

North Ayrshire Council  
25 March 2026

At a Meeting of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m. involving a combination of participation by remote electronic means and physical attendance within the Council Chambers, Irvine.

**Present (Physical Participation)**

Nairn Angus-McDonald, Marie Burns, Eleanor Collier, Joe Cullinane, Scott Davidson, Anthea Dickson, Todd Ferguson, Stewart Ferguson, Robert Foster, Scott Gallacher, Tony Gurney, Mary Hume, Cameron Inglis, Margaret Johnson, Christina Larsen, Shaun Macaulay, Tom Marshall, Jean McClung, Matthew McLean, Davina McTiernan, Donald Reid, Chloé Robertson, Ronnie Stalker, Angela Stephen and John Sweeney.

**Present (Remote Electronic Participation)**

John Bell, Charles Currie, Alan Hill, Jim Montgomerie and Donald L. Reid.

**In Attendance**

C. Hatton, Chief Executive; S. Anson, Executive Director (Education); D. Hammond, Executive Director (Communities and Housing); R. McCutcheon, Executive Director (Place); C. Cameron, Director (Health and Social Care Partnership); M. Boyd, Head of Service (Finance); F. Walker, Head of Service (People and ICT); A. Craig, Head of Service (Democratic), R. Lynch, Senior Manager (Legal Services); M. McColm, Senior Manager (Communications), C. Stewart and S. Wilson, Committee Services Officers, and H. Young, Senior Committee Services Officer (Democratic) (Corporate Services).

**Chair**

Provost Dickson in the Chair.

**Apologies**

Amanda Kerr, Louise McLaughlan and Ian Murdoch.

**1. Provost's Remarks**

The Provost welcomed those present to the meeting and dealt with preliminary matters, including intimation that the meeting, which was taking place on a hybrid basis, was being recorded.

**2. Apologies**

The Provost invited intimations of apologies for absence, which were recorded.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

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

There were no declarations of the Party Whip.

#### **4. Previous Minutes**

The accuracy of the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 11 February 2026 and the Special Meeting held on 25 February 2026 were confirmed and the Minutes signed in accordance with Paragraph 7(1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

#### **5. Provost's Report**

Submitted report by the Provost for the period from 2 February 2026 to 15 March 2026.

Noted.

#### **6. Leader's Report**

Submitted report by the Leader of the Council for the period from 11 February 2026 to 15 March 2026.

The Leader of the Council also provided an update on the sale of Ardrossan Harbour.

On a point of order, Councillor Inglis advised that comments made by Councillor Gurney were not appropriate during the pre-election period.

Noted.

#### **6. Council Minute Volume**

Submitted for noting the Minutes of meetings of committees of the Council held in the period 11 December 2025 to 11 March 2026.

Noted.

#### **7. Appointment to Committee**

The Council was invited to consider a nomination to fill a vacancy of the Ayrshire Economic Joint Committee and Ayrshire Economic Partnership Board sub-committee.

Councillor Gurney, seconded by Councillor Larsen, moved that Councillor Collier be appointed to serve on the Ayrshire Economic Joint Committee and accordingly its relevant sub-committees including the Ayrshire Economic Partnership Board. There being no other nomination, Councillor Collier was duly appointed.

## 8. NAC Education Service – “Pupil use of Mobile Phones in Schools”

Submit report by the Executive Director (Education) on the review of the current NAC Education Service operating procedure "Pupil use of mobile devices in schools". Output from all engagement was detailed within the surveys undertaken and set out at Appendices 1- 3, with the Equality and Children’s Right Impact Assessment (ECRIA) set out at Appendix 4 to the report.

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

- the measures put in place to ensure teachers receive the necessary support to enforce the rules;
- communication to pupils that the decision should not be viewed negatively, but as an investment in their future success and in supporting mental health;
- discussions with the Scottish Government regarding the potential for this matter to be considered at a national level;
- how the policy was considered to differ from the arrangements currently in place;
- the variation in policy and enforcement across individual schools, and how a school-by-school approach would address this issue; and
- the remedies applied in the event of any breach of the rules.

Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor Larsen, moved the approval of the recommendations set out in the officer’s report.

As an amendment Councillor Inglis, seconded by Councillor Stalker, proposed to include the following paragraph after section 3.4 of the report:

“In addition to the restriction of mobile phone use during lessons, it is further proposed that mobile phones should not be visible or used during intervals, lunch periods, or while pupils are moving through corridors. This measure is intended to minimise disruption, reduce inappropriate use, and support positive relationships and behaviour across the wider school community. Under this amendment, phones must remain switched off or stored out of sight (“not seen and not heard”) except where explicit permission has been granted in line with agreed individual exemptions.”

Members asked questions of clarification of the mover of the amendment including whether there was necessity for an impact assessment on its terms given the application of the UNCRC. It was clarified that the amendment had been shared with officers only shortly before the meeting but that from the general consultation and impact assessment undertaken in relation to the proposal contained in the report, it was considered that this was also sufficient for the purposes of the amendment.

The Chief Executive provided clarification that there would not be a requirement for additional resources and the policy would be managed in accordance with the existing arrangements for monitoring of conduct and behaviour within the school estate.

Further information was provided by the Executive Director (Education) regarding the ongoing pilot of the mobile-phone pouch model at Garnock Campus.

There followed debate and summing up.

On a division and roll call vote, there voted for the amendment, Councillors Gallacher, Inglis, Marshall, Stalker and Stephen (5) and for the motion, Councillors Angus-McDonald, Bell, Burns, Collier, Cullinane, Currie, Davidson, Dickson, S. Ferguson, T. Ferguson, Foster, Gurney, Hill, Hume, Johnson, Larsen, Macaulay, McClung, McLean, McTiernan, Montgomerie, D. Reid, D. L Reid, Robertson and Sweeney (25) and the motion was declared carried.

Accordingly, the Council agreed to (a) note the content of the report; and (b) approve the finalisation of the refreshed Service Operating Procedure on the use of mobile phones in schools based upon the principles set out in the report.

## **9. Exclusion of the Press and the Public**

Council 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 items of business on the grounds indicated in terms of Paragraph 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

### **9.1. Disposal to a Nominated Party - Sale of Spier's Trust Land**

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Place) on the sale of Spier's Trust Land.

Councillor Collier, seconded by Councillor Gurney, moved the approval of the recommendations set out in the officer's report. There being no amendment, the motion was carried.

## **10. Questions**

In terms of Standing Order 14, submitted:

- (1) a question by Councillor Angus-McDonald to the Cabinet Member for Finance in the following terms:

“To ask the Cabinet Member to confirm the uplift in the Council's contribution to the Health and Social Care Partnership for 2026/27?”

Councillor Larsen thanked the Member for his question and responded in the following terms:

“From the Revenue Budget report presented at the Council meeting of the 25 February 2026, the Council's Budget included a net contribution to the Health and Social Care Partnership of £13.759m for 2026/27. This contribution included a share of Scottish Government funding to support pay increases for 2025/26 and 2026/27 of

£1.218m, funding to meet new expenditure requirements in 2026/27 of £7.580m and an additional contribution from the Council of £4.961m”.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Angus-McDonald referenced alleged comments of Councillor Larsen at a community meeting and other Cabinet Members on the impact of a proposed 12% Council Tax rise. He asked what the Cabinet Member would say to the 70% of service users currently receiving care packages, who are identified as having sufficient but non-critical levels of need and whose packages are expected to be reviewed over the coming years?

Councillor Larsen advised that she could not speak for other members of the administration and confirmed that she had not indicated at a community meeting that the administration’s proposal to increase Council Tax by 12% would have fully met the HSCP budget deficit. She referenced various meetings, including the budget working group, which had been held prior to the budget setting meeting where all Elected Members had been informed of the HSCP’s financial position, the consequent risk to the Council, the pressures facing the partnership, and the adverse impact these pressures would have upon the most vulnerable members of the community.

Councillor Larsen also explained that the administration had sought to provide additional funding to the HSCP by originally proposing an increase in Council Tax of 12%, which would have generated an additional £3.56 million for the HSCP, in addition to the Council’s £4.96 million contribution, providing a total of £8.530 million in recurring funding.

On points of order, Councillor Cullinane queried the factual accuracy of comments on outcomes from a proposal for a 12% increase in Council Tax which had not been put to the vote at the budget meeting. Councillor Larsen advised that Councillor Angus-McDonald had referred to the administration’s Council tax proposal during his supplementary question, and that her comments had been made in response to that reference.

Councillor Larsen further advised that she was also a carer and was fully aware of the implications of the decision.

(2) a question by Councillor Gallacher to the Cabinet Member for Communities, Housing and the Islands in the following terms:

“To ask how many vape shops are currently open in North Ayrshire?”

Councillor Hill thanked the Member for his question and responded in the following terms:

“At present, there are 199 premises in North Ayrshire that are listed on the Scottish Government’s Register of Tobacco and Nicotine Vapour Product Retailers”.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Gallacher asked whether the Council was confident that all vape outlets currently trading were on the register, and whether, in respect of those known to the Council, the business operators were readily identifiable and traceable?

Councillor Hill advised that it was not possible to be fully confident as to which businesses may be selling vapes illegally however, the Council would pursue enforcement action where intelligence was available and would undertake inspections as required. He further advised that, over the past four years, officers had seized approximately 12,000 illegal vape products across North Ayrshire.

Councillor Hill also advised that he would encourage Elected Members and members of the public to contact the Council should they have any information regarding businesses operating illegally.

(3) a question by Councillor McTiernan to the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care in the following terms:

“To ask the Cabinet Member for Health & Social Care how the Brighter Pathways programme will progress and what outcomes it will achieve?”

Councillor Robertson thanked the Member for her question and responded in the following terms:

“Brighter Pathways is North Ayrshire’s multi-year transformation programme focused on reshaping children’s services, improving outcomes for care-experienced young people, and creating a more sustainable, rights-based local care system. It is deeply aligned with The Promise and has been a standing strategic priority for both the IJB and the Council since 2024. It is not a single project it is a phased transformation with multiple workstreams progressing at different speeds depending on readiness, complexity and priority.

Overall, Brighter Pathways focuses on improving outcomes for children and families through earlier and more effective intervention, greater stability for care experienced children, and stronger transitions into adulthood. It strengthens joint working across the HSCP, Education, Housing and Health.

Some elements have already been completed and are delivering early benefits, including:

- Strengthened relationships with Education, particularly through improved shared decision making and joint planning for children and young people;
- The development of a Care Leavers Housing Protocol, which is already supporting more consistent and joined up pathways for young people as they move towards independence;
- The introduction of a digital recruitment campaign to attract new foster carers.

Other areas of work have taken longer, reflecting their complexity. This includes the revision of our existing fostering scheme, which has required detailed consultation and careful redesign aimed at increasing recruitment and retention of foster carers, however I am pleased to advise that this will launch as of the 1st April 2026.

Similarly, the development of the Boyle Street supported accommodation model in Irvine represents a significant shift in how we support young people move on up from care.

A five year Brighter Pathways plan, taking us to 2030/31, was presented to the IJB in November 2025, This captures the phased nature of delivery and sets out when we expect the full benefits of Brighter Pathways to be realised as change becomes embedded and sustained. Progress continues to be overseen through clear governance arrangements, with children's safety and wellbeing remaining central throughout. It is an excellent example of how through targeted work and investment across a range of corporate parents we expect to improve outcomes and deliver financial benefits, with those anticipated to total over £6m by 2030.

It is essential we remain focussed on this programme of work and remain responsive to the evolving legislative and policy landscape, including the Children's Care and Care Experience Service Planning Bill and national consultations on the Kinship Care Vision of Scotland and the review of Secure Care".

(4) a question by Councillor Kerr to the Cabinet Member for Finance in the following terms:

"Now that all three Ayrshire Councils have agreed their budget for 2026/27, can the Cabinet Member set out what the level of Council Tax for a Band D property will be for all three Ayrshire local authorities?"

In the absence of Councillor Kerr, and in terms of Standing Order 14.4, the question was instead asked by Councillor Foster.

Councillor Larsen thanked the Member for his question and responded in the following terms:

"The 2026/27 Council tax charge for Band D properties across Ayrshire is as follows:-

North Ayrshire £1,685.84  
South Ayrshire £1,694.96  
East Ayrshire £1,717.28"

(5) a question by Councillor Marshall to the Cabinet Member for Education in the following terms:

"The Report to North Ayrshire Council's Corporate Health and Safety Group on 19 March 2026 recorded the number of Aggression and Violence incidents occurring within the Education Directorate for Quarter 3 over the last 4 years. There were 357 incidents in 2022, 457 in 2023, 372 in 2024 and 576 in 2025.

What is the explanation for a 61% increase over the last four years?"

Councillor Johnson thanked the Member for his question and responded in the following terms:

"The service carefully monitors such figures on an ongoing basis. The rise in the number of incidents is based upon a myriad of factors, including improved reporting

processes, ongoing impacts from the pandemic, and increases within the primary sector.

Our aim is to ensure safe, inclusive learning environments where aggression and violence are neither tolerated nor normalised, and where the wellbeing of pupils and staff is paramount”.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Marshall asked what action was being taken by the Council to reduce the number of aggression and violence incidents?

Councillor Johnson advised that she did not have the information requested but would provide a response to Councillor Marshall following the meeting.

(6) a question by Councillor McTiernan to the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care in the following terms:

“Can the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care outline what steps have been taken to advocate for a better funding deal for North Ayrshire for community-based health and care services & actively pursue opportunities for additional funding?”

Councillor Robertson thanked the Member for her question and responded in the following terms:

“There have been extensive and sustained efforts to attempt to secure additional funding from Scottish Government for North Ayrshire health and care services.

IJB Chief Officers met with the Cabinet Secretary on 5th March 2025 to present an overview of the national picture for IJBs, some of the context around the rising pressures and cost of services, and to bring to life the impact of a critically challenging financial position for service delivery, risks and performance expectations in the coming year – outlining at that time a total budget deficit across Scotland of £562m. The North Ayrshire Chief Officer presented at that session and shared a case study in relation to our local area. As a follow up to this session the Cabinet Secretary agreed to meet with local representatives and on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2025 met with Chief Executive of North Ayrshire Council and NHS Ayrshire and Arran and the IJB Chair, Vice Chair and Chief Officer. An overview of the operational and financial challenges for North Ayrshire were presented as were a number of specific asks, those being:

- Additional Funding – NHS Reform asks to support social care – for North Ayrshire of circa £9.5m
- To recognise that there is no Health without Social Care
- Appreciate our local demographic impact on demand
- Greater flexibility – for resources and local solutions
- Targeted funding based on local need

Positively as an outcome of this meeting when NHS Ayrshire and Arran were allocated funding from the NHS Reform national allocation, over £1million of this was ring-fenced for North Ayrshire to support whole system improvement.

The IJB requested that the Chief Officer formally write to the Cabinet Secretary at their meeting in December 2025 setting out again our local challenges and to formally request additional financial support. This coincided with a similar request from the Council's Chief Executive to also seek support.

The Cabinet Secretary agreed to meet with North Ayrshire representatives and on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2026, the Council's Chief Executive and IJB Chief Officer met with the Cabinet Secretary and Minister. The meeting provided the opportunity to discuss and share in more detail again the North Ayrshire position. The Chief Officer outlined our current year financial position and projections for next year, service performance, including delayed transfers of care and waits within community services and the public consultation approach for social care eligibility criteria. The Cabinet Secretary and Minister acknowledged the difficulties we face and referred to opportunities to work with NHS Ayrshire and Arran on shifting the balance of care and risk-share and hospital at home service developments and confirmed there is no further funding available from Scottish Government. This position was confirmed in a follow up letter received by the Chief Executive on 12<sup>th</sup> March.

The Chief Officer responded to this on 12<sup>th</sup> March, before the IJB budget meeting and set out the challenging position and difficult decisions the IJB were now faced with and welcomed an opportunity for continued engagement on this issue”.

(7) a question by Councillor Hume to the Cabinet Member for Education in the following terms:

“Communities have welcomed the reinstatement of school crossing patrollers in the Council's 2026/27 budget. Can the Cabinet Member outline the timeline for implementing this budget decision?”

Councillor Johnson thanked the Member for her question and responded in the following terms:

“Arrangements are being made to progress the Council decision. It is anticipated that any change in the structure will be aligned to the new school year in August”.

(8) a question by Councillor McTiernan to the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care in the following terms:

“Given the number of concerned residents who have been in touch regarding the eligibility criteria proposals, can the Cabinet Member outline for Council the decision that was taken at the IJB Budget meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> March to balance their budget and what led to that decision?”

Councillor Robertson thanked the Member for her question and responded in the following terms:

“Over 3,800 views were expressed by our residents in the lead up to the IJB considering proposals for social care eligibility, the largest response to any consultation the HSCP has undertaken and demonstrates the strength of feeling. The IJB considered the extensive feedback alongside budget proposals and given

the gravity of the financial position and very difficult decisions that were made I welcome the opportunity to provide an update to all Members.

At that meeting, the IJB were presented with a significant financial challenge for 2026/27 with an estimated budget gap of £9.1million to address. After national funding adjustments, the contribution agreed through North Ayrshire Council's own budget, and a number of proposed savings totalling £2.8million, a substantial budget gap remained, particularly within social care services. The papers before the Board made clear that three-quarters of the social care budget is tied up in individual care packages, and that all other internal measures—tightening controls, reducing non-essential spend, accelerating transformation, and use of reserves—had already been exhausted. This information previously was shared through the public consultation, with all elected members and in detail at the IJB Finance Working Group.

To meet its legal duty to set a balanced budget, the IJB therefore approved a revised Eligibility Policy, moving to a Critical-Only threshold for funded adult social care. This was the only remaining measure capable of closing the £5.8 million gap that still needed to be addressed for next year.

The IJB did not take this decision lightly. It was informed by:

- Escalating demand for social care which continues to outstrip available resources.
- The professional advice of the Chief Officer, Chief Finance Officer and the Chief Social Work Officer, who set out the risks of continuing to add to waiting lists and the unsustainability of current demand levels.
- Extensive community engagement carried out since December and an Equalities Impact Assessment, which the Board considered as part of its decision-making.
- The funding allocation for 2026/27 being confirmed, with the level of funding from the Council and Health Board determined and a clear response from Scottish Government of no further national investment.
- National evidence from Audit Scotland showing that IJBs across Scotland are facing similar pressures and that changes to service models and eligibility criteria are now unavoidable.

I want to reassure Members that the move to Critical-Only eligibility does not change our statutory duties. Everyone will continue to have their needs assessed, and services will continue to intervene where there is risk of harm or where statutory responsibilities apply. However, in order to live within the funding available, ongoing commissioned support will now be prioritised for those with the most critical and immediate levels of need. The Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) requires to advise the Council on how to discharge statutory social work duties, to ensure that services meet national standards, provide high-quality care, and properly manage risk, the CSWO to this Council was clear in advice to the IJB that the proposed changes were the safest course of action to protect the Council and our residents, ensuring those at risk and the most vulnerable are able to receive support.

This is an extremely difficult position, and neither the Council nor the IJB wished to be here. But the IJB was required to set a legally balanced budget, and all other avenues to close the significant budget gap had been exhausted.

The IJB will continue to work with the HSCP to monitor the impact of this decision, to lobby nationally for a fairer settlement for social care, and to support individuals and families as these changes take effect”.

As a supplementary question, Councillor McTiernan asked whether the Cabinet Member was content with the information that had been shared with Elected Members prior to the budget, and whether it would be fair to state that there was no option but to accept the proposals?

Councillor Robertson advised that was a fair assessment of the situation, noting that an amendment had been brought forward. She further advised that 6 Members of the IJB had voted for the proposals out of necessity, notwithstanding that it may have been easier to support the amendment. She indicated that supporting the amendment would have raised public expectations at a time when it was clear that no further funding was forthcoming.

Councillor Robertson further advised that Elected Members who attended the finance briefings and the budget working group had been made aware that the HSCP had assumed the uplift provided, and that the eligibility proposals had been brought forward with the budget gap in mind. She further referenced the Administration’s original proposal at the budget meeting, commenting that an increase in Council Tax of 12.5% would have enabled investment of £8.5 million in the HSCP, thereby affording the IJB the opportunity to explore alternative options and to adopt a different approach.

Points of order were raised by Councillors Cullinane and Gurney in terms of accuracy and political comment during the pre-election period.

(9) a question by Councillor Foster to the Cabinet Member for Finance in the following terms:

“I previously asked the Cabinet Member about several large VER packages that had been approved for a number of former employees. After the Cabinet Member refused to give a transparent answer, and having had an FOI request refused, I had to challenge the decision by NAC to withhold information from elected members through the Information Commissioner appeal process. The Information Commissioner instructed North Ayrshire Council to supply me with the salary ranges of council staff that have received the highest costing VER packages.

Can the Cabinet Member tell me why at least three of these packages have a 4.5 year payback timeframe, which exceeds the timescales set out in the policy, and also how many council staff were refused VER packages as they didn’t meet the same policy criteria?”

Councillor Larsen thanked the Member for his question and responded in the following terms:

“The principal aims of the 2023/24 VER scheme was to realise significant recurring budget savings to help the Council address a budget gap of £13.0m in 2024/25 whilst seeking to minimise the impact upon Council services and avoiding the need for compulsory redundancies. The costs, savings and payback period was, in line with standard practice, operated at a programme level. In this particular instance the one-off costs were £5.7m, realising recurring savings of £2.5m equating to a payback period of 2.3 years.

A robust governance process was in place to consider all applications. Firstly, at Directorate level where a number of applications were not supported by Directors and Heads of Service due to the impact upon the delivery of services. Those applications recommended for progression were subsequently considered by the VER Scrutiny Panel which considered the VER scheme, cost, savings and payback at a programme level. The programme outcomes were subsequently reported to the Staffing and Recruitment Committee for agreement”.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Foster asked whether the Cabinet Member recognised that the payback period was not in accordance with what had been agreed by the Council, and that the Council had awarded some individuals VER packages in excess of £310,000? He further asked whether the Cabinet Member could write to him to advise how many staff had been refused VER on the basis of the same criteria?

Councillor Larsen advised that the Council cannot share information on individuals who received VER packages and that the payback period of 2.3 years, achieved at programme level was in accordance with best practice parameters of a three-year payback. She further advised that the programme outcomes had been reported to the Staffing and Recruitment Committee for agreement.

On a point of information, Councillor Cullinane advised that the Staffing and Recruitment Committee did not sign off on individual packages.

A further point of order was raised by Councillor Burns, seeking clarification regarding the time allocated for providing answers to questions.

## **11. Motions**

In terms of Standing Order 15, submitted:

### **(1) a motion by Councillor Cullinane, seconded by Councillor Hume, in the following terms:**

“With the continued success of the Councils early years clothing grant scheme, Council agrees to continue the £50 clothing grant to all eligible\* 3- and 4-year-olds in Early Years during the 2026/27 school year, utilising the surplus funds allocated to the scheme in previous years.”

There being no amendment the motion was declared carried.

**(2) a motion by Councillor McLean, seconded by Councillor S Ferguson, in the following terms:**

"North Ayrshire Council gives its solidarity and sympathy to the City of Glasgow following the fire on Union Street. Council notes the offers of help that the Scottish Government has committed to Glasgow City Council with regard to support, immediate costs and rebuilding. Council also notes the recent fires in and around Irvine High Street; in the former Ruby Tuesdays and neighbouring shops, then the devastating fire to the old Forum building. Council also notes the most recent fire in the old Dreghorn Primary School, which is within a conservation area.

I therefore move that:

1. Council resolves to instruct the Chief Executive to write to Scottish Government to seek equitable treatment and assistance, in line with what Glasgow City Council has been offered and
2. Council receives a future report on ownership of the former Dreghorn Primary School, Ruby Tuesdays and the Forum site on the possible options available to the Council and partners for regeneration in the event of funding being made available including what options there may be for the Council to require owners to take action to rectify the condition or appearance of these sites".

Councillor Currie left the meeting during consideration of this item.

Members asked questions of clarification of the movers of the motion.

The Monitoring Officer provided clarification that the motion relates to a request for funding assistance with a future report to follow. She further confirmed that the last report to Council was presented in 2023.

As an amendment, Councillor Collier, seconded by Councillor Davidson, moved the direct negative.

There followed debate and summing up.

On a division and roll call vote, there voted for the amendment, Councillors Burns, Collier, Davidson, Dickson, Gurney, Hill, Johnson, Larsen, Macaulay, McClung, McTiernan and Robertson (12) and for the motion, Councillors Angus-McDonald, Bell, Cullinane, S. Ferguson, T. Ferguson, Foster, Gallacher, Hume, Inglis, Marshall, McLean, Montgomerie, D. L Reid, Stalker, Stephen and Sweeney (16), Councillor D. Reid abstaining and the motion was declared carried.

Accordingly, the Council agreed as follows:

"North Ayrshire Council gives its solidarity and sympathy to the City of Glasgow following the fire on Union Street. Council notes the offers of help that the Scottish Government has committed to Glasgow City Council with regard to support,

immediate costs and rebuilding. Council also notes the recent fires in and around Irvine High Street; in the former Ruby Tuesdays and neighbouring shops, then the devastating fire to the old Forum building. Council also notes the most recent fire in the old Dreghorn Primary School, which is within a conservation area.

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The meeting ended at 3:45 p.m.