals**

- 3.1 It is proposed that the Committee notes the Minutes.

#### **4. Implications**

<b>Financial:</b>	None
<b>Human Resources:</b>	None
<b>Legal:</b>	None
<b>Equality:</b>	None
<b>Environmental &amp; Sustainability:</b>	None
<b>Key Priorities:</b>	Presentation of the Board Minutes to the Scrutiny and Petitions Committee supports CPP Partnership Working
<b>Community Benefits:</b>	None

## **5. Consultation**

5.1 No consultations were required in relation to this report.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elma Murray". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

ELMA MURRAY  
Chief Executive

Reference :

For further information please contact Ann Pearson, Committee Services  
Support Officer on 324129

## **Background Papers**

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**Agenda Item No 3****AYRSHIRE VALUATION JOINT BOARD**

Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday, 10 November 2015 at 10.30 a.m. within  
County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr

**Item 1 - Sederunt.****Present:**

- |                   |              |  |
|-------------------|--------------|--|
| East Ayrshire     | Councillors: | George Mair, John McFadzean, William Menzies<br>Jim Roberts and Elena Whitham.   |
| North Ayrshire    | Councillors: | Matthew Brown (Chair) Catherine McMillan and Donald<br>Reid.   |
| South Ayrshire    | Councillors: | John Hampton, Rita Miller Robin Reid and Alec Oattes.  |
| In Attendance:    |              | Helen McPhee, Assessor and ERO; John McConville, Head of Valuation<br>Services and Assistant ERO; Harry McCormick, Principal Administrative<br>and IT Development Officer; Tom Simpson, Corporate Accounting<br>Manager, South Ayrshire Council; Wynne Carlaw (for Clerk) South<br>Ayrshire Council; Fiona Docherty, Finance North Ayrshire Council; and<br>Alison Nelson, Co-ordinator (Democratic Support), South Ayrshire<br>Council. |
| <b>Apologies:</b> |              | Councillor John Easdale, North Ayrshire Council;<br>Councillor John Ferguson, North Ayrshire Council;<br>Councillor Andy Campbell, South Ayrshire Council  |

**Variation in Order of Business**

The Board agreed to vary the order of business as hereinafter minuted.

**Declarations of Interest.**

There were no declarations of interest by Members in terms of the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

**Item 2 - Minutes of Previous Meeting.**

The Minutes of meeting of the AVJB held on 1 September 2015 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

### **Item 3 – Matters Arising.**

With regard to Item 9 – Staffing (Modern Apprentices) the Assessor and ERO reported that she had been in dialogue with North and East Ayrshire Council and had been advised that the AVJB's employment of Modern Apprentices would depend on their employment contract with their respective Councils. The Assessor and ERO is still however pursuing this and will report back to a future meeting if there are any changes which allow the employment of Young Apprentices from North and East Ayrshire.

### **Item 4 A – Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2015/16 – Position Statement at 30 September 2015**

There was submitted (circulated) a report dated 30 October 2015 by the AVJB's Treasurer presenting the Board's income and expenditure for the period ended 30 September 2015 (monitoring period 6) as compared with the approved revenue budget.

Board Members raised issues in relation to employee costs, property costs and IER and Revaluation. Assurances were given that management were endeavouring to contain expenditure within existing budgets as far as possible, in order to minimise the impact on the Boards Reserves. Further updates would be provided to members as the year progresses.

#### **Decided:**

- (1) to approve the content of the report.

### **Item 5 – Valuation and Performance.**

There was submitted (circulated) a report of 30 September 2015 by the Head of Valuation Services and Assistant ERO advising on progress achieved in Valuation and Council Tax issues and to provide an update to the ongoing reporting of performance up to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015 in relation to the following:

- (1) Non-Domestic Subjects
  - Appeals Referred to the Lands Tribunal for Scotland
  - Outstanding Appeals Not Referred to the Lands Tribunal for Scotland
  - Revaluation 2017
- (2) Council Tax;
- (3) VAC Hearing Dates;
- (4) Performance
  - Performance in Council Tax from 1 April to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015
  - Performance in Non-Domestic Valuation 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015

The Head of Valuation Services and Assistant ERO intimated that the appeal for the Paper Mill had been concluded. Councillor Menzies enquired as to the budget implications regarding the funding of the appeal. Tom Simpson, Corporate Accountant advised that costs relating to this appeal were included in the budget statement discussed under Item 4A.

The Assessor and ERO advised that the settlement was 'fair and just' intimating that the Paper Mill was valued in a certain way with the agents intimating that it should have been valued another way.

After research it was determined that all other Paper Mills, within Scotland, had been valued as specified by the agents. The Assessor and ERO agreed to value it in that manner which has resulted in a major change of value from £5.8m to £4.4m.

Performance levels in both Council Tax for the period 1 April 2015 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015 were well ahead of target. However, whilst every effort would be made to maintain these levels it is nevertheless very likely that some slippage will be experienced as more resources are diverted to allow progress to be made in delivering revaluation 2017.

It should be noted that within the Performance in Non-Domestic Valuation 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015 % of total added – AVJB totals' should read 4%.

Staff had been split into teams which appeared to be working well and performance was currently being maintained and it is hoped 2014/15 targets will be met..

**Decided:** to note the contents of the report.

#### **Item 6 – Electoral Registration**

There was submitted (circulated) a report dated 10 November 2015 by the Principal Admin and IT Development Officer advising the Board of recent updates relating to the function of electoral registration in relation to the following areas:-

- (1) Individual Electoral Registration (IER)
- (2) Rolling Registration and Annual Canvass
- (3) By Elections
- (4) Scottish Parliament Election 2016
- (5) Publication of the Electoral Register
- (6) Electoral Management System

The Principal Admin and IT Development Officer intimated that the transitional period relating to IER under The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 (Transitional Provisions) Order 2015 comes to end. This will result in approximately 6,500 being removed from the register. Members acknowledged that they were aware that this may happen when IER was initially introduced. The ERO intimated that every effort had been made to contact non responders with approximately 6 letters being issued to each individual.

Questions were raised by Members of the Board in relation to the identification of 16/17 year olds who would be entitled to vote at the Scottish Parliamentary Elections taking place in May 2016. The ERO confirmed that she has received a list from Educational Services and will target those listed. She also advised that the Electoral Commission would be commencing a media campaign in February and that letters to 16/17 year olds would be issued to coincide with this. Discussions were also ongoing with the three Chief Executives with a view to promoting electoral registration through secondary schools.

The Principal Admin and IT Development Officer advised that approximately 3,000 letters

would be issued, in January, to postal voters, whose signature had been held for five years, in order for them to refresh their signature.

Board members intimated that they found the statistics contained within the Appendix interesting and valuable, particularly the variances between electoral wards. Councillor Menzies requested a breakdown per polling district of the non-IER registered electorate numbers to enable local councillors to use the information to target areas of low response and high expected drop off numbers. Board Members requested that the statistical information in the Appendix be reported to future meetings.

Board members discussed the publication of the electoral register and the advantages and disadvantages of publishing on the 1 December 2015 or 1 February 2016, after discussion the ERO intimated that she would publish on 1 December to maintain consistency with other EROs across the country.

**Decided:** to note the contents of the report and to note the publication of the electoral register on 1 December 2015.

### **Item 7 - Staffing**

There was submitted (circulated) a report dated 10 November 2015 by the Head of Valuation Services and Assistant ERO to advise members of current staffing issues. The report advised on;

- (1) Appointments
- (2) Staffing Structures
- (3) Staff Workloads
- (4) Absence
- (5) Website
- (6) Policy and Procedures
- (7) Records Management

The Head of Valuation and Assistant ERO advised that two temporary property assistants would be starting early December which would alleviate some of the pressure on existing staff. The Board have also recruited up to 40 temporary canvassers. The Board were also taking part in South Ayrshire Council's 'Work Out Programme' and a fifth year pupil from Kyle Academy has joined the team each Wednesday from September 2015 until Easter 2016. The pupil had fitted in well and staff had taken on the challenge of supporting her in her duties.

The Board's website had been modernised and re-launched. The Assessor and ERO thanked South Ayrshire Council's IT for their assistance with this. Elected members were asked to look at the web-site and make any comments regarding further changes or content.

The Head of Valuation and Assistant ERO advised that as a result of updating the Code of Conduct the policies as listed in the Appendix 1 to the report required to be updated. Councillor Miller intimated that amendments were required to the contact details in the Media Relations

Protocol and reference to the Provost required to be removed in the Protocols for Relations between Councillors and Employees and Amongst Councillors in Multi-member Wards.

Councillor Menzies made reference to expenses and intimated that this required to be amended as each local authority reimburses expenses and not the Board.

**Decided:**

- (1) approve the contents of the Report and note the amendments required as detailed above.

**Item 8 – Maximising Electoral Registration**

There was submitted (circulated) a report dated 10 November 2015 by the Assessor and ERO to update the Board on the maximising registration/democratic engagement progress and to indicate the future of this element of service delivery. The report advised on;

- (1) Resources
- (2) Partnership Working
- (3) Electoral Commission and;
- (4) Current and Future Events/Projects

**Decided:**

- (1) note the content of the Report.

**Item 9 – Schedule of Meetings for 2016/17**

There was submitted (circulated) a report dated 1 October 2015 by the Democratic and Governance Manager to propose the dates for Board Meetings during 2016/17. A revised schedule was circulated which aided in the statutory requirement for accounting reporting.

**Decided:**

- (1) To agree the dates circulated on the Revised Schedule of Meetings for 2016/17.

**Item 10 – Date of Next Meeting**

The Board noted that the next meeting would be held on **Tuesday 12 January 2016** at 10.30 a.m. within the **Robert Burns Room, East Ayrshire Council Headquarters, London Road, Kilmarnock.**

The meeting ended at 12.10 p.m.