

Ayrshire Economic Joint Committee
20 November 2023

At a Meeting of the Ayrshire Economic Joint Committee at 2.00 p.m. involving participation by remote electronic means.

Present

Councillors Marie Burns and Anthony Gurney (North Ayrshire Council); Maureen McKay (East Ayrshire Council); and Martin Dowey, William Grant and Bob Pollock (South Ayrshire Council).

In Attendance

R. McCutcheon, N. McIlvanney and A. Finlayson (North Ayrshire Council); R. Grieveson, D. McDowall, G. Saunders and P. Davies (East Ayrshire Council); M. Newall, L. Reid and S. Yearley (South Ayrshire Council); J. Martin (Scottish Enterprise); C. Stewart and H. Clancy (North Ayrshire Council).

Apologies

Councillors Iain Linton, Douglas Reid (East Ayrshire Council) and William Grant (South Ayrshire Council); C. Hatton and L. Kirk (North Ayrshire Council); E. Fraser, J. McLachlan, E. Mackay and D. Watt (East Ayrshire Council); A. Cox (Ayrshire College) and P. Zealey (Skills Development Scotland).

Chair

Councillor 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. Appointment of Chair

The Joint Committee agreed (a) to note the appointment of Councillor Marie Burns (North Ayrshire Council) as Chair of the Ayrshire Economic Joint Committee (AEJC) for the period from September 2023 to 31 August 2024; and (b) to ratify the appointment of Councillor Marie Burns as Chair of the Ayrshire Economic Partnership Board (AEPB) for the period from September 2023 to 31 August 2024.

3. Minutes

The Minutes of Special meetings of the Joint Committee held on 7 August 2023 and 18 September 2023 were confirmed and the Minutes signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

4. Ayrshire Growth Deal (AGD) Internal Audit Annual Report 2022/23

Submitted report by the Chief Auditor (East Ayrshire Council) providing an annual report on internal audit activity in line with obligations laid out in Ayrshire Growth Deal (AGD) Governance Document.

A Member asked a question and was provided with further information in relation to the difference in terminology, regarding the words used in the Audit report, i.e., 'general risk and control' as compared to 'general risk and compliance'.

The Joint Committee agreed to note (i) the current arrangements for Internal Audit as laid out at Appendix 1 to the report, (ii) note the work carried out prior to and since inception, including during 2022/23 as laid out at Appendix 2 to the report and (iii) the AGD Annual Internal Audit Opinion of continuing reasonable assurance as laid out in sections 10-11 of the report.

5. Ayrshire Growth Deal (AGD) Internal Audit Plan 2023/24

Submitted report by the Chief Auditor (East Ayrshire Council) providing an annual consolidated internal audit plan in line with obligations laid out in Ayrshire Growth Deal (AGD) Governance document.

The Joint Committee agreed to note (i) the current arrangements for Internal Audit as laid out in Appendix 1 to the report, (ii) the regulatory responsibility for each Council to approve days spent on AGD work as laid out at paragraph 7 and the subsequent annual consolidated internal audit plan for the AGD as presented at Appendix 2 to the report and (iii) (c) note the previously agreed arrangements to report the outcomes of individual internal audit assignments laid out at section 8 to the report.

6. Ayrshire Growth Deal (AGD) - Programme Update

Submitted report by the Head of Economic Growth (East Ayrshire Council) advising of the progress of the Ayrshire Growth Deal (AGD) and the development of its component projects as at 30 October 2023. The Ayrshire Growth Deal Update of Programme and Projects and the Quarterly Communications Report, as at October 2023, were attached at Appendices 1 and 2, respectively, to the report.

The Joint Committee agreed (a) that officers be authorised to liaise with both Governments to progress the projects having regard to the updated position in line with the formal change requirements contained within the Deal protocols; and (b) to note (i) the updates provided in the report (as of 30 October 2023), (ii) the progress across the Ayrshire Growth Deal Programme, and (iii) the proposal for realignment of the reporting requirements, principally the undertaking of the Annual Performance Report, Financial Plan, Implementation Plan and Benefit Realisation Plan at the end of March 24, and onwards at the same time every year, all subject to agreement from the Government.

7. Ayrshire Growth Deal (AGD) – Programme Risk Register Update (October 2023)

Submitted report by the Head of Economic Growth (East Ayrshire Council) providing an update on the AGD Programme Risk Register as at the end of October 2023. The updated risk register was set out at Appendix 1 to the report.

The Joint Committee agreed to approve the content of the updated Programme Risk Register dated October 2023, as referred to within the report and set out at Appendix 1 to the report.

8. Schedule of Future Meeting Dates - 2024

The Joint Committee was invited to note that Ordinary Meetings of the Ayrshire Economic Joint Committee (AEJC) would take place at 2.00 p.m. on:

Monday 19 February 2024
Monday 20 May 2024
Monday 9 September 2024
Monday 25 November 2024

Noted.

9. Exclusion of the Public – Paras 9 & 10

The Joint Committee 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 Paragraphs 9 & 10 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

10. Ayrshire Growth Deal Subsea Cable and Infill projects re-scoping proposal

Submitted report by the Project Lead – Digital, Ayrshire Growth Deal (AGD) on the above.

The Joint Committee agreed to endorse the recommendations in the report.

The meeting ended at 2.25 p.m.