



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

LEADER'S REPORT

For the period covering: 16 March – 10 May 2026

The attached report gives a summary and brief details to Council, of meetings and events attended by the Leader of North Ayrshire Council, Councillor Anthony Gurney.

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AYRSHIRE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING, 23 March

On 23 March, I attended an Ayrshire Economic Partnership Board meeting where attendees received a programme update on the Ayrshire Growth Deal (AGD) up to the end of February 2026 as well as an update on the AGD Programme Risk Register.

Board members were also updated on capacity funding for Regional Economic Partnerships (REPs) secured from the Scottish Government and the Ayrshire region's proposals for this allocation. The Board were also updated on the progress of and outcomes for the Ayrshire Skills Investment Fund (ASIF) and seek approval for the appointment of a new Chair and Vice Chair of the Ayrshire Economic Joint Committee Ayrshire Skills Investment Fund Sub-Committee.

COSLA MINI CONFERENCE AND CONVENTION, 27 March

On 27 March, I attended COSLA Mini-Conference and Convention. At Convention, COSLA Leaders held useful discussion on a range of subjects including the following:

- COSLA Plan Annual Report
- Strengthening Local Democracy
- Child Poverty
- Community Cohesion
- Civility Charter
- COSLA Budget 2026/27
- Appointments to Outside Bodies

The Mini-Conference was opened by a useful session entitled "The Future of Public Service Workforce" delivered by Jonathan Carr-West, Chief Executive of Local Government Information Unit (LGIU) and Roz Foyer, General Secretary of the Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC). There then followed a political hustings with different politicians from different political parties.

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***AYRSHIRE ECONOMIC JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING, 23 April***

On 24 April, I attended a meeting of the Ayrshire Economic Joint Committee (AEJC). The same points were covered as those discussed at the AEPB held on 23 March. Attendees received a programme update on the Ayrshire Growth Deal (AGD) up to the end of February 2026 as well as an update on the AGD Programme Risk Register.

This was followed by updates on capacity funding for Regional Economic Partnerships (REPs) secured from the Scottish Government and the Ayrshire region's proposals for this allocation. There was also an update on the progress of and outcomes for the Ayrshire Skills Investment Fund (ASIF) and for Committee's approval for the appointment of a new Chair and Vice Chair of the Ayrshire Economic Joint Committee Ayrshire Skills Investment Fund Sub-Committee.

COSLA LEADERS', 24 April

On 24 April, I attended a meeting of COSLA Leaders to discuss a packed agenda including the following items:

- COSLA Civility Charter
- COSLA Capacity to Respond to New Scottish Government
- Political Party Manifesto Summaries
- Distribution
- Public Services Delivery Scotland
- Breakfast Clubs
- National Primary School Swimming Offer
- Local Government Finance Update
- Master Customer Record
- Digital Office Annual Report and Action Plan
- Verity House Agreement
- Delivery of Trading Standards

The Scottish Government has made an announcement of a total of £12million funding to support free swimming lessons for primary school children. There are confusing communications regarding the scope of this offer, with mention of both universal provision and focus on primary 5s. It is believed that the focus will be on P5s within a more universal offer, but this has yet to be clarified. The funding will be rolled out initially to some local authorities already providing swimming lessons within this financial year with further authorities added over the following two years.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Gurney'. The signature is fluid and stylized, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Councillor Anthony Gurney
Leader of North Ayrshire Council