

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.

Special Cabinet
19 September 2023

IRVINE, 19 September 2023 - At a Special Meeting of the Cabinet of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

Present

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

Also Present

Eleanor Collier, Davina McTiernan and Chloé Robertson.

In Attendance

C. Hatton, Chief Executive, M. Boyd, Head of Service (Finance) (Chief Executive's Service); A. Sutton, Executive Director (Communities & Education); R. McCutcheon, Executive Director (Place); F Walker, Head of Service (People & ICT); A. Craig, Head of Service, M, McColm, Senior Manager (Communications), S. Wilson and C. Stewart, Committee Services Officers (Democratic Services).

Apologies

Alan Hill

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. Council Tax Multiplier: Scottish Government Consultation

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the recommendations of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee following a call-in request relating to the consultation response in respect of the review of the level of Council tax multipliers for Band E to Band H properties. A copy of the original report presented to Cabinet on 29 August 2023 was attached at Appendix 1 to the report while Appendices 2A and 2B provided information on the call-in requests. Appendices 3A and 3B detailed comments on the call-ins from Officers with Appendices 4 and 5 providing the Minute of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee held on 12 September 2023 and an amended consultation response reflecting the Islands Act duty.

The Cabinet considered the request by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee to reconsider its earlier decision to approve the consultation response from North Ayrshire Council. Members sought further information on the requested extension to the consultation response deadline and the process to take the report to the next meeting of the Council.

Accordingly, the Cabinet (a) agreed not to accept the recommendation of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee to reconsider its earlier decision to approve the consultation response from North Ayrshire Council while adapting the request to include reference to an Islands Impact Assessment within the response; and (b) noted that, in terms of Standing Order 26.7, the matter be referred to the next meeting of the Council for determination.

3. Urgent Items

There were no urgent items.

The meeting ended at 2.10 p.m.

Cabinet
3 October 2023

IRVINE, 3 October 2023 - At a Meeting of the Cabinet of North Ayrshire Council at 2.30 p.m.

Present

Marie Burns, Shaun Macaulay, Alan Hill, Margaret Johnson and Christina Larsen; and Andrew Bruce and Elizabeth Turbet (Church Representatives) and Jacqui MacKenzie (Teaching Representative).

In Attendance

A. Sutton, Executive Director and A. McClelland, Head of Service (Education) (Communities & Education); R. McCutcheon, Executive Director, L. Kirk, Interim Head of Service (Economic Development & Regeneration) and L. Cree, Senior Manager (Property Management & Investment) (Place); C. Cameron, Director and S. Hunter, Chief Social Work Officer (Health and Social Care Partnership); F Walker, Head of Service (People & ICT); A. Craig, Head of Service (Democratic), J. Hutcheson, Senior Communications Officer (Communications), H. Clancy and D. McCaw, Committee Services Officers (Chief Executive's Service).

Chair

Marie Burns in the Chair.

Apologies

Tony Gurney and Rev. Mark Goodman (Church Representative).

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. Ayrshire College and Irvine Royal Academy Skills Centre of Excellence

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Communities and Education) providing an update on the revised position in relation to the Ayrshire College Skills Centre of Excellence at Irvine Royal Academy resulting in a revised approach to delivery of Developing the Young Workforce, with a focus on the Future Skills Hub at Kilwinning Campus.

The Cabinet acknowledged the improvement journey undertaken at Irvine Royal Academy by staff and young people within the community and recognised the excellent School-College Partnership developments and Future Skills Hub facility at Kilwinning Campus.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) welcome the School-College Partnership developments and the Future Skills Hub approach; and (b) otherwise note the revised position in relation to the Ayrshire College Skills Centre of Excellence at Irvine Royal Academy.

3. Education Service Standards and Quality Report 2022-23

Submitted a report by the Executive Director (Communities and Education) on key progress towards the Education Service Improvement Priorities and the National Improvement Framework Priorities for session 2022-23. The Education Service Standards and Quality Report 2022-23 were detailed at Appendix 1 to the report, including principal improvement activities undertaken throughout the academic session 2022-23 and key performance information on learner outcomes.

The Cabinet welcomed the report and acknowledged the educational challenges faced across North Ayrshire following the Covid-19 pandemic and also in terms of deprivation.

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

- established links in terms of career pathways for pupils;
- the offer from Ayrshire College to provide a 'vocational burst' programme to extend the range of skills and vocational activities available to young people deciding what to progress into the senior phase and beyond;
- ongoing work within schools in terms of attendance levels;
- the inclusion of stretch aims for improvement over the next three years; and
- positive inspections across schools in North Ayrshire over the last year.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) approve publication of the document set out at Appendix 1 to the report; and (b) otherwise note the content of the report.

4. Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report

Submitted report by the Director (Health and Social Care Partnership) on the Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report, as required by the Scottish Government, and covering the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. The report provided information on the successes and challenges in relation to the past year and noted the positive contributions to individuals, families and communities across North Ayrshire while highlighting the key risks for 2024.

The Cabinet welcomed the report and acknowledged the challenges faced, particularly in relation to care and mental health, across North Ayrshire.

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

- strengthening established care links with communities through the HSCP Locality Forums and Community Planning Locality Partnerships; and
- current and future care capacity across North Ayrshire.

The Cabinet agreed to note the contents of the Chief Social Worker Annual Report 2022-23.

5. Lease Disposal – Additional Area at Nethermiln Playing fields, West Kilbride

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Place) on the lease of the football pitch at Kirkton Glen and Nethermiln Playing Fields, West Kilbride to West Kilbride Community Sports Club for a period of 25 years, with an option to extend for a further 25 years. The lease disposal area was detailed at Appendix 1 to the report. The Appendix also set out previous areas leased and provided detail on additional areas which could be added to the lease, allowing for the full redevelopment of the sports facilities within Kirkton Glen.

The Cabinet agreed (a) to approve the lease disposal of the football pitch at Kirkton Glen and Nethermiln Playing Fields to West Kilbride Sports Club for a period of 25 years, with an option to extend for a further 25 years at a nominal rent of £1 per annum, exclusive of VAT.

6. North Ayrshire Asset Management Strategy and Plans

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Place) on the refreshed North Ayrshire Corporate Asset Strategy and associated Asset Management Plans. Appendix 1 to the report detailed the full Strategy and Plans which reflected updated priorities and challenges.

The Cabinet acknowledged the work carried out by services in production of the comprehensive Strategy and Action Plans.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the North Ayrshire Corporate Asset Strategy and Plans as detailed at Appendix 1 to the report.

7. Vacant and Derelict Land Strategy 2023-2028

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Place) seeking approval of the Vacant and Derelict Land Strategy 2023-2028, detailed at Appendix 1 to the report.

The Cabinet acknowledged the work carried out by the service in production of the comprehensive Strategy and Action Plans.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the Vacant and Derelict Land Strategy 2023-2028 detailed at Appendix 1 to the report.

8. Local Transport and Active Travel Strategy 2023-2028

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Place) seeking approval for the Local Transport and Active Travel Strategy 2023-2028, detailed at Appendix 1 to the report.

The Cabinet acknowledged the work undertaken by the service in obtaining external funding packages to encourage modifications to travel options within communities.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the proposed Local Transport and Active Travel Strategy 2023-2028, detailed at Appendix 1 to the report.

The meeting ended at 3.25 p.m.