



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

LEADER'S REPORT

For the period covering: 20 June – 10 September
2018

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

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GLENCAIRN SHELTERED HOUSING UNIT, 21 June

On 21 June, I was delighted to be asked to attend the official opening of Glencairn Sheltered Housing Unit at Bill Smith Court in Stevenston. This modern, state-of-the-art facility provides 28 affordable, high-quality sheltered homes for the elderly.

The £5.3 million Glencairn House development also incorporates the Council's first district heating network, shared with the adjacent Glencairn Primary School, which will help to reduce the cost of heating for our residents and address the issue of fuel poverty. This fantastic initiative will reduce our own carbon footprint by using a sustainable energy source and it is hoped that by 2030, North Ayrshire will have reduced its carbon emissions by 40%.

Two further district heating systems are also being proposed for new build Council housing developments in Dalry and in Largs, comprising 169 properties in total. These schemes are scheduled for completion in 2019/20 and 2020/21 respectively.



(Left to right) Councillor John Sweeney, Patricia Gibson MP, Provost Clarkson, Councillor Davina McTiernan and Council Leader, Joe Cullinane

NORTH AYRSHIRE ECONOMIC, REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD, 28 June

The North Ayrshire Economic, Regeneration and Development Board met on the 28 June where the establishment of a Regional Ayrshire Partnership for Inclusive Economic Growth was the main item for discussion. It is hoped that the Pan-Ayrshire delivery model will secure our ambitious Ayrshire Growth Deal, see growth in our local economy and boost our local tourism sector.

Negotiations continue with the Scottish Government, its agencies and regional partners to secure commitment to the new partnership model.

COSLA LEADERS, 29 June

On 29 June, COSLA Leaders met to discuss a packed agenda including Brexit, the EU Settlement scheme and the Prescription Scotland Bill. Leaders also considered a report which gave them an update regarding the initiation of Strand 2 of the Review of Local Governance.

Councils noted that a wide range of public services were being invited to identify the reforms that they wished to see as part of an iterative development process.

SUMMER CODE CAMP, 12 July

On 12 July, I paid a visit to Elderbank Primary School in Irvine to find out more about the "Summer Code Camp". The summer camp forms part of our "Coding the Future" programme which provides the opportunity for young people to improve their digital literacy skills and offers an alternative activity to sport and crafts to enjoy during the summer holidays.

The week long summer camp saw 25 young people between the ages of 9-13, take part in a series of activities designed to teach them how to code through the use of a visual coding language called Scratch.

The summer camp forms part of the Council's 'Coding the Future' programme which sees a variety of council staff volunteer as STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) ambassadors and help facilitate coding clubs within local schools and libraries.

There has been huge interest by our young people in this programme and I would like to thank all the Council staff who volunteer as STEM ambassadors to help out with this project within local schools and libraries.

VISIT TO ELDERLY CARE HOMES, 27 July

Together with our Older People's Champion, Councillor Jimmy Miller, I visited two of our elderly care homes on 27 July. Anam Cara based in Kilbirnie and Buckreddan Care Home based in Kilwinning.

Anam Cara in Kilbirnie, is a 14 bedded dementia respite facility for adults with dementia or cognitive impairment and provides a much needed break for carers throughout North Ayrshire - including the islands. The facility also has great inclusion links with all the community groups in the Garnock Valley and intergenerational activities with St Bridget's Early Years Centre which is located next door.

Buckreddan is a private care home offering accommodation and care to the elderly on a much larger scale and allows for a personal level of care to be undertaken by the dedicated staff that work there.

I would especially like to thank Clare Mills and her team for hosting what proved to be a very informative visit and for giving myself and Councillor Miller a deeper insight into dementia.



Council Leader Joe Cullinane, Clare Mills (Anam Cara Senior Manager) and Councillor Jimmy Miller (Older People's Champion)



Councillor Jimmy Miller chats to residents at Anam Cara over a cup of tea.

SCHOOL EXAM RESULTS, 7 August

On 7 August, I visited some of our local secondary schools (Irvine Royal Academy, Kilwinning Academy, Ardrossan Academy and Greenwood Academy) to meet and chat with some of the pupils who had just received their exam results. I am pleased to say that overall, results showed continued success at a range of levels across the authority with passes at Higher level remaining strong and consistent with last year's performance. This year also saw a higher number of pupils achieving success in their Advanced Highers, an improvement on last year's success.

Congratulations to all our pupils who have worked hard throughout the year.

EU CITIZENS EVENT, 7 August

On the evening of 7 August, I took part in a Pan-Ayrshire/Scottish Government EU citizens' event here in Cunninghame House. The aim of the event was to communicate and reinforce the message of the value placed by the Scottish Government and the Ayrshire Councils on EU/European Economic Area (EEA) citizens living in Scotland and their contribution to our culture, economy and society.

We were joined by the Cabinet Secretary for Government Business and Constitutional Relations, Michael Russell MSP, who was able to provide clarity on key issues around Brexit and some of the negotiations that the Scottish Government were undertaking to safeguard citizens' rights and future EU migration.

The event also provided a platform for EU and EEA nationals living in Ayrshire to raise their views and any concerns they have relating to living in Scotland post Brexit.

ARDROSSAN TASK FORCE MEETING, 13 August

On 13 August, I attended a meeting of the Ardrossan Task Force in Atlantic Quay. The meeting was chaired by Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity, Michael Matheson MSP, who began the meeting by reaffirming Ardrossan as the mainland port for Arran and Campbeltown ferry.

There was an update on the work of the Ardrossan Steering Group followed by a thorough discussion on service continuity. It is the shared objective of all of the Ardrossan Task Force members to maintain ferry services from Ardrossan during the closure of the Arran Berth.

PERIOD POVERTY LAUNCH, 17 August

On 17 August, North Ayrshire Council become the first local authority in the UK to offer free sanitary provision in its public buildings. This announcement, which is an extension to our already successful secondary schools period poverty programme, enables females across North Ayrshire to access a free supply of sanitary products in places such as libraries, community centres and public offices.

The launch took place at Kilwinning Academy and I am pleased to say we were joined on the day by Monica Lennon MSP, who has been a leading figure in the fight against period poverty

and who has been progressing the Sanitary Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Bill through the Scottish Parliament.

I am proud to say that we are leading the way in the fight against period poverty.. Of course, this could not have been possible without the work of our officers who have made it happen and I would like to thank them for their dedicated work on this worthwhile project.

I would also like to thank all the people who took the time to come along to Kilwinning Library to take part in the launch especially our young people who spoke to journalists about what this means to them on a personal level.



Some of our wonderful YOYP Ambassadors at the launch with Council Leader, Joe Cullinane, Monica Lennon MSP and Minnie McNaught from North Ayrshire Council (far right)

ARDROSSAN EMPLOYABILITY HUB, 21 August

I attended the official reopening of the Ardrossan Employability Hub at Glasgow Street in Ardrossan on 21 August. Developing the skills of our workforce and tackling inequality are both issues that are extremely important to me as an individual and as Leader of North Ayrshire Council. That is why it has been one of our top priorities for this Administration to ensure that we address both issues and provide opportunities, like our Employability Hubs, to benefit our local community.

I am encouraged by the success of our other Employability Hubs based in Fullarton, Stevenston, Kilwinning and Kilbirnie. To date, they have cumulatively received over 6,000 visits and supported more than 1,600 residents by providing them with the help they need to find work.

Of course, this has been a joint effort and I would like to thank all the partners involved: CEIS, Job Centre Plus, Ayrshire Chamber, Skills Development Scotland, the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), Ayrshire College and the Lennox Partnership.

And I would like to give a special thanks to Cunninghame Housing Association who decided to encourage social enterprise and the public sector to make use of the building to support the local community. Because of this approach, North Ayrshire Council and partners have been able to afford this facility and do exactly that; support our local community.



North Ayrshire Council Leader, Joe Cullinane, North Ayrshire Council Chief Executive, Elma Murray OBE, Cabinet Member for Economy, Councillor Alex Gallagher and hub Co-ordinator, Alison Corbett

FAIR FOR ALL ADVISORY PANEL, 22 August

On 22 August, I attended the Fair For All advisory meeting in Cunninghame House. The advisory panel received updates on a range of subjects including our approach to becoming a Child Centered Council, The Place of Kindness, Food Theme and pledges and our Citizen's Basic Income.

The Panel were also given a presentation on the Poverty Alleviating Grants Tool which provides information on the benefits/grants received by North Ayrshire residents from the Council.

AILEEN CAMPBELL, CABINET SECRETARY VISIT, 24 August

On 24 August, North Ayrshire Council welcomed Aileen Campbell, the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government to Ardrossan Academy. The Cabinet Secretary met with some of the S5 Higher Modern Studies class to learn about how our pioneering period poverty scheme was supporting young women in school.

I can think of no better place than North Ayrshire for the Cabinet Secretary to have announced the Scottish Government's plans to provide funding for local authorities across Scotland to develop period poverty initiatives such as ours. North Ayrshire Council has led the way on this issue and I am delighted that in the first year alone pupils have benefitted from almost 13,000 free sanitary products.

VISIT BY SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT TO ARRAN, 27 August

On 27 August, we welcomed the First Minister and her Cabinet to the Isle of Arran for a series of events including their Cabinet meeting, a public engagement Q&A session and a number of individual Ministerial visits.

During the day, the First Minister met with a group of care experienced young people and I had the pleasure of joining them afterwards for lunch along with the Chief Executive. This was my personal highlight of the day.

I would also like to pay particular thanks to our staff again for facilitating these visits and of course to the staff and pupils at Arran High who made everyone feel so welcome on the day.

MEETING WITH CABINET SECRETARY, MICHAEL MATHESON, 28 August

On the 28 August, the three Ayrshire Council Leaders together with their Chief Executives held a meeting with the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity, Michael Matheson to discuss the Ayrshire Growth Deal and the Regional Partnership for Economic Growth.

We remain hopeful that our proposals contained in the bid will be successful in receiving the funding required from the UK and Scottish Governments. We are also working with government policy leads to ensure that projects initially developed some time ago have been updated to reflect current government policies.



If successful, the funding will allow us to develop the many projects in the areas of innovation, inclusive growth, coastal and community regeneration, transport and aerospace.

MEETING WITH DEPUTY FIRST MINISTER, JOHN SWINNEY, 28 August

Together with the Cabinet Member for Education, Councillor John Bell, our Chief Executive, Elma Murray OBE and Head of Service for Inclusion, Caroline Amos, we held productive discussions with the Deputy First Minister, John Swinney MSP, on 28 August in Atlantic Quay.

Productive discussions were held on a range of subjects including our Schools for the Future programme, investment in our existing schools estate, funding for Ardrossan Academy and new Additional Supports Needs campus.

INTRODUCTORY CALL WITH MINISTER FOR ENERGY, CONNECTIVITY AND THE ISLANDS, 29 August

On the 29 August, I had an introductory conversation with the Minister for Energy, Connectivity and the Islands, Paul Wheelhouse MSP. The Minister and I spoke for over an hour on the following issues:

- Development of Hunterston as a National Strategic West of Scotland Hub
- Health and Social Care challenges on Arran around a rapidly aging population
- Demand for social housing on Arran
- Improved digital connectivity on Arran
- How to increase the working population to sustain and grow the economy on Arran

Together with our Executive Director for Economy and Communities, Karen Yeomans, I will be having further discussions with the Minister at the beginning of November.

COSLA LEADERS, 31 August

COSLA Leaders met in Forfar on the 31 August for their monthly meeting. The packed agenda included an update on Brexit, an update on the Local Governance Review and discussion on the EU Settlement scheme.

I am pleased to say that COSLA Leaders have agreed to work with the Home Office and Scottish Government to support and inform EU citizens in our communities about the EU Settlement Scheme. Leaders also agreed to seek more clarity on the Scottish Government's commitment to pay the settled status fees of EU citizens working in the public sector in Scotland by writing to the Minister for Europe, Migration and International Development.

VISIT BY CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER IN SCOTLAND, 4 September

On 4 September, our Youth Services team welcomed the Children's Commissioner in Scotland, Bruce Adamson, to the Harbour Arts Centre. Our Youth Executive shared their experiences of projects they have been involved in throughout North Ayrshire and what this has meant to them as individuals.

I am left in no doubt that we, North Ayrshire Council, are leading the way in youth participation work and congratulate the officers involved who continue to deliver in this field.

FINALLY

Finally, I would like to thank our Chief Executive Elma Murray for her hard work, dedication and drive over the past 9 years. Your work has been outstanding and admired by all. On behalf of the Elected Members and staff at North Ayrshire Council thank you and best wishes in your future endeavors.



A handwritten signature in dark ink, which appears to read 'Joe Cullinane'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Councillor Joe Cullinane
Leader North Ayrshire Council