

Cabinet
29 August 2023

IRVINE, 29 August 2023 - At a Meeting of the Cabinet of North Ayrshire Council at 2.30 p.m.

Present

Marie Burns, Tony Gurney, Alan Hill, Margaret Johnson, Christina Larsen and Shaun Macaulay.

Also Present

Cameron Inglis and Eleanor Collier.

In Attendance

C. Hatton, Chief Executive, M. Boyd, Head of Service and D. Forbes, Senior Manager (Finance) (Chief Executive's Service); A. Sutton, Executive Director and R. Leith, Head of Service (Communities) (Communities & Education); T. Reaney, Head of Service (Neighbourhood Services), N. McIlvanney, Interim Head of Service (Growth, Investment & Employability), L. Kirk, Interim Head of Service (Economic Development & Regeneration) and F. Ellis, Senior Manager (Housing & Public Protect) (Place); P. Doak, Head of Service (HSCP Finance & Transformation) (Health and Social Care Partnership); A. Craig, Head of Service, I. Hardy, Team Manager (Policy, Performance & Elections), J. Hutcheson, Senior Communications Officer (Communications), S. Wilson and H. Clancy, Committee Services Officers (Democratic Services).

Chair

Marie Burns in the Chair.

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest by Members in terms of Standing Order 11 and Section 5 of the Code of Conduct for Councillors.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on 30 May 2023 and 13 June 2023 (Special) were confirmed and the Minutes signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

3. Exclusion of the Press and the Public

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

4. BUILD Project – Exempt Item

Submitted a report by the Executive Director (Place) providing Cabinet with an update on the current status of the BUILD project.

Noted.

Please note – the following item was heard by the Audit & Scrutiny Committee on 12 September 2023, please refer to the minute of that Committee for the decision.

5. B714 Upgrade

Submitted a report by the Executive Director (Place) updating Cabinet on the progress of the B714 Upgrade and seeking approval for the reallocation of funding to support project delivery. Further information on the funding reallocation proposals were attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

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

- levelling up inflationary pressures and what mitigating factors were in place to manage these; and
- whether a justification had been provided to the Council on why a previously expressed commitment to fund the improvements was not being adhered to.

The Cabinet agreed (a) to the submission of the updated Outline Business Case to the UK Government for approval, informed by feedback on the draft submission; and (b) to approve the reallocation of Council funding, detailed at Appendix 1, to support the delivery of the project, subject to the approval of the Final Business Case.

6. Revenue Budget 2023/24: Financial Performance to 30 June 2023

Submitted a report by the Head of Service (Finance) advising Cabinet of the financial performance for the Council at 30 June 2023.

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

- action being taken to address and reduce the overspend within the Health and Social Care Partnership; and
- the cause of the overspend within Waste Services and the work being undertaken to reduce this.

The Cabinet agreed (a) to approve the virements detailed at Appendix 7 to the report; and (b) to note (i) the information and financial projections outlined in the report, (ii) the latest financial projection for the Health and Social Care Partnership highlighted at section 2.6 of the report and (iii) the potential impact of the review of Strathclyde Pension Fund on future budget pressures.

7. Capital Programme and Treasury Management Performance to 30 June 2023

Submitted a report by the Head of Service (Finance) advising Cabinet of progress in delivering the Capital Investment Programme 2023/24 and the associated Treasury Management performance to 30 June 2023.

Members asked a question and were provided with further information in relation to the major risk, and long-term impact, of inflationary pressures.

The Cabinet agreed (a) to approve the virement proposals noted within the HRA programme detailed at Appendix 2 to the report, and (b) to note (i) the revisions to budgets outlined in the report, (ii) the General Services and HRA revised budgets at 30 June 2023, (iii) the forecast expenditure to 31 March 2024, including the additional investment of £5.000m to support the B714 upgrading project as detailed at sections 2.12 and 2.13 of the report; and (iv) the estimated performance against the Prudential Indicators set out in the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy.

8. Health and Safety Annual Report 2022/23

Submitted a report by the Head of Service (Finance) providing Cabinet with an updated report on the Health and Safety performance within Council Services during 2022/23.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to the Working Group that was established and the action taken to reduce the number of Aggression and Violence incidents within the Education Service.

Noted.

Please note – the following item was heard by the Audit & Scrutiny Committee on 12 September 2023, please refer to the minute of that Committee for the decision.

9. Council Tax Multipliers: Scottish Government Consultation

Submitted a report by the Head of Service (Finance) for Cabinet to consider the consultation response in respect of the review of the level of Council tax multipliers for Band E to Band H properties. The proposed consultation response was noted at Appendix 1 to the report.

Having noted the importance of recognising that this was a consultation response, and that decisions on Council Tax setting were made at full Council as part of the annual budget setting process and that no changes were being made to the Council Tax levels currently set, the Cabinet agreed to approve the Consultation response from North Ayrshire Council included in Appendix 1 to the report, for submission to the Scottish Government by 20 September 2023.

10. North Ayrshire Council Plan 2023-28: Performance Management Framework

Submitted a report by the Chief Executive to consider and agree the Council Plan 2023 – 2028 Performance Management Framework. The Council Plan was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

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

- engagement with partners and partnership working, both locally and nationally, for a whole system approach to wider issues; and
- whether the targets set out in the report were both ambitious and realistic.

The Cabinet agreed (a) to approve the Council Plan 2023-28 Performance Management Framework attached at Appendix 1 to the report; and (b) to refer the Performance Management Framework to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

11. Crown Estates Scotland – Memorandum of Understanding

Submitted a report by the Executive Director (Place) seeking approval to renew a Memorandum of Understanding with Crown Estates Scotland.

The Cabinet agreed that the Council continues the partnership agreement with Crown Estates Scotland, to further explore investment opportunities to support North Ayrshire Council's regeneration and economic development priorities.

Please note – the following item was heard by the Audit & Scrutiny Committee on 12 September 2023, please refer to the minute of that Committee for the decision.

12. Visitor Levy (Scotland) Bill

Submitted a report by the Executive Director (Place) seeking approval to respond to active consultations on the Visitor Levy (Scotland) Bill and setting out working arrangements for exploration of the potential benefit and impact of a visitor levy.

The Cabinet, having welcomed the principle of having fiscal flexibility at a local level, irrespective of whether it was ultimately exercised, agreed (a) to authorise officers to respond to consultations on the Visitor Levy (Scotland) Bill as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report by expressing support for the introduction of a levy, subject to further exploration of costs and benefits; and to note the formation of an internal Visitor Levy Officer Working Group which would engage with the Tourism Forum, businesses and regional stakeholders to inform any future emerging proposals related to the implementation of a visitor levy.

13. Tree and Woodland Management Policy

Submitted a report by the Executive Director (Place) seeking Cabinet approval on the proposed updated Tree and Woodland Management Policy. The updated Tree and Woodland Management Policy was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the updated Tree and Woodland Management Policy, attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

14. Memorial benches, Plaques and Other Memorial Opportunities

Submitted a report by the Executive Director (Place) providing an overview and seeking Cabinet approval of the appropriate options to be supported for memorials for members of the public to remember a loved one. In addition to the examples of the options from other organisations/charities contained in paragraphs 2.23 and 2.24 of the report, the offering from the local community charity in Arran at Arran Memorial Garden in Shiskine was highlighted.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the range of memorials options set out in the report.

15. Proposals for Community Investment Fund (CIF) Expenditure

Submitted a report by the Executive Director (Communities and Education) on applications by Locality Partnerships to allocate CIF funding to proposed projects. Appendices 1-3, respectively, set out applications by Arran Locality Partnership (Arran Geopark) for £79,853, The Three Towns Locality Partnership (Saltcoats Active Lifestyles Team (SALT)) for £45,600 and Kilwinning Locality Partnership (the Corra Foundation) for £36,000 across a three-year period.

The Cabinet, having reviewed the submissions against the CIF criteria, agreed to approve the applications in relation to (i) Arran Geopark, (ii) Saltcoats Active Lifestyle Team (SALT) and (iii) the Corra Foundation, in the amount of £79,853, £45,600 and £36,000 (the latter across a three-year period).

The meeting ended at 4:05 p.m.