

Cabinet
4 June 2024

IRVINE, 4 June 2024 - At a Meeting of the Cabinet of North Ayrshire Council at 2.30 p.m.

Present (Physical Participation)

Marie Burns, Tony Gurney, Margaret Johnson, Christina Larsen and Shaun Macaulay and for consideration of Education Authority Business Jacqui McKenzie.

Present (Remote Electronic Participation)

Alan Hill

Also Present

Chloé Robertson

In Attendance

C. Hatton, Chief Executive; D. Hammond, Executive Director, R. Leith, Head of Service (Communities); and J. Greenlees, Senior Manager (Policy, Performance and Community Planning) (Communities and Housing); C. Cameron, Director, E. Stewart, Head of Service (Children, Families and Criminal Justice) (Health and Social Care Partnership); S. Anson, Executive Director, A. McClelland, Head of Service; and K. McCormick, Executive Manager (Education); M. Boyd, Head of Service; and D. Forbes, Senior Manager (Strategic Business Partner) (Finance); T. Reaney, Head of Service (Neighbourhood Services); and L. Kirk, Head of Service (Economic Development, Growth and Regeneration); F. Walker, Head of Service (People & ICT) ; and A. Craig, Head of Service, M. Sugden, Communications Officer, H. Clancy, Senior Committee Services Officer and C. Stewart, Committee Services Officer (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 April 2024 were confirmed and the Minutes signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

3. Third Church Representation on Cabinet (Education)

Submitted a report by the Head of Service (Democratic Services) advising of the resignation of Reverend Mark Goodman as the Third Church representative on Cabinet when it considers Education business.

The Chair thanked Reverend Mark Goodman for his contributions to the Education Cabinet and wished him well for the future.

The Cabinet agreed to note the resignation of Reverend Mark Goodman from Cabinet; and advertise for the vacancy of Third Church representative to consider Education business.

4. School Attainment Results

Submitted a report and received a presentation by the Head of Service (Education) on (i) Curriculum for Excellence attainment levels in literacy and numeracy for 2022-23; and (ii) the overall performance of the 2022-23 North Ayrshire Council school leavers as highlighted in the INSIGHT benchmarking tool. Supporting statistics were attached at Appendices 1-6 to the report.

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

- stretch aims included within the service improvement plan and form part of the Standards and Quality report within the service improvement plan annual actions;
- the service improvement plan annual actions report being brought to the next Education Cabinet; and
- ongoing work in North Ayrshire to ensure we are on track including the refreshed strategy on raising attainment and the use of data and the launch of new data tools to support schools.

The Cabinet agreed to note (i) the content of the report, including the progress being made by learners, specifically in literacy and numeracy; (ii) the achievements of school leavers in SQA examinations in 2023; and (iii) the measures being taken to make further improvements to attainment and achievement levels across all schools.

5. Educational Achievement of Care Experienced Learners in North Ayrshire in 2023

Submitted a report by the Head of Service (Education) on (i) Curriculum for Excellence Broad General Education (BGE) attainment levels of care experienced learners in 2022; (ii) Senior Phase attainment of care experienced school leavers in 2023; (iii) post-school participation of care experienced learners.

A Member asked a question and was provided with further information in relation to the proposed improvement actions and specific improvements that can be measured.

The Cabinet agreed to note (i) the content of the report, including the progress being made by care experienced learners, specifically in literacy and numeracy; (ii) the achievements of care experienced school leavers in SQA examinations in 2023; (iii) the progress in closing the attainment gap between all learners and care experienced learners; and (iv) the positive progress in post-school participation of care experienced school leavers.

6. Play Pedagogy in the Early Stages of Primary

Submitted a report by the Head of Service (Education) with information on the current and proposed approach to play pedagogy in primary school establishments. A collaborative improvement summary of findings was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

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

- the roll out of the approach to all Primary Schools;
- collaborative improvement work with 3 other Local Authorities to progress to phase 2;
- the link to the South West Educational Improvement Collaborative plan and potential changes;
- including parents in the process to capture effective feedback; and
- How play pedagogy will remain a focus for North Ayrshire's Education Service and that there will be a planned programme for teaching and support staff to undertake the necessary professional learning to enable them to take the programme forward.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note the current and proposed approach to play pedagogy in our primary schools; and (b) receive further updates through the annual Education Service Standards and Quality Report.

7. Firework Control Zones

Submitted a report by the Head of Service (Democratic Services) on the progress made with regard to the new discretionary powers to designate Firework Control Zones and seek Cabinet's approval for the proposed process for handling community requests.

A Member asked a question and was provided with further information in relation to initial engagement with partners on the proactive designation of a firework control zone in North Ayrshire and that it will be kept under review.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note the progress made with regard to the new discretionary powers to designate Firework Control Zones; and (b) approve the proposed process for handling community requests and receive further update reports as the process is refined.

8. Revenue Budget 2023/24 : Financial Performance to 31 March 2024

Submitted a report by the Head of Service (Finance) on the financial performance for the Council for 2023/24.

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

- anticipation that Integration Joint Board will cover the full overspend from available reserves, resulting in an in-year net breakeven position for the HSCP; and
- the main pressure areas to be addressed in order to report a balanced position by the end of 2024/2025.

The Cabinet agreed to (i) note the information and financial outturn position outlined in the report; (ii) approve the earmarking of £5.486m identified at 2.5 of the report to meet future year commitments; (iii) note the financial performance of the Health and Social Care Partnership highlighted at 2.6 of the report; and (iv) note the virements detailed in Appendix 7 to the report.

9. Capital Programme Performance to 31 March 2024

Submitted a report by the Head of Service (Finance) on the progress in delivering the Capital Investment Programme for 2023/2024.

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

- individual programme costs being monitored closely with cost increases met initially from the additional flexibility built into the programme, but that there is a significant level of risk to be managed; and
- increase in the level of spend due to the large Millport Coastal Flood Protection Project and significant investment in the educational estate at the Montgomerie and Moorpark primary schools.

The Cabinet agreed to note (i) the revisions to budgets outlined in the report; and (ii) the General Services and HRA expenditure to 31 March 2024.

10. Children's Services Performance Update 2023-24

Submitted a report by the Director (Health and Social Care Partnership) seeking approval for the North Ayrshire Children's Services Performance Update 2023-24 attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

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

- the plan for a third annual Promise Conference;
- children's mental health service improvements;
- improvements in speech and language therapy provision; and
- 43 young people accessing the care experienced app on a regular basis.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the North Ayrshire Children's Services Performance Update 2023-34 attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

11. Brighter Pathways : Remodelling Care Options

Submitted a report by the Director (Health and Social Care Partnership) to note the programme of work and current pressures on placement availability and alternative care for any child and young person in the looked after system. These challenges are not unique to North Ayrshire and compounded by a number of factors outlined in this report.

Members commented on the report and were provided with further information in relation to the significant progress and increased numbers of children in kinship care in North Ayrshire and supports in place for families of kinship care.

The Cabinet agreed to endorse the Brighter Pathways programme of work and proposals to address the pressure areas with service developments and alternative resources to prevent high cost residential resources for children and young people; and note (i) the intention to build capacity and provide more local resources and choice to young people who require to be looked after with increased family based care and alternative options for young people leaving care; and (ii) the review of current service provision to ensure it meets current context, changing landscape of the care system and the demographic young people and families.

12. Participation Strategy and Locality Planning Update

Submitted a report and received a presentation by the Executive Director (Communities and Housing) seeking approval of the proposed North Ayrshire Participation Strategy and providing an update on proposed next steps in relation to North Ayrshire's locality planning approach to support the implementation of the strategy. The draft Participation Strategy was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

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

- accessibility and monitoring the approach and obtaining regular feedback, particularly from communities and groups;
- the use of images on the website for accessibility purposes; and
- community wealth building as part of the review.

The Cabinet agreed to approve (i) the proposed North Ayrshire Participation Strategy attached at Appendix 1 to the report for publication; and (ii) the proposed next steps at paragraphs 2.15-17 of the report to develop the locality planning approach further and agrees to receive a further report to Cabinet on the outcome of this work.

Councillor Hill left the meeting at this point.

13. Proposals for Community Investment Fund (CIF) Expenditure

Submitted a report by the Executive Director (Communities and Housing) on an application received from the Irvine Locality Partnership on the allocation of Community Investment Fund (CIF) funding. The application from the Irvine Locality Partnership, in relation to Irvine Cricket Club was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

Having reviewed the application in line with the CIF criteria, the Cabinet agreed to approve a £49,500 award to the Irvine Locality Partnership.

14. North Ayrshire Visitor Management Plan 2024

Submitted a report by the Executive Director (Place) seeking approval of the North Ayrshire Visitor Management Plan 2024 attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the North Ayrshire Visitor Management Plan 2024 attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

15. Strathclyde Partnership for Transport – Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy: Consultation on the Recommended Options for Improving our Future Bus Network

Submitted a report by the Executive Director (Place) seeking approval for the proposed North Ayrshire Council submission to Strathclyde Partnership for Transport consultation on the “Recommended Options for Improving our Future Bus Network”. A table summarising the five options for future delivery of the regional bus network and the draft consultation response were attached at Appendices 1 and 2 respectively, to the report.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the submission of the proposed consultation response provided at Appendix 2 to the report.

16. North Ayrshire Burial Grounds

Submitted a report by the Executive Director (Place) on the review of burial grounds capacity and future provision of cemeteries in North Ayrshire.

Members asked a question and were provided with further information in relation to potential ashes only plots for Moorpark Cemetery.

The Cabinet agreed (a) to note significant progress has been made since the previous report in 2016 with cemetery extensions delivered at Knadgerhill, High Road, Dalry, West Kilbride and Kilbride (Lamlash) as well as walls repairs and other infrastructure works; (b) to note a new cemetery at Redston, Kilwinning is complete; (c) to note a site has been identified for a new cemetery in Kilbirnie and is being progressed; (d) to note that work is underway to identify a suitable site for a new cemetery in Ardrossan; (e) to note it has not been possible to identify a suitable site for extension or construction of a new Sannox cemetery, Arran; (f) that when Sannox cemetery has no further capacity, alternative existing burial grounds on Arran will

require to be used ; (g) to note a comprehensive assessment of available burial space within all existing cemeteries has been carried out; (h) options will continue to be assessed for cemeteries with less than 10 years capacity remaining – Dalry, High Road, Brisbane Glen; and (i) to note that future funding requirements will be considered as part of the Capital Plan refresh.

The meeting ended at 4:35 p.m.