

Cabinet
7 June 2022

IRVINE, 7 June 2022 - At a Meeting of the Cabinet of North Ayrshire Council at 2.30 p.m.

Present

Marie Burns, Scott Davidson, Tony Gurney, Alan Hill, Margaret Johnson, Christina Larsen and Shaun Macaulay; and Elizabeth Turbet (Church Representative) and Jackie MacKenzie (Teaching Representative) (Agenda Items 2-3).

In Attendance

C. Hatton, Chief Executive, M. Boyd, Head of Service (Finance), F. Walker, Head of Service (People & ICT), D. Forbes, Senior Manager (Finance Management) and L. Miller, Senior Manager (Audit, Fraud, Safety and Insurance) (Chief Executive's Service); R. McCutcheon, Executive Director, C. McAuley, Head of Service (Economic Development and Regeneration), L. Kirk, Senior Manager (Regeneration) and L. Neill, Senior Manager (Employability) (Place); A. Sutton, Executive Director, R. Arthur, Head of Service (Connected Communities), A. McClelland, Head of Service (Education), K. Herron, Senior Manager (Education) and L. Forsyth, Senior Manager (Information and Culture); C. Cameron, Director (Health and Social Care Partnership); J. Hutcheson, Senior Communications Officer and C. Stewart, Committee Services Officer (Democratic Services).

Apologies

Andrew Bruce, Church Representative.

Chair

Marie Burns in the Chair.

1. Chair's Remarks

Councillor Burns, Chair, welcomed those present to the first meeting of the Cabinet under the new Administration and advised that due to a technical issue this meeting of Cabinet was unable to be webcast. The Chair also reminded Members that all decisions were subject to the Call In Procedure detailed at Standing Order 26.

2. 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.

3. School Attainment Results 2021

Submitted a report by the Executive Director (Communities and Education) on (a) the overall performance of the 2021 North Ayrshire Council school leavers as highlighted in the INSIGHT benchmarking tool; and (b) Curriculum for Excellence attainment levels in literacy and numeracy for 2021. Improving attainment in Literacy and Numeracy was shown in the charts in Appendix 1 to the report; Improving Attainment for All was shown in the charts in Appendix 2; Attainment vs. Deprivation

was shown in the charts in Appendix 3; Increasing Post-School Participation was shown in the charts in Appendix 4 and Attainment in Broad General Education – Attainment of Curriculum for Excellence Level (ACEL) in P1, P4 and P7 was shown in Appendices 5 and 6 to the report.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) and the measurable outcomes in this respect.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note (i) the content of the report, including the progress being made by learners, specifically in literacy and numeracy, (ii) the achievements of school leavers in SQA examinations in 2021; and (b) approve the measures being taken to make further improvements to attainment and achievement levels across all schools.

4. Educational Achievement of Care Experienced Learners in North Ayrshire in 2021

Submitted a report by the Executive Director (Communities and Education) on (a) Curriculum for Excellence Broad General Education (BGE) attainment levels of care experienced learners in 2021; (b) Senior Phase attainment of care experienced school leavers in 2021; and (c) Postschool participation of care experienced learners. The total number of care experienced young people in North Ayrshire at the annual census date in September each year was shown in the charts in Appendix 1 to the report; Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy in Broad General Education for care experienced leavers was shown in the charts in Appendix 2; Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy and overall attainment in all qualifications at Senior Phase level for care experienced school leavers was shown in the charts in Appendices 3-5 and Post-school participation of care experienced school leavers was shown in the charts in Appendix 6 to the report.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to the types of positive outcomes for care experienced learners.

The Cabinet agreed to note (i) the content of the report, including the progress being made by learners, specifically in literacy and numeracy and (ii) the achievements of school leavers in SQA examinations in 2021.

5. Community Asset Transfer

Submitted a report by the Executive Director (Communities and Education) seeking approval for the transfer of ownership of Thornhouse Avenue Tennis Courts, Irvine to Irvine Tennis Club. A location plan was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to the development plans and number of full-time members of the Tennis Club.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) the asset transfer of Thornhouse Avenue Tennis Courts, Irvine from North Ayrshire Council to Scottish Incorporated Charitable Organisation (SCIO), "Irvine Tennis Club"; (b) approve the recommended terms of transfer on this occasion at 1% of the property valuation of £113,000 (totalling £1130); and (c)

authorise officers to conclude the associated legal and community asset transfer processes for Thornhouse Avenue Tennis Courts.

6. Child Poverty Report 2021/22 & Action Plan 2022/23

Submitted a report by the Executive Director (Communities and Education) seeking approval for (a) The North Ayrshire Child Poverty Report 2021-22 and Action Plan 2022-23; (b) the submission of the report to the Scottish Government and the publication on the North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership website; (c) the proposal to develop a strategy to tackle child poverty, covering the period 2023-26; (d) the introduction of a “Tackling Child Poverty” Board to agree, monitor and deliver our local strategy in relation to the wide-ranging proposals within the Scottish Government’s Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan, to be chaired by the Council Leader; and (e) Permission to propose North Ayrshire as a “Pathfinder” local authority in tackling child poverty, as described in the Scottish Government delivery plan (Best Start, Bright Futures: tackling child poverty delivery plan 2022 to 2026). The draft North Ayrshire Local Child Poverty Action Plan and Report 2022-23 was attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

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

- income maximisation to focus on the maximum take up of all supports available in North Ayrshire;
- ‘pathfinder’ areas designed to tackle child poverty and which would commence work on a phased approach to develop a whole system, person-centred support; and
- the range of payments and supports already in place which were being taken forward by Local Government.

The Cabinet agreed (a) to approve the North Ayrshire Child Poverty Report 2021-22 and Action Plan 2022-23; (b) that the report could be submitted to the Scottish Government and published on the North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership website; (c) to approve the proposal to develop a strategy to tackle child poverty, covering the period 2023-26; (d) to approve the introduction of a “Tackling Child Poverty” Board to agree, monitor and deliver our local strategy in relation to the wide-ranging proposals within the Scottish Government’s Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan, to be chaired by the Council Leader; and (e) to grant permission to propose North Ayrshire as a “Pathfinder” local authority in tackling child poverty, as described in the Scottish Government delivery plan (Best Start, Bright Futures: tackling child poverty delivery plan 2022 to 2026).

7. Appointment of Champions

Submitted a report by the Head of Service (Democratic Services) on the appointment of five Champions to represent Young People, Mental Health, Older People, Veterans and Carers.

Having heard the Chief Executive advise of a change in nomination to the Veterans Champion contained in the report, the Cabinet agreed to make the following appointments:

Young People's Champion - Councillor Chloe Robertson
Mental Health Champion - Provost Anthea Dickson
Older People's Champion - Councillor Donald L. Reid
Veterans Champion – Councillor Jim Montgomerie
Carers Champion - Councillor Nairn McDonald

Please note – the following item was heard by the Audit & Scrutiny Committee on 30 June 2022, please refer to the minute of that Committee for the decision.

8. Revenue Budget 2021/22: Financial Performance to 31 March 2022

Submitted a report by the Head of Service (Finance) on the financial performance for the Council at 31 March 2022. Detailed explanations of the significant variances in service expenditure compared to the approved budgets, together with information on funding to be carried forward to support expenditure during 2022/23 were provided in Appendices 1-5 of the report. A full list of the proposed carry forward of earmarked funds was included at Appendix 5. Information in respect of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) was set out in Appendices 6 and 6a to the report.

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

- the position in relation to unearmarked reserves; and
- energy efficiency measures including heating support funding, scheduled to be in place prior to the start of the Autumn/Winter heating season.

The Cabinet agreed (a) to note (i) the information and financial performance outlined in the report and its associated appendices, (ii) the transfer of the net in-year underspend of £3.073m to supplement the Investment Fund, (iii) the financial performance of the Health and Social Care Partnership at paragraph 2.7 of the report and (iv) the IJB cumulative deficit position of £2.320m at 31 March 2022; and (b) to approve the additional earmarking of £11.833m identified at section 2.5 of the report to meet future year commitments.

9. Capital Programme Performance to 31 March 2022

Submitted a report by the Head of Service (Finance) on progress in delivering the Capital Investment Programme for 2021/22.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information on issues affecting Capital Programme projects, including inflationary pressures in relation to increases in materials and construction costs.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note (i) the revisions to budgets outlined in the report, and (ii) the General Services and HRA expenditure to 31 March 2022.

10. Strategic Risk Register 2022/23

Submitted a report by the Head of Service (Finance) seeking approval of the Strategic Risk Register for 2022/23. The Strategic Risk Register was set out at Appendix 1 to the report.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the Council's Strategic Risk Register for 2022/23 as set out at Appendix 1 to the report.

Please note – the following item was heard by the Audit & Scrutiny Committee on 30 June 2022, please refer to the minute of that Committee for the decision.

11. Regeneration Delivery Plan Funding Proposals 2022/23

Submitted a report by the Executive Director (Place) seeking approval for the 2022/23 Regeneration Delivery Plan funding proposals.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to timescales for submitting applications to the Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF).

The Cabinet agreed (a) to approve the Regeneration Delivery Plan funding proposals for 2022/23 provided at Appendix 1 to the report; (b) that delegated authority be granted to the Executive Director (Place) to agree changes to the funding allocations in consultation with the Portfolio Lead, as required; and (c) to note the update on the previously agreed Levelling Up Fund (LUF) bid for the 'Gateway to the West Coast and Clyde Islands strategic regeneration package' and that this LUF bid would now be solely based on the development of Lochshore.

12. North Ayrshire's Local Employability Partnership - No One Left Behind Delivery Plan

Submitted a report by the Executive Director (Place) on North Ayrshire's Local Employability Partnership and seeking approval of the proposed North Ayrshire 'No One Left Behind' Delivery Plan.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to employability and fair and sustainable work.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note the update on the work of North Ayrshire's Local Employability Partnership; (b) approve (i) the North Ayrshire 'No One Left Behind' Delivery Plan attached at Appendix 3 to the report, and investment priorities detailed therein and (ii) the submission of the North Ayrshire Delivery Plan to the Scottish Government as requested to support the 'No One Left Behind' Offer of Grant.

13. UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Submitted a report by the Executive Director (Place) on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) and seeking agreement on the Council's approach to developing an investment plan to secure funding from the three-year programme.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note the proposed local approach to the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF); (b) support the production of a North Ayrshire SPF Investment Plan that reflected future aspirations for a regional investment plan; (c) the Ayrshire Regional Economic Joint Committee as the 'SPF partnership group'; (d) note the timelines indicated and supports the request to UK Government (UKG) for an extension period until the 31 August 2022; and (e) receive a further report to the next meeting of the Cabinet presenting and seeking approval of North Ayrshire Council's proposed SPF Investment Plan submission to UKG.

Please note – the following item was heard by the Audit & Scrutiny Committee on 30 June 2022, please refer to the minute of that Committee for the decision.

14. North Ayrshire Economic COVID Recovery Fund

Submitted a joint report by the Executive Director (Place) and the Executive Director (Communities & Education) on the Economic COVID Recovery Fund and seeking agreement for the proposed North Ayrshire Economic COVID Recovery Fund Investment Plan.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to grant funding including the range and supports available.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note the Scottish Government's recently announced Economic Covid Recovery Fund, which would see an allocation of £2.154m for North Ayrshire; and (b) approve the proposed North Ayrshire Economic COVID Recovery Fund Investment Plan.

The meeting ended at 4.35 p.m.