



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

Meeting of the Council

Wednesday 13 November 2019

Responses to Questions

Question

- (1) a question by Councillor Murdoch to the Leader of the Council in the following terms:

"What is the long term future of the Viking Experience in Largs? Will it continue to operate within its current location and are there any plans to remove it or change it in any way?"

Response

"The Viking Experience, which is within the Vikingar facility in Largs, is currently operated by KA Leisure on behalf of North Ayrshire Council. Any changes to the Viking Experience would be a matter for KA Leisure and their Board. KA Leisure is an arms-length organisation and four North Ayrshire Councillors represent the Council on the Board. Any changes to delivery would need to be agreed by the Board. The Council would then discuss the proposals with KA Leisure at their regular management and support meetings and updates provided through KA Leisure's regular reports to Cabinet."

Question

- (2) a question by Councillor Murdoch to the Cabinet Member for the Economy in the following terms:

"At the Full Council Meeting held on Wednesday 15th May 2019, the Member for the Economy stated that "Largs Matters Ltd are in the final stages of winding up and will be preparing a final set of audited accounts".

What is the current position regarding the winding up of Largs Matters Ltd? Are there any funds due to be returned to the businesses and is there an inventory of their assets?"

Response

"Officers have made contact with one of the two directors remaining at Largs Matters Ltd and they have confirmed that the company is still in the process of winding up and preparing final accounts. Until final accounts are produced we are unable to confirm the amount of any refund due to businesses. Council officers will arrange to meet with the company directors early in the New Year to review and encourage progress to bring the matter to a conclusion."

Question

- (3) a question by Councillor Billings to the Cabinet Member for the Economy in the following terms

"At a time when North Ayrshire is bringing forward plans for new tourism initiatives does the Cabinet Member not agree that further taxation on such an important industry makes no sense and will he agree to make this very clear in the Council's response to the Scottish Government's consultation on imposing a transient visitor levy?"

Response

"Council agreed on 7 November 2018 to support taxation powers being given to Local Authorities, including the transient visitor levy. We are aware of industry concerns regarding the introduction of a levy and the business representations that will be made as part of the Government consultation. Whilst being supportive of increased powers for local taxation, there has been no decision made on whether North Ayrshire would implement a scheme locally or what form this would take. Further details would need to be known and wider engagement on this would need to be considered before doing so. We are particularly sensitive that a potential levy could exacerbate already high regional inequalities within Scotland. A holding response will be submitted to the consultation stating the Council's position as outlined."

Question

- (4) a question by Councillor Gallacher to the Cabinet Member for Education in the following terms:

"To ask the Cabinet Member for Education if he will give an update on the proposed work to drain the kids playing field at Woodlands Primary School. This work was agreed after an amendment to the budget last year released the funding for this."

Response

"Property Management and Investment (PMI) are continuing to make progress with this project and have been keeping the school abreast of developments.

The PMI team has been working with the Council's flooding team, Hub South West (HubSW) and their supply chain to develop a drainage solution for the school playing field. Intrusive site investigations have been undertaken and the civil engineer has provided a design layout.

The proposed layout has been shared with the flooding team, officers in Education & Youth Employment and the Head Teacher. All parties recognise that the overall available external space for the children will be impacted slightly by these proposals, however they accept that this compromise is necessary to create a useable play area.

Contd/

Following approval of the proposals, we were awaiting the final cost and programme from HubSW to enable the works to commence. The proposals involve draining water from the school playing field to a section of adjacent land. The area which will receive the diverted ground water had no identified flooding issues.

However, in recent months there have been flooding issues in this area of open space adjacent to the existing school. These had to be investigated and held up the project.

The new flooding issues were found to be connected with a build up of silt which has now successfully been cleared and the flooding has subsided. The area continues to be monitored by the Council's flooding team. The design of the proposed flooding alleviation works is currently being reviewed to inform any potential amendments to the civils to prevent future silt build up and the programme to undertake works for the school playing field is now being finalised.

The Head Teacher is being kept updated as work progresses and officers continue to push for a satisfactory resolution to the drainage issues as quickly as possible."

Question

(5) a question by Councillor Gallacher to the Cabinet Member for Place in the following terms:-

"To ask the Cabinet Member for Place if he will work with the relevant department to ensure that disabled anglers have easy access to the River Irvine, and that the disabled fishing platforms installed by the Council a few years ago, are all up to standard safety wise etc."

Response

"Officers will contact the angling club to establish what assistance can be provided to support their access to, and on-going enjoyment of the facilities."

Question

(6) a question by Councillor Davidson to the Cabinet Member for Place in the following terms:

"All Members will be aware of the recent serious Road Traffic Incident on Wednesday 30th October on Dalry Road Kilwinning, right outside the Academy, where an eight year old girl was struck by a car on leaving Abbey School.

In light of this accident can I ask if a Road Traffic Assessment is to take place? If so, will it include the following:

- The recording, study and analysis of road use and speed of vehicles, in particular at times when the pavements and roads are busiest with pupils going to or coming from the Academy and Abbey Primary and also at lunch times.
- Observation of the amount of pupils using the pavements and determine whether the pavements are suitable, with particular attention to the narrow stretches of pavements.
- Look at the existing Twenty's plenty zone outside Kilwinning Academy, and look at the potential for increasing this zone and other traffic calming solutions.
- The feasibility of pedestrian safety fencing, such as that used at Garnock Academy, being fitted also along our pavements on Dalry Road to stop pupils drifting on to road, and to encourage them to use safe spaces to cross.
- A look at the speed limit coming into the town, from Dalry direction, and assess if vehicles are slowing down on entering Kilwinning at start of built up area prior to school.
- An assessment of the impact that the Dalry Bypass has had on any increase in volume of traffic arriving in Kilwinning, and evaluate if this could be improved by an extension of the Dalry Bypass from the roundabout north of Wilson's to Sharpill Roundabout on the A78.
- Assess whether the redeployment of a Lollipop person to this busy stretch of road will have a beneficial impact to the safety of our young people who depend on crossing these roads safely."

Response

"The recent road traffic accident on Kilwinning Road, Dalry is a very distressing incident. I know that the thoughts of everyone in this chamber have been with the young girl involved and her family. I understand that she is in a stable condition.

The incident is the subject of a Police Scotland investigation and details of the incident and the factors contributing to it are still to be made available.

The A737 Dalry Road is a trunk road and therefore the responsibility of Transport Scotland and their management Agent Scotland Transerv.

Contd/

We will await the findings of the investigation and then work with Police Scotland and Transport Scotland to review any measures which can be undertaken to improve road safety at this location.”

Question

(7) a question by Councillor Dickson to the Leader of the Council in the following terms:

"Could the Leader advise why the CIF (Community Investment Fund) application, prepared by the 3 community councils of Beith, Dalry and Kilbirnie, submitted to the Cabinet from the Garnock Valley Locality Partnership, was not taken to Cabinet for decision?"

Response

“The CIF (Community Investment Fund) application, which was prepared by the three community councils of Beith, Dalry and Kilbirnie, was considered by Cabinet on 29th October 2019. The application was put forward by the Garnock Valley Locality Partnership and Cabinet agreed to:

Defer the CIF applications in relation to:

- (i) Garnock Valley Participatory Budgeting – Community Councils and
- (ii) Participatory Budgeting, The Three Towns Locality Partnership

pending the introduction of proposals to Cabinet for small-grant awarding Participatory Budgeting.

These proposals will be considered by the Cabinet early in the new year.”

Question

(8) a question by Councillor McNicol to the Leader of the Council in the following terms:

“Will the Leader of the Council inform members if an Environmental/Traffic Impact Assessment has or will be carried out at the North Shore site re the following:

- (a) Flooding and Sea Water inundation.
- (b) The likely result of a material increase in the volume of traffic.
- (c) What is the estimated cost and time scale for the remediation of the site?
- (d) What is the estimated cost and time scale for the installation of sea defences?
- (e) Will any materials be imported or exported from the site during the remediation phase?
- (f) What was and/or will be the involvement of SEPA prior to, during and after remediation?

For all the above from where will the costs be met?

Contd/

What access has the Council had to records held by the previous occupants of the site in relation to procedures carried out on the land over a period spanning decades, and any health issues reported by staff during and after their service with the company?"

Response

"An Environmental Impact Assessment has not been carried out at this stage, as the proposals remain subject to the statutory consultation process.

The need for an EIA will be determined with reference to the Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 2017. Any proposed development would need to go through the screening process as the site exceeds 0.5 hectares and is classed as an 'urban development project' in terms of Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations dating from 2017.

In determining whether an EIA is required, relevant factors will include the scale of the site, the proposals for the site and the potential impacts on the marine environment emerging from the proposed marina and works to the sea wall. If an EIA is required, its scope will be determined by the planning authority. If required, an EIA would accompany a planning application for the site.

a) Flooding and Sea Water inundation.

Flood risk assessments have previously been undertaken, most recently in 2012. This will require to be revised to inform the required ground level for the site and the nature of improvements required to the sea wall/revetment.

b) The likely result of a material increase in the volume of traffic.

A transport assessment will be undertaken to consider movement to and from the site and the requirement for any improvements to the sites access by car, or by pedestrians/cyclists. It should be noted that the site has previously benefited from planning consent for over 400 residential units with associated traffic volumes considered acceptable.

c) What is the estimated cost and time scale for the remediation of the site?

Around a quarter of the site has already been remediated. The remediation of the remainder of the site would be carried out in advance of site construction works. While a cost is not available at this stage given the need to masterplan the site and develop an associated remediation strategy, previous estimates associated with proposals for residential use had a projected cost of circa £2.5M.

d) What is the estimated cost and time scale for the installation of sea defences?

A flood risk assessment was carried out in 2012. This found a requirement to improve the sea wall/revetment. While again a cost is not available at this stage given the need to masterplan the site and revisit flood assessment work, previous estimates associated with the proposals for residential use had a cost of circa £2.25M.

Contd/

e) Will any materials be imported or exported from the site during the remediation phase?

This will depend on the detailed remediation strategy to be developed for the site, however some movement of material is likely.

f) What was and/or will be the involvement of SEPA prior to, during and after remediation?

A detailed remediation strategy for the site requires to be developed by an accredited Geo-Environmental consultant. This will require to be agreed by SEPA before works are implemented.

SEPA's role is Consultee to Environmental Health and as the Regulator we must take cognisance of their advice. Works will be agreed with SEPA prior to commencing, they will be kept informed of progress and further advice will be requested from them if required. Verification that mitigation measures have been successful will also be agreed with them (for the water environment).

For all the above from where will the costs be met?

There are a variety of funding sources which are available to fund the costs including the Ayrshire Growth deal for the International Marine Sciences Environmental Centre (IMSE) and the Marina Proposals; Scottish Government, Vacant and Derelict Land Fund and NAC Capital budget for the School Campus.

The contribution to estimated remediation costs are being included in the business cases for each project as they develop.

What access has the Council had to records held by the previous occupants of the site in relation to procedures carried out on the land over a period spanning decades, and any health issues reported by staff during and after their service with the company?

The Council has had no access to records held by the previous occupants of the site in relation to procedures carried out on the land as far as Environmental Health are aware or at this time. During the site's previous use, any regulation would have been the responsibility of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Pollution (HMIP) and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). Environmental Health are not aware of any health issues reported by staff during and after their service with the company at this time. Personal health issues would be dealt with by local GPs and the appropriate Health Board."