

## North Ayrshire Council

A Special Meeting of North Ayrshire Council will be held remotely on **Wednesday, 16 March 2022** at **14:00** to consider the undernoted business.

### **1 Arrangements in Terms of COVID-19**

In light of the current COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting will be held remotely in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003. Where possible, the meeting will be live-streamed and available to view at <https://north-ayrshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>. In the event that live-streaming is not possible, a recording of the meeting will instead be available to view at this location.

### **2 Apologies**

### **3 Declarations of Interest**

Members are requested to give notice of any declarations of interest in respect of items of business on the Agenda.

### **4 Previous Minutes**

The accuracy of the Minutes of (a) the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 16 February 2022 and (b) the Special Meeting held on 2 March 2022, will be confirmed and the Minutes signed in accordance with Paragraph 7(1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (copy enclosed).

### **5 Leader's Report**

Submit report by the Leader of the Council for the period covering 7 February - 6 March 2022 (copy enclosed).

**6 North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Board:  
Minutes of Meeting held on 3 March 2022**

Submit report by the Executive Director (Communities and Education) on the Minutes of a meeting of the North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership Board held on 3 March 2022 (copy enclosed).

**7 Membership of the Licensing Committee and Board**

The Council is invited:

1. to note (i) the resignation of Councillors Ferguson and Gallacher from the Licensing Committee and Board and (ii) that, in terms of the Scheme of Administration, the Licensing Committee vacancies arising should be filled by the Administration and main Opposition; and
2. to consider (i) a nomination, proposed by Councillor Bell, seconded by Councillor Cullinane, for Councillor Donald Reid to be appointed to the Licensing Committee and Board and (ii) a nomination, proposed by Councillor Burns, seconded by Councillor Macaulay, for Councillor Hill to be appointed to the Licensing Committee and Board.

**8 Membership on the Planning Committee and Local Review Body**

The Council is invited:

1. to note that, in terms of the Scheme of Administration, there is currently one Planning Committee and Local Review Body vacancy for an 'Other' Member (namely a Conservative and Unionist/Independent Member); and
2. to consider a nomination proposed by Councillor Cullinane, seconded by Councillor Donald Reid, for Councillor Bell to be appointed to fill an outstanding vacancy of the Planning Committee and Local Review Body.

**9 Best Value Assurance Audit Recommendations Update**

Submit report by the Chief Executive on progress against Best Value Assurance Audit Recommendations (copy enclosed).

**10 Questions**

In terms of Standing Order 12, submit:-

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

“At recent Council meetings, it has become apparent that some Elected Members do not understand the basics of capital finance, particularly in relation to the financing of new schools. If Elected Members are making misleading comments about these funding models, how can we expect the public to understand such complex matters? Can the Leader of the Council, therefore, provide clarity on the following?

1. The Scottish Government’s financial contribution to North Ayrshire’s PPP contract?
2. Outline all the capital and revenue costs related to the construction of Largs Campus under the Design, Build, Finance and Maintain (DBFM) model, procured using the SNP Government’s NPD/PFI model?
3. Outline all the capital and revenue costs related to the construction of Garnock campus, financed through the Council’s Capital Investment Programme?”

**(2) a question by Councillor Foster to the Leader of the Council in the following terms:**

“Can the Leader of the Council confirm the total number of cases logged on the Council’s Lagan system this term by members of A) The Labour Group B) The SNP Group C) The Conservative and Unionist Group?”

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

“Will the Leader commit to support a judge led public enquiry into the North Ayrshire Schools PPP Project, which is currently costing taxpayers over £1 million a month, and will cost the public purse over £400 million in total for four schools with a capital value of just £83 million: or does the Leader consider that North Ayrshire taxpayers just have to keep paying for the contract?”

**(4) a question by Councillor Gallacher to the Cabinet Member for Green New Deal and Sustainability in the following terms:**

"In approximately what year will the Council's renewables projects be bringing in the first of the tens of millions of pounds of income for North Ayrshire Council, once all construction and set-up costs have been recovered?"

**(5) a question by Councillor Miller to the Leader of the Council in the following terms:**

"Can the Leader of the Council confirm that North Ayrshire Council has no contractual or other dealings with Russia?"

**(6) a question by Councillor Murdoch to the Cabinet Member for Green New Deal and Sustainability in the following terms:**

"Last year I proposed an additional £1 Million be added to the budget to improve the roads infrastructure. The motion was seconded by Councillor Donald L Reid. We were informed that it would take 35 times that amount to bring the roads network up to standard at that time.  
Can the Cabinet Member please provide the current figure that would be necessary to bring the North Ayrshire Roads Infrastructure totally up to date?"

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

"Is the Leader of the Council concerned about the poor Ferry provision for Cumbrae Residents, Businesses and Tourists?"

## **11 Urgent Items**

Any other items which the Provost considers to be urgent.

## **Webcasting - Virtual Meeting**

Please note: this meeting may be recorded/live-streamed to the Council's internet site, where it will be capable of repeated viewing. At the start of the meeting, the Provost/Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being recorded/live-streamed.

You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act 2018. Data collected during the webcast will be retained in accordance with the Council's published policy, including, but not limited to, for the purpose of keeping historical records and making those records available via the Council's internet site.

If you are participating in this meeting by invitation, you are consenting to being filmed and consenting to the use and storage of those images and sound recordings and any information pertaining to you contained in the them live-streaming/recording or training purposes and for the purpose of keeping historical records and making those records available to the public. If you do not wish to participate in a recording, you should leave the 'virtual meeting'. This will constitute your revocation of consent.

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact [dataprotectionofficer@north-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:dataprotectionofficer@north-ayrshire.gov.uk).

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## North Ayrshire Council Sederunt

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Ian Clarkson (Provost)  
Robert Barr (Depute Provost)  
John Bell  
Timothy Billings  
Marie Burns  
Joe Cullinane  
Scott Davidson  
Anthea Dickson  
John Easdale  
Todd Ferguson  
Robert Foster  
Scott Gallacher  
Alex Gallagher  
Margaret George  
John Glover  
Tony Gurney  
Alan Hill  
Christina Larsen  
Shaun Macaulay  
Jean McClung  
Ellen McMaster  
Ronnie McNicol  
Louise McPhater  
Davina McTiernan  
Tom Marshall  
Jimmy Miller  
Jim Montgomerie  
Ian Murdoch  
Donald Reid  
Donald L Reid  
Ronnie Stalker  
Angela Stephen  
John Sweeney

Chair:

Apologies:

Attending:

North Ayrshire Council  
16 February 2022

At a Meeting of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m. involving participation by remote electronic means.

**Present**

Robert Barr, John Bell, Timothy Billings, Marie Burns, Joe Cullinane, Scott Davidson, Anthea Dickson, John Easdale, Todd Ferguson, Robert Foster, Scott Gallacher, Alex Gallagher, Margaret George, John Glover, Tony Gurney, Alan Hill, Christina Larsen, Tom Marshall, Shaun Macaulay, Tom Marshall, Jean McClung, Ellen McMaster, Ronnie McNicol, Louise McPhater, Davina McTiernan, Jimmy Miller, Jim Montgomerie, Ian Murdoch, Donald Reid, Donald L. Reid and John Sweeney.

**In Attendance**

C. Hatton, Chief Executive; C. Cameron, Director (Health and Social Care Partnership); R. McCutcheon, Executive Director and F. Ellis, Team Manager (Property Management and Investment) (Place); C. Amos, Interim Executive Director (Communities and Education); M. Boyd, Head of Service (Finance), F. Walker, Head of Service (People and ICT); A. Craig, Head of Service, N. Shearer, Team Manager (Legal Services), M. McColm, Senior Manager (Communications), H. Clancy, A. Little and C. Stewart, Committee Services Officers and M. Anderson, Senior Manager (Committee and Member Services) (Democratic Services) (Chief Executive's Service).

**Chair**

Robert Barr, Depute Provost, in the Chair.

**Apologies**

Ian Clarkson and Angela Stephen.

**1. Depute Provost's Remarks**

In the absence of the Provost, the Depute Provost welcomed Members and officers to the meeting, which was proceeding on a wholly remote basis by electronic means, and dealt with preliminary matters.

**2. Apologies**

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

### **3. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest in terms of Standing Order 10 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 held on 8 December 2021 was confirmed and the Minutes signed in accordance with Paragraph 7(1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

### **5. Leader's Report**

Submitted report by the Leader of the Council for the period from 29 November 2021 – 6 February 2022.

Noted.

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

Submitted for noting and for approval of any recommendations contained therein, the Minutes of meetings of committees of the Council held in the period 4 June 2021 – 8 February 2022.

Noted.

### **7. North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Board: Minutes of Meeting held in December 2021**

Submitted report by the Interim Executive Director (Communities and Education) on the Minutes of a meeting of the North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership Board held in December 2021.

The Chief Executive highlighted the following elements of the report:

- an Ayrshire Growth Deal update;
- the role of Scottish Fire and Rescue Service with regard to new fire alarm requirements;
- the work of Community Justice Ayrshire and further partnership working opportunities;
- development of the new Local Outcomes Improvement Plan; and
- further opportunities for partnership working, including youth volunteering

Noted.



## **8. Council/Committee Meetings**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the format and arrangements for Council and committee meetings during the remainder of the current Administration, including the proposed resumption of the hybrid meetings pilot.

At its last meeting on 8 December 2021, the Council agreed to pause the hybrid meetings pilot in light of concern around the Omicron variant of COVID-19. The report recommended resumption of this pilot, together with proposed changes to the committee timetable during the pre-election period.

Members asked questions, and received clarification, on the following:

- outstanding business in respect of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee; and
- the mechanism for calling further Special Meetings

Councillor Cullinane, seconded by Councillor Bell, moved approval of the recommendations set out in the report. There being no amendment, the motion was declared carried.

Accordingly, the Council agreed as follows:

- (a) to reschedule a number of meetings in the pre-election period prior to the Local Government Elections on 5 May 2022) as illustrated in Appendix 1 to the report, such that:
  - (i) the scheduled meeting of the Cabinet on 22 March 2022 would be cancelled in favour of a Special Meeting on 8 March 2022;
  - (ii) the scheduled full Council meeting on 30 March 2022 would be cancelled in favour of a Special Meeting on 16 March 2022; and
  - (iii) for the purpose of considering Minutes of Meeting only, a Special Meeting would take place at 1.00p.m. on 30 March 2022;
- (b) to resume the hybrid committee meetings pilot, subject to:
  - (i) consultation with the Health and Social Care Partnership with regard to the IJB arrangements;
  - (ii) applicants/licence-holders attending the Licensing Committee doing so on a remote basis only;
  - (iii) the number of physical attendees not exceeding the current maximum capacity of the Council Chambers;
  - (iv) any hybrid meetings during the pilot proceeding as “remote meetings (with physical participation)”, meaning that any failure of the hybrid equipment would result in the meeting reverting to a remote platform;
  - (v) the implementation of all necessary COVID-19 mitigation measures in respect of the Council Chambers;

- (vi) the pilot being suspended in the event of a reintroduction of COVID-19 restrictions; and
  - (vii) the extent of the pilot being dependent on the availability of sufficient staff resources.
- (c) that, in principle, meetings of the Council and its committees revert to a physical format, with the provision of hybrid facilities for those who may wish to access remotely, in the new Administration, subject to (i) the relevant change to Scottish Government guidance permitting it and (ii) the carrying out of appropriate risk assessment.

## **9. Outside Body Appointment**

The Council was invited to note that David Hammond replaced Yvonne Baulk as the officer appointee to the Board of Largs DBFM.

Noted.

## **10. Medium-Term Financial Outlook 2022/23 to 2024/25**

Submitted report by the Head of Finance on the financial challenges facing the Council over the medium term, in order to help inform the development of budget proposals.

Members asked questions, and received clarification, on the following:

- whether any renegotiation of the contract in respect of four PPP-funded schools had taken place recently or was planned;
- the extent to which construction inflationary pressures could be attributed to the effects of Brexit;
- whether construction inflation was being experienced globally;
- the feasibility of seeking to renegotiate PPP contracts and whether officers could be requested to do so;
- whether there had been any successful renegotiations with private companies in respect of PPP contracts elsewhere;
- the cost to the public purse of PPP contracts, compared with the NPD contract in respect of Largs Campus and the model employed for Garnock and Lockhart Campuses;
- the recent NHS Ayrshire and Arran negotiation to buy out the end of their PFI contract for a community hospital and Scottish Government support for this; and
- payments to the PPP contractor in respect of non-domestic rates and utilities.

On a point of order, Councillor Burns sought, and received, confirmation that any questions of clarification should be directed towards officers rather than to another Elected Member.

The Head of Finance undertook to circulate information to Elected Members on (i) the comparative costs to the public purse of the different funding models for capital school estate projects and (ii) payments to the PPP contractor in respect of non-domestic rates and utilities.

Councillor Cullinane, seconded by Councillor Bell, moved approval of the recommendations set out in the report. There being no amendment, the motion was declared carried.

Accordingly, the Council agreed as follows:

- (a) to note (i) the financial challenges identified in the Medium-Term Financial Outlook 2022/23 to 2024/25 and (ii) the scale of the financial challenges which the Council faces over the medium term; and
- (b) that proposals be brought forward to set a balanced budget for 2022/23.

#### **11. Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Investment Programme, Revenue Budget and Rent Levels for 2022/23**

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Place) on the proposed HRA capital investment programme and revenue budget for 2022/23 and the consequential rent levels.

Members asked a question, and received clarification, on whether there had been an increase in rent arrears during the pandemic.

Councillor Cullinane, seconded by Councillor Bell, moved approval of the recommendations set out in the report. There being no amendment, the motion was declared carried.

Accordingly, the Council agreed as follows:

- (a) to approve the HRA capital investment programme for 2022/23, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (b) to approve the HRA revenue budget for 2022/23, as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report;
- (c) to approve a rent increase of 2.50% in 2022/23 for council houses, garage sites, lock-ups and sheltered housing service charges; and
- (d) to note the indicative rent increases of 4.00% for 2023/24 and 2024/25.

## 12. Questions

In terms of Standing Order 12, submitted:

- (1) a question by Councillor McMaster to the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care in the following terms:

“The Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care will be aware of the cancellation of the contract at Cooriedoon Care Home. Can he provide me with assurances that the residential nursing care needs of the people of Arran will be met in future?”

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

“The Health and Social Care Partnership, on behalf of North Ayrshire Council took the difficult decision to terminate the contract with Cooriedoon Care Home due to concerns for some time in relation to the quality of care and support provided and that, despite significant support over a period of time, there had been no sustained improvement.

The priority for the Partnership is to provide and support high quality care services for the citizens of North Ayrshire regardless of where this is delivered. Residential care homes support some of the most vulnerable people cared for and we have a responsibility for their safety, wellbeing and welfare.

The transition of residents from Cooriedoon Care home to an alternative place of care is being informed and determined by the preference of individual residents and their families and, as expected, the majority of residents wish to remain on Arran. Montrose House, the North Ayrshire Council care home on the island, is a purpose-built, modern facility which up until now has been under-utilised. The HSCP have secured the appropriate registration from the Care Inspectorate to increase capacity in Montrose House to 30 beds and to provide residential and nursing care supports. As a result, no resident will require to leave Arran for alternative care and support following the decision to terminate the contract with Cooriedoon Care Home.

Capacity for nursing and residential care on Arran has been assessed for the immediate and longer term and resources are being put in place to ensure a resilient model of residential care for the island community. The Integration Joint Board has recently invested additional resources in community-based supports on Arran that will ensure people in the community can remain supported in their own homes for longer, including investment in overnight care supports.

Prior to the pandemic, a significant amount of work was undertaken to develop the case for change and the future vision for health and care services on Arran. This is outlined in the Arran Integrated Model, which now forms part of the Caring for Ayrshire programme of work across Ayrshire and Arran. The North Ayrshire HSCP will refresh the Arran model to update in light of recent investment in community-based services and the recent changes in relation to the provision of residential care services and there will be engagement with the local community on the future model as this is refreshed. The updated case will be brought to the North Ayrshire Integration Joint Board at a future date for approval, to ensure we can collectively ensure the delivery of high quality, safe and resilient care services for the Island.”

(2) a question by Councillor Donald L. Reid to the Leader of the Council in the following terms:

“Under the 1% Framework Agreement, councils in Scotland have committed to allocate at least 1% of council budgets, made up of revenue and capital expenditure, using Participatory Budgeting (PB). Whilst it is for local authorities to decide how to take forward PB at a local level can the Leader advise on the position in North Ayrshire with specific comment on where NAC are in their aspiration to achieve the 1% objective?”

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

“This information is already in the public domain via a report to Cabinet on 25 January 2022. The Council Plan Mid-Year Report 2021/22 advises that 2.63% of our budget is being allocated through Participatory Budgeting.

Participatory budgeting is a democratic way for people to have a direct say on how public money is spent. Mainstream PB can play a central role in collectively defining services, post pandemic, which meet the needs of communities.

The Scottish Government set a target of 1% for the use of participatory budgeting methods in public funds by 2020. North Ayrshire was the only local authority in Scotland to achieve this. The percentage of Council budget directed via participatory methods during 2020/21 was 1.13% which equates to £4,044,679.”

(3) a question by Councillor Donald L. Reid to the Leader of the Council in the following terms:

“It has been widely circulated in the national press that some £5 billion in taxpayers’ money has been paid in Covid business support grant to fraudsters. Press report also refer to claims that the Treasury rebuffed offers of investigation by the National Crime Agency because of embarrassment over these eye-watering losses.

Can the Leader (or other relevant Cabinet postholder) advise on the situation in NAC with regard to potential fraud within the Covid business support handouts and comment on any likely investigations into fraudulent claims, highlighting the total spend by NAC during the past 18 months (or other period as figures are available) on such business grant funding and provide any other relevant information on this matter?"

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

"North Ayrshire Council has delivered £53.5m of financial support to North Ayrshire businesses over the last 18 months via just under 11,000 grant payments. This support covers a number of funds including the:

- Strategic Framework Business Fund
- Support for Businesses Grant
- Newly Self-Employed Hardship Fund
- Bed and Breakfast Hardship Fund
- December and January Hospitality Fund
- January Hospitality Top-Up Fund
- Brewers Support Fund
- Nightclub Closure Fund
- Furlough Top-Up Grant
- Local Authority Discretionary/Transition Fund
- Support for Taxi Operators

Significant fraud prevention controls were put in place, and the current number of fraudulent grant payments made via North Ayrshire Council is 9 (representing less than 0.1% of all grants processed) from 4 individuals/businesses. These four individuals/businesses made multiple fraudulent claims across a number of local authority areas, and NAC Finance are pursuing the individuals/businesses for repayment of these funds. The sum of these fraudulent claims is £51,000, representing approx. 0.09% of all such funds administered by North Ayrshire Council.

The £5 billion figure recently mentioned in the press relates to suspected fraudulent loans obtained from banks via the UK Bounceback Loan Scheme. This scheme provided banks with a UK Treasury loan guarantee for any loans subsequently defaulted on by the applicants. It is estimated that circa £47 billion of loan funding has been provided to businesses and individuals via this mechanism."

(4) a question by Councillor Stalker to the Cabinet Member for Green New Deal and Sustainability in the following terms:

"The flood prevention works at Dalry commenced on 1 April 2021 and was due to be completed by the 31 August 2021. The due date was then put back to the end of December 2021, and now it has been delayed yet again with a completion date of the 5 March 2022.

Given the distress and disruption to the residents of Dalry, can I ask the Cabinet Member to provide an update regarding the on-going flood prevention works in the Garnock Valley and can he reassure the residents of Dalry that there will be no further delays and that this work will be finished by the 5 March 2022?"

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

"The Upper Garnock Flood Protection Scheme is a significant engineering project being carried out over a number of locations. Construction works started during August 2020, with the Dalry works commencing in April 2021 as part of the overall Scheme. The total investment of £18.5m into these essential flood protection measures will see tremendous benefits for the local community.

The construction industry has been severely impacted by the global pandemic, resulting in significant delays to a large number of projects across the UK. Due to many businesses being forced to close for extended periods of 2020, self-isolation requirements and the subsequent supply chain disruption, there has been a massive backlog of work within the sector which had a detrimental knock-on effect outwith the Council's control on the Upper Garnock Valley Flood Protection Scheme.

There have also been a number of technical issues to overcome due to the complexity of the works and some unforeseen elements of such deep groundworks.

Whilst we appreciate the concerns of residents regarding the time taken, we are working tirelessly to complete the remainder of the work. Through our dedicated Community Liaison Officer, we have kept a constant dialogue with those residents most affected by the work in and around Mill Park. For such disruptive work we have had fantastic cooperation from the residents and we very much appreciate the way that local people have supported this project.

The majority of the complex and specialist elements are now completed. The final facings to the wall are now over two thirds complete to the Beith Road side and the installation of the new road drainage has begun. This will allow reinstatement of Beith Rd to begin and the Contractors are fully confident that the road will reopen in early March.

I'd like to thank residents and local people in general for their support and cooperation during the construction of this vital flood protection scheme."

As a supplementary question, Councillor Stalker asked how much the contract was over budget and whether there would be any contractual penalties to the contractor due to the delays.

Councillor Montgomerie responded by advising that he did not have this information available but undertook to have a written response circulated to Elected Members.

- (5) a question by Councillor Donald Reid to the Cabinet Member for Green New Deal and Sustainability in the following terms:

“Following a suggestion from the First Minister, does North Ayrshire have to cut the bottom off any doors in our schools across North Ayrshire to improve ventilation in our classrooms?”

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

“We are following national guidance in relation to monitoring CO<sub>2</sub> levels in education establishments. The results of this monitoring are continually collated and analysed, and then used to determine if any physical adaptations are required to improve ventilation in any of our teaching spaces.

I can confirm that, where any alterations are required, cutting the bottom off doors will not be one of the options considered as this could affect the fire rating performance of the door.”

- (6) a question by Councillor Donald Reid to the Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Green New Deal and Sustainability in the following terms:

“Does cutting the bottom off any doors in any school or workplace affect building regulations? Fire Safety around sealed doors on escape routes being an obvious obstacle amongst other issues of concern if we follow Scottish Government instruction in this regard.”

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

“As noted in the previous response, cutting the bottom off doors will not be one of the measures we use to improve ventilation if our monitoring results show that physical adaptations are required in a teaching space to improve air flow.

Following analysis of monitoring results, if officers determine that the most appropriate way to increase air flow is by adapting a door, we would achieve this by installing a proprietary air transfer grille.

Fire rated air transfer grilles are available and, if specified, we would ensure that these are designed and installed to comply with any relevant building standards legislation, including any fire performance required.”



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

“Has the Leader of the Council met with any Scottish Government Ministers since the last Council meeting?”

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

“The Chief Executive and I attended a meeting with Scottish Councils on the West Coast of Scotland with Angus Robertson MSP, the Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, External Affairs and Culture, to discuss the issue of depopulation across the West Coast of Scotland.

Tom Arthur MSP was due to attend our CWB commission meeting in January but unfortunately had to pull it late on.

Other than that, there have been no other ministerial meetings since before Christmas.”

As a supplementary question, Councillor Donald Reid expressed disappointment that there had been no progress of a ministerial nature in relation to Ardrossan Harbour, and asked whether the Leader could advise on the current position regarding the Harbour and the Glen Sannox ferry.

Councillor Cullinane responded by advising that the Council was now in a position to go out to public consultation on the landside works at Ardrossan Harbour, but that there was no update available on the marina-side works, nor had he received a briefing from Transport Scotland with regard to further delays to the Glen Sannox ferry project. The Leader advised that he was due to meet the new Minister in advance of a Ministerial Taskforce meeting and hoped to be in a better position to update Members thereafter.

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

“Stanley Primary School in Ardrossan opened in August 2007. Part of the disastrous PPP contract that continues to afflict this Council, the school design was criticised in advance of its build.

The criticisms, from parents, pupils, staff and local residents, included the fact that the school was simply too small. This criticism was blithely dismissed by the Labour Administration.

It did not take long for the foresight of everyone but those who built the school to be proven correct. As the school roll increased pupils at the school were soon shunted into huts to be taught. An arrangement that continues to this day. (And an arrangement that was yet another windfall for the private, off-shore organisations that hold the PPP contract).

Part of the issue was the lack of land in the new school estate as the Labour Administration followed up one disastrous decision by another, namely selling the land that was the site of the old school. A decision I opposed at the time but one that was forced through by the Labour administration in concert with their friends. The pupils were thus doubly disadvantaged. Not only are they being taught in huts their play space was severely restricted to accommodate the buildings.

In the years since, I have continually sought a resolution to this problem. A problem that was foreseen and one that the Administration ignored.

The building of the new Lockhart Campus, a project supported by money from the Scottish Government, offered a potential solution to the problem. The space created by the closure of the James McFarlane school could be utilised to create a new early years space, allowing the primary pupils to be re-integrated into their school, playgrounds to be returned, huts to be removed, and the extra payments to the PPP company ceased.

This solution, so clear to those in Ardrossan, has once again been dismissed out of hand.

It is not too late to address the issue. Will the Administration pledge to fully investigate the opportunity to provide adequate facilities for the children and bring fully costed proposals back to this Chamber for decision?"

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

"Stanley Primary School, since its rebuilding in 2007, has grown to be a key community asset in the area and one which is greatly valued.

The modular accommodation was originally provided to take account of an unusual spike in the birth rates in the Ardrossan area, which affected the school intake from 2014. The school roll peaked in 2018 with 468 pupils, but the roll has reduced each year by 10 to 15 pupils, meaning that we anticipate the school roll will reduce to 421 pupils by August 2022 and is predicted to fall further in the period until 2028, based on current information.

Since the last lease renewal for the modular accommodation in 2020, as noted above, the pupil roll has reduced and is projected to remain around current levels for the foreseeable future.

The current class structure at the school requires 16 teaching spaces and this would be the number required based on the roll projections noted above. The main school building at Stanley PS is capable of accommodating 16 classes, as well as the Early Years provision which continues to meet local demand for places.

The modular accommodation is leased on a renewable three yearly basis, with the next lease break being in 2023. The service will soon be exploring the potential for this accommodation to be discontinued. This will involve close working with the Head Teacher to ensure that the requirements of all parties are appropriately met.

Based on current information, this will allow all classes to be housed in the main school building and will release the area currently occupied by the modular accommodation to be used as playground space once again.

On this basis, there is no requirement for additional accommodation to be provided at Stanley Primary School.”

As a supplementary question, Councillor Gurney referred to some pupils having spent all of their early years and primary education being taught in “huts” and asked why the current and previous Labour Administrations were so determined to deny the children of Ardrossan a decent education in proper accommodation.

Councillor Bell responded by noting that the Member had served as Education portfolio holder for much of this time and had not appeared particularly exercised by the situation in Ardrossan. The Cabinet Member referred to Ardrossan Academy’s excellent HMle report and to planned investment in a new Ardrossan Academy and Primary School. Councillor Bell concluded his remarks by contrasting this with what he described as disastrous decisions by the Elected Member during his time as Education portfolio-holder.

In terms of Standing Order 5.7, the Depute Provost agreed that the meeting be adjourned at 3.30 p.m. for a short comfort break, reconvening at 3.40 p.m. with the same Members and officers present and in attendance, with the exception of Councillor Davidson, who joined the meeting during consideration of the following item of business.

(9) a question by Councillor Gallagher to the Leader of the Council in the following terms:

“Can the Leader tell us how much general capital and housing revenue account capital investment has been made in the North Coast Ward since the Labour Administration?”

Councillor Cullinane thanked the Member for his question and responded in the following terms, referencing the tables included in his written response:

“The general capital programme includes a total of £8.2million investment across a range of capital investment projects in the North Coast and Cumbraes covering the financial years from 2016 to 2022. A further £52.8m is included in the capital programme covering the years from 2022 to 2031 and includes major investments as part of the Ayrshire Growth Deal, Millport Coastal Flood prevention and Largs Promenade Sea Wall.

In respect of the HRA capital programme investment from 2016 to 2022 totals £24.9m and includes the major Flatt Road housing development in Largs.

A year-by-year breakdown has been included:

**General Fund Capital Expenditure – 2016-March 2022**

Ward	Actuals 2016-17	Actuals 2017-18	Actuals 2018-19	Actuals 2019-20	Actuals 2020-21	Budget 2021-22	Total 2016 to 2022
<b>8 North Coast and Cumbraes Total</b>	524,086	2,266,663	807,924	791,225	264,287	3,555,482	8,209,667

**General Fund Capital Expenditure 2022- March 2031 - Budget**

Ward	Budget 2022-23	Budget 2023-24	Budget 2024-25	Budget 2025-26	Budget 2026-27	Budget 2027-28	Budget 2028-29	Budget 2029-30	Budget 2030-31	Totals
<b>8 North Coast &amp; Cumbraes Total</b>	16,039,562	15,594,532	4,266,688	1,400,000	4,000,000	5,000,000	4,000,000	2,500,000	-	52,800,782

**HRA Capital Expenditure 2016 to 2022**

Ward	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Total
North Coast and Cumbraes	£-	£-	£1,640,867	£8,529,125	£10,578,787	£4,211,402	<b>£24,960,181</b>

As a supplementary question, Councillor Gallagher asked whether the Leader would ensure, given the opportunity, that future administrations continued to invest in all Wards and, in particular, the Member's own Ward of the North Coast and Cumbraes.

Councillor Cullinane responded by offering a commitment as Leader and on behalf of the Administration, that investment, such as in housing, would continue to be delivered across every single Ward.

(10) a question by Councillor Marshall to the Leader of the Council in the following terms:

“What has been the total value of the Council Tax receipts from newly built and occupied houses both in this Administration and in the previous Administration, as well as the annual total for each of the past 5 financial years?”

Councillor Cullinane thanked the Member for his question and responded in the following terms, referencing his written response:

“An analysis of council tax receipts across all requested years has been provided for information. This includes £226million council tax receipts covering the years from 2012-13 to 2016-17 and almost £271million from 2017-18 and projected to 2021-22.

	<b>Total in-Year Council Tax Receipts</b>
	<b>£</b>
2021-22 (projected)	57,692,941
2020-21	56,019,831
2019-20	54,825,893
2018-19	52,007,666
2017-18	50,342,090
	<b>270,888,421</b>
2016-17	46,524,274
2015-16	45,800,384
2014-15	45,078,268
2013-14	44,551,571
2012-13	44,140,297
	<b>226,094,794</b>

As a supplementary question, Councillor Marshall advised that he had been looking for figures on a year-by-year basis, of the new houses which contributed to council tax, and asked whether the Leader recognised the successful efforts of planning officials and the Planning Committee in bringing new housing to the area, thus mitigating population decline.

Councillor Cullinane responded by advising that he would arrange for any missing information to be circulated. The Leader advised that the development mentioned by the Elected Member was driven by the Local Development Plan which the Council had endorsed and supported. Councillor Cullinane acknowledged the work of planning officers and noted that the Council's Planning Service was recognised as one of the most efficient in the country.

(11) a question by Councillor Marshall to the Leader of the Council in the following terms:

“How many new houses have been granted Planning Permission by the Planning Department in each of the present and immediate past two Administrations?”

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

“Planning approvals for each administration term are:

2007 –2012	2,123 new homes approved
2012 –2017	1,867 new homes approved
2017 – 31 <sup>st</sup> January 2022	2,989 new homes approved

*The data provided relates to all consents by the ‘Planning Authority’ during the dates stated.”*

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

“How many secondary school children in North Ayrshire have received a free laptop or a tablet, and a free internet connection as per the SNP election promises made in May 2021?”

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

“It is our understanding that the Scottish Government is working to strengthen ICT infrastructure and plans are currently being developed for the distribution of devices across all local authorities. To date, no devices have been issued to learners in North Ayrshire as part of the Scottish Government election pledge in their most recent Programme for Government. However, we understand that plans are in development.

Locally, in 2020/21, over 2400 digital devices were distributed to children and young people in North Ayrshire. Over 950 of these were provided to secondary aged learners, along with internet connectivity. These devices were funded partly by COVID Recovery funds and partly by the Scottish Government Digital Inclusion Funding. In March 2021, at the annual budget meeting, North Ayrshire Council committed to invest £250,000 per year to provide access to devices and connectivity for online learning and activities. In session 2021-22, we have taken delivery of 1,000 Chromebooks which are currently being prepared for distribution. 469 of these are for secondary learners, targeted at S2 pupils.”

As a supplementary question, Councillor Ferguson referred to a recent announcement about online revision sessions as a contingency measure for this year's exam diet and asked, given that digital devices/internet connection had not been provided, for the Cabinet Member's reassurance that no young person in North Ayrshire would be disadvantaged as a result of the Scottish Government's failure to provide the necessary tools.

Councillor Bell responded by offering an assurance that officers were working hard to ensure that young people were properly supported. The Cabinet Member invited Councillor Ferguson to make him aware of any cases of difficulty and gave an assurance that he would pass them on to officers for appropriate action.

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

"To ask the Cabinet portfolio-holder for Education if he thinks the decision to send out the controversial school 'sex survey' unaltered is still the right one?"

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

"In my opinion, Councillors made the correct decision in agreeing to go forward with the Scottish Government's Health and Well-being Census. The ability for parents/carers to ask that their child can opt out and for the young person to not answer individual questions if they are not comfortable will be made clear in guidance. The process of data collection and security has been approved and a presentation on the Census was given at a recent Parent Councils Chairs meeting where no concerns were raised. The survey will provide information on a wide range of topics which will help guide the provision of services and support for young people going forward."

As a supplementary question, Councillor Ferguson referred to this data being made available to IT professionals within local authorities and asked the Cabinet Member whether all those with access were PVG checked. Councillor Ferguson also requested confirmation that the full survey would be published on the Council's website so that it was available in the public domain.

Councillor Bell responded by undertaking to check the PVG arrangements for the Council's data protection experts who would access the data. The Cabinet Member provided an assurance that the data would be held in a secure location and could not be accessed by anyone without proper authentication. Councillor Bell also undertook to advise Elected Members whether, and where, the survey had been published.

(14) a question by Councillor Ferguson to the Cabinet Member for Green New Deal and Sustainability in the following terms:

“To ask the Cabinet portfolio-holder for Green New Deal and Sustainability what discussions he has had with Scottish Fire and Rescue in relation to SNP proposals to cut the bottom off school doors?”

The following written response was taken as read:

“I can confirm that I have had no discussions with Scottish Fire and Rescue regarding removing the bottoms from doors, and the earlier answers I have provided on this matter confirm this would not be part of our approach in dealing with any ventilation improvements required in teaching spaces.”

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

“Regarding the site of the former oil and bitumen refinery in Ardrossan on which this Council plans to build two schools and a leisure centre, will the Leader of the Council accept anything less than a guarantee that the site has been 100% cleared of the toxic contaminants we know are in the soil before embarking on building schools and a leisure facility?”

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

“Extensive site investigations have been undertaken, and a remediation strategy agreed with the Scottish Government’s Environmental Regulator SEPA.

The development of former industrial sites is relatively common in the West of Scotland and is a priority of the Scottish Government through their Vacant and Derelict Land Task Force.

The proposed works will ensure that the contaminants which have been present in the site are removed or appropriately treated, and that the site ground conditions are suitable for the proposed use. I would not accept anything less than this.”

As a supplementary question, Councillor McNicol repeated his request that the Leader guarantee that the site would be 100% cleared of the toxic contaminants.

Councillor Cullinane responded by repeating that his earlier assertion that the proposed works would ensure that identified contaminants were removed or treated and the site ground conditions were suitable for the proposed use. The Leader questioned Councillor McNicol’s ability to participate in the Planning Committee when it met to determine this application given that the Elected Member had reached a pre-determined view.



(16) a question by Councillor Donald L. Reid to the Leader of the Council in the following terms:

“Applications opened for free bus travel for under 22s in Scotland on 31 January 2022. Can the relevant cabinet holder advise what the current uptake has been in North Ayrshire at this early stage (if figures are readily available) and what steps are being taken by NAC to publicise the availability of this excellent service for young people?”

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

“The new Scotland-wide Young Persons Free Bus Travel scheme officially launched on 31 January 2022. However, applications were open to eligible young people from 10 January.

As of 8 February 2022, 1,207 cards have been issued, of these 1,017 applications were made via the online process. For those unable to apply online, there is a manual application process available via email or by phone. Details of this are on our website. Since the launch of the scheme on 31 January 2022, over 3,000 journeys across Scotland have been made by young people with a valid North Ayrshire free bus travel card.

The initial campaign to promote this initiative was low key, both nationally and locally, due to the rising number of Covid cases. However, as restrictions have eased, the campaigns have increased. The Council has promoted this campaign via our website and all social media platforms, linking in with Youth Services and schools and specifically targeting and reminding parents of the applications routes.

The Customer Service Team are currently working with Education to simplify the process which would provide parents with the ability to apply via their school with the verification checks being made against the child’s SEEMiS record. This would eliminate the need for parents to upload and submit supporting documentation which is proving to be a barrier for some.

The Council has received a letter of thanks from the Cabinet Secretary which acknowledges the work that has been done to support the launch of this new scheme. Can I also add my thanks to the Customer Service Team who lead on this new initiative.”

(17) a question by Councillor Billings to the Cabinet Member for Green New Deal and Sustainability in the following terms:

“As the first tenants are gaining access to their much-anticipated new homes in Brodick it is time to consider what else is being done to address the ongoing housing crisis on Arran. It has long been recognised that the lack of affordable and flexible housing on Arran is a major factor that holds Arran back from reaching its full economic and social potential. Whilst the 34 new social housing units will contribute to the solution, the 2016 North Ayrshire Council (NAC) report commissioned on behalf of The Arran Economic Group recognised that housing is a multifaceted issue and that a range of approaches were needed. NAC’s Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2022 states that ‘the Council is undertaking research to determine locality preferences for housing on the island (Arran)’.

My question to the Cabinet Member for Green New Deal and Sustainability is could he explain what ‘determine locality preferences for housing’ means, and what form will this research take and when will it commence?”

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

“The North Ayrshire Housing Allocation Policy allows applicants to choose the areas they would prefer for housing. Currently the only choice available for Arran applicants is the whole of Arran. By asking Arran applicants to indicate their locality preferences, we will be able to refine demand information for different towns/villages on the island.

All North Ayrshire Housing Register applicants who stated a preference for Arran are being contacted individually by telephone. They are being asked to indicate what towns/villages on the island they would prefer.

The telephone survey started in January. When this review is complete, and all 34 applicants have moved into the new development at Brathwic Terrace, this information will be utilised alongside demand information from the North Ayrshire Housing Register to determine the level of housing need on the island and will identify which Arran localities are most in demand. This will thereafter be utilised to inform the investment which will be considered within the forthcoming Strategic Housing Investment Plan for 2023-2028.”

As a supplementary question, Councillor Billings asked what plans there were to refresh the 2016 report in light of new data and new Council powers.

Councillor Montgomerie responded by advising that the SHIP was subject to review each Autumn and that housing need on Arran would be discussed as part of this process.

(18) a question by Councillor Murdoch to the Cabinet Member for Green New Deal and Sustainability in the following terms:

“Does the Cabinet Member think the Traffic Management Plan for Largs Campus needs reviewed, updated and implemented in a way that helps pedestrians, motorists and residents?”

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

“As part of the Campus project, a traffic management plan was prepared and various measures were put in place, such as parking restrictions and a new pedestrian crossing on Alexander Avenue. There were a few reported concerns following the opening of the Campus in 2018 and each of these concerns were investigated by our Roads Service in conjunction with Police Scotland. Issues identified were typical of most schools, with poor and inconsiderate parking behaviour being the main issue. There have been no recent concerns raised in relation to the traffic management at the Campus and there are currently no further traffic management measures proposed. However, the Road Safety Officer will contact the Campus to discuss any local concerns that may have been brought to their attention.”

As a supplementary question, Councillor Murdoch asked what the Council could do to improve the situation with regard to ongoing traffic problems around the Campus.

Councillor Montgomerie responded by offering to arrange a meeting with officers on site to look at what might be done to rectify the problem.

(19) a question by Councillor Murdoch to the Cabinet Member for Green New Deal and Sustainability in the following terms:

“Can the Cabinet Member please provide the figures related to the allocation of new housing at Flatt Road in Largs:

- (i) How many of the new properties were allocated to Largs residents?
- (ii) How many properties were allocated to North Coast residents?
- (iii) How many properties were allocated to North Ayrshire residents?
- (iv) How many properties were allocated to people from outside North Ayrshire?”

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

“I can confirm 100 properties have been let to date.

- (i) How many of the new properties were allocated to Largs residents? 63
- (ii) How many properties were allocated to North Coast residents? – 74
- (iii) How many properties were allocated to North Ayrshire residents? – 97
- (iv) How many properties were allocated to people from outside North Ayrshire? – 3”

As a supplementary question, Councillor Murdoch requested clarification on the breakdown and on the number of people who had a connection to the area.

Councillor Montgomerie responded by advising that, as far as he was aware, all had a local connection to the area.

(20) a question by Councillor Murdoch to the Cabinet Member for Green New Deal and Sustainability in the following terms:

“Can the Cabinet Member please provide a specific date for the introduction of DPE (Decriminalised Parking Enforcement)?”

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

“The introduction of Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) follows a statutory process and must be approved by the Scottish Parliament. This has unfortunately been delayed due to the COVID pandemic. Officers are working with Transport Scotland to progress North Ayrshire’s application for the introduction of DPE and car parking charges. Due to the statutory processes involved and potential for delays it is not possible to confirm an exact date for the introduction of DPE at this time, however Officers are continuing to follow the required process and will ensure further progress updates are regularly provided to Elected Members.”

As a supplementary question, Councillor Murdoch asked whether action could be taken as soon as possible to ensure people were aware of the DPE arrangements well in advance of their implementation

Councillor Montgomerie responded in the affirmative, while acknowledging the challenges of raising awareness during the pandemic.

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

“When will North Ayrshire Council consistently enforce and take action against fly tipping, littering, dog fouling, feeding seagulls, organic and chemical discharges and emissions into the atmosphere and the coastal waters, etc?”

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

“The Streetscene Operational service area is responsible for enforcement of littering, fly-tipping and dog fouling offences. Our internal bespoke prevention initiatives include an anti-roadside litter campaign and the OB-litter-ATE campaign to address lunchtime litter issues at schools. There is also significant and effective partnership working with colleagues in Housing Services and Waste Services to reduce potential offences as well as the provision of support to our ever-growing numbers of volunteers keen to help litter pick in their local areas. Our teams are active members of national campaigns, working in partnership with service providers such as Police Scotland, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Keep Scotland Beautiful and Zero Waste Scotland. Examples of this partnership approach are the successful Operation Moonbeam – Safer shores initiative – My beach your beach.

Our enforcement techniques are well established and considered sector leading, with neighbouring local authorities often consulting with our officers to help improve their existing procedures. Officers actively patrol areas of concern. A slight increase in fixed penalties issued was evident during lockdown however this is now stabilising - figures are detailed in the table below:

<b>Fixed Penalties</b>	
<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Penalties</b>
<b>2017-18</b>	237
2018-19	217
2019-20	181
2020-21	331
2021-22	262

The Enforcement Team can currently challenge those who feed gulls as the legislation that covers littering states litter can be considered as any item that is thrown down, dropped, or otherwise deposited. The enforcement team would in the first instance have a discussion with individuals on an educational basis and only if that was not heeded move to issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

I can also confirm that the relevant authority with statutory powers in relation to chemical discharges and emissions into the atmosphere and coastal waters is SEPA. I can confirm that in the past and where required the Council has and would work with SEPA to assist them in relation to any environmental crime or discharge of emissions into the atmosphere or coastal waters.”

As a supplementary question, Councillor Murdoch asked if the Leader could give an assurance that wardens would visit the North Coast more often during the summer months.

Councillor Cullinane responded by advising that this was an operational matter, but that any Elected Member with a particular area of concern could raise this through the Council's Lagan system.

On a point of order, Councillor Billings questioned the competence of the motion set out in the next item of business. Councillor Billings asserted that, if there were allegations of a breach of the Code of Conduct, the Monitoring Officer was required, in terms of the Scheme of Delegation to Officers, to investigate and bring a report on the matter to the Council, and the motion should not be considered in advance of this.

In terms of Standing Order 5.7, the Depute Provost agreed that the meeting be adjourned at 4.30 p.m. to allow him to receive procedural advice from officers. The meeting reconvened at 4.40 p.m. with the same Members and officers present and in attendance.

### **13. Motions**

In terms of Standing Order 13, submitted:

- (1) a motion by Councillor Foster, seconded by Councillor Macaulay, in the following terms:

"I move that:

1. Council has no confidence in Councillor Marshall remaining a member of the Planning Committee and Local Review Body and that he is removed from membership of these committees with immediate effect and
2. Councillor Larsen is appointed as chair of Planning Committee and the Local Review Body with immediate effect."

With the permission of the Depute Provost, the Monitoring Officer addressed the meeting to confirm the competence of the above motion. Members were advised that the motion made no reference to any Code of Conduct issue and that, in any event, it was competent for a motion of no confidence to be moved at any time, irrespective of whether any grounds were presented.

Councillor Marshall addressed the meeting to advise that it was his interpretation of section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act (1989) that the Monitoring Officer was required to submit a report to the Council, in the absence of which, he intimated his formal resignation as a member of the Planning Committee and Local Review Body.

In light of Councillor Marshall's resignation from the Planning Committee and Local

Review Body, and in response to various points of order in respect of the motion, the Chief Executive, in terms of Standing Order 14.5, advised the Depute Provost that the mover and seconder of the motion be invited to amend it by withdrawing point 1. Councillors Foster and Macaulay so agreed.

In response to various points of order, the Monitoring Officer advised Councillor Foster that, when speaking to his motion, he confine his remarks to the terms of the motion, as amended.

On a point of order, Members sought to assert that Councillor Foster's remarks could include wider contextual information. The Monitoring Officer repeated her advice that, given the withdrawal of part 1 of the original motion, the mover and seconder of the motion should confine any remarks to the terms of the motion, as amended.

In terms of Standing Order 5.7, the Depute Provost agreed that the meeting be adjourned at 5.20 p.m. to allow him to receive procedural advice from officers. The meeting reconvened at 5.30 p.m. with the same Members and officers present and in attendance.

At the invitation of the Depute Provost, Councillor Foster, as the mover of the motion was invited to finish presenting the motion. Councillor Foster was again reminded that he should confine his remarks to the terms of the motion, as amended, and this advice was reiterated in response to a further point of order.

In the absence of Councillor Macaulay due to a temporary connection issue, Councillor Burns formally seconded the motion.

As an amendment, Councillor Ferguson, seconded by Councillor Gallacher, moved as follows:

"Vice Chair Councillor Timothy Billings is appointed as Chair of Planning Committee and the Local Review Body with immediate effect."

Members were then invited to ask questions of clarification of the movers of the motion, as amended, and the amendment. On a point of order, Members were reminded, in terms of Standing Order 14.7, that questions of clarification should relate to the terms of the motion and amendment.

The meeting proceeded to the debate stage.

In terms of Standing Order 16.2, Councillor Gurney, seconded by Councillor Cullinane, moved the closure of debate.

On a division and a roll call vote, there voted in favour of the procedural motion to close the debate, Councillors Barr, Bell, Billings, Burns, Cullinane, Davidson, Dickson, Easdale, Ferguson, Foster, Gallagher, George, Gurney, Hill, Larsen, Macaulay, McClung, McMaster, McPhater, McTiernan, Miller and Montgomerie (22) and against, Councillors Donald Reid and Sweeney (2), Councillors Gallacher, Glover, Marshall, McNicol, Murdoch and Stalker abstaining, and the motion was declared carried.

Accordingly, the Council agreed to move to the vote.

On a further division and a roll call vote, there voted for the amendment, Councillors Barr, Bell, Billings, Ferguson, Gallacher, Gallagher, George, Glover, Marshall, McNicol, Montgomerie and Stalker (12) and for the motion, as amended, Councillors Burns, Cullinane, Davidson, Dickson, Foster, Gurney, Hill, Larsen, Macaulay, McClung, McMaster, McPhater and McTiernan (13), Councillors Easdale, Miller, Murdoch, Donald Reid and Sweeney abstaining, and the motion, as amended, was declared carried.

Accordingly, the Council agreed to appoint Councillor Larsen as Chair of the Planning Committee and the Local Review Body with immediate effect.

Due to a technical issue with his device, Councillor Donald L. Reid was unable to participate in this item of business or in the remainder of the meeting.

(2) a motion by Councillor Gurney, seconded by Councillor McClung, in the following terms:

“Our citizens will soon be asked to go to the polls and cast their vote. It is not controversial to suggest that it is important that as many people as possible are given the opportunity to exercise their democratic rights and that it is the duty of this Council to encourage that expression.

Indeed, it is the duty of the Returning Officer to promote electoral awareness. That is unlikely to happen in the current circumstances when the most common comment heard at polling stations is to the effect that one would hardly know that there was an election, an issue brought sharply into focus by the recent COVID restrictions.

It is clear that we have a duty to promote the largest demonstration of democratic involvement that we can. Traditionally one of the most effective promotion techniques was to utilise election signs. Indeed, signage was historically the most visible means of making the public aware that an election was upcoming.

Taking these circumstances into account it is imperative that every effort is made to raise electoral awareness and to facilitate that Council will implement a pilot project to allow election signage for the next poll.



Our previous policy on these matters was clear and comprehensive and so would be used verbatim, subject to any updating required by the Returning Officer who would have the delegated authority to do so if a poll, such as a snap general election caused by the removal of the Prime Minister, were to be called before the next Council meeting. This policy was discussed by Council on the 2nd of April 2014 and may be found here

<https://north-ayrshire.cmis.uk.com/northayrshire/CommitteesMeetings/MeetingsCalendar/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/339/Committee/4/Default.aspx>

This report made clear that:

- The policy of allowing posters on Council property had proven fit for purpose and that there are no road safety or cost implications for the Council
- A previous Chief Executive's clear recommendation to Council was to approve a policy which allowed for such signage. It is therefore clear that this is the right thing to do from an unbiased electoral perspective, especially given that the Chief Executive is also the Returning Officer

Following this pilot Council will receive a report on the issues in the following terms:

- Benefits in terms of public awareness
- Cost to the Council in terms of having to remove posters
- Environmental issues relating to inadequately secured posters becoming litter
- Road safety issues

Following this pilot, there will be a decision taken on whether the policy should continue for future polls.

I, therefore, moved that the Council agrees to implement the above proposals."

As an amendment, Councillor McNicol, seconded by Councillor Marshall, moved as follows:

"Council agrees not to implement a pilot project to allow election signage for the next poll and as a direct negative to the motion move that the Council do not allow the display of campaign posters on Council Property."

Members asked questions of clarification of the movers and seconders of the motion and amendment.

There followed debate and summing up.

On a point of order, Councillors Hill and Gurney, referring to remarks made by Councillor Miller during debate, sought clarification as to any procedural requirement for the Council to be formally advised that Councillor Miller was no longer a member of the Labour Group. The Head of Democratic Services undertook to advise on this further outwith the meeting.

On a division and roll call vote, there voted for the amendment, Councillors Barr, Bell, Billings, Cullinane, Easdale, Ferguson, Foster, Gallacher, Gallagher, George, Glover, Marshall, McNicol, McPhater, Miller, Montgomerie, Murdoch, Donald Reid, Stalker and Sweeney (20) and for the motion, Councillors Burns, Dickson, Gurney, Hill, Larsen, Macaulay, McClung, McMaster and McTiernan (9), and the amendment was declared carried.

Accordingly, the Council agreed:

- (a) not to implement a pilot project to allow election signage for the next poll; and
- (b) not to allow the display of campaign posters on Council Property.

Councillor Davidson left the meeting during consideration of this item.

In terms of Standing Order 5.7, the Depute Provost agreed that the meeting be adjourned at 6.45 p.m. for a comfort break, reconvening at 6.55 p.m., with the same Members and officers present and in attendance.

- (3) a motion proposed by Councillor Ferguson, seconded by Councillor Billings, in the following terms:

“That the Council:

1. Welcomes the first-round award of £172million of UK Government Levelling Up funding to eight projects across Scotland.
2. Notes our satisfaction that one of the successful projects was an award of £23.7million to make long overdue improvements to the B714 which will help to provide more efficient transportation links between the Central Belt and North Ayrshire.
3. Further notes that this is in addition to the transformative £103million awarded to the Ayrshire Growth Deal which will create approximately 7,000 jobs across Ayrshire.
4. Believes that this initiative will make a significant contribution to the economy of North Ayrshire and congratulates all the partners for their work in delivering what it sees as transformative, exciting, and innovative projects for North Ayrshire.
5. Finally, asks that the Chief Executive write to Iain Stewart MP Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Scotland Office, on behalf of the Council expressing our thanks to the UK Government for their support during the Levelling Up Fund application process and to express our commitment to working collaboratively with the Scotland Office to deliver upon on future Levelling Up Projects across North Ayrshire.”

As an amendment, Councillor Cullinane, seconded by Councillor Sweeney, moved that the Council:

- “Notes that since 2010 over £100million has been cut from the Council’s revenue budget in real terms
- Notes that the £126million referenced in the motion is one-off investment to be invested over a decade
- Further notes that £126million is little over a third of the Council’s annual revenue budget
- Recognises that the investment being made through the Council’s own capital programme and housing revenue account capital programme is significantly higher than £126million over a decade
- Congratulates Council officers for developing successful projects in the Ayrshire Growth Deal and the B714 “Levelling Up” bid
- Believes that so called “Levelling Up” requires more than one-off capital investment in traditional infrastructure projects; requiring a more fundamental shift in economic approach based on the principles of Community Wealth Building
- Believes that local government has a central role to play in this approach but is concerned that more than a decade of cuts has undermined local capacity within Councils
- Agrees that the Council continues to work collaboratively with both the UK and Scottish Government’s in our efforts to secure further investment that will help realise our ambitions for North Ayrshire”.

There followed debate and summing up.

On a division and roll call vote, there voted for the amendment, Councillors Bell, Burns, Cullinane, Dickson, Easdale, Foster, Gallagher, Gurney, Hill, Larsen, Macaulay, McClung, McMaster, McPhater, McTiernan, Miller, Montgomerie, Donald Reid and Sweeney (19) and for the motion, Councillors Barr, Billings, Ferguson, Gallacher, George, Glover, Marshall and Stalker (8), Councillors McNicol and Murdoch abstaining, and the amendment was declared carried.

Accordingly, the Council agreed as follows:

- (a) to note that (i) since 2010, over £100million had been cut from the Council’s revenue budget in real terms, (ii) the £126million referenced in the motion was one-off investment to be invested over a decade and (iii) £126million was little over a third of the Council’s annual revenue budget;
- (b) to recognise that the investment being made through the Council’s own capital programme and housing revenue account capital programme was significantly higher than £126million over a decade;

- (c) to congratulate Council officers for developing successful projects in the Ayrshire Growth Deal and the B714 “Levelling Up” bid;
  - (d) that so called “Levelling Up” required more than one-off capital investment in traditional infrastructure projects, requiring a more fundamental shift in economic approach based on the principles of Community Wealth Building;
  - (e) that local government had a central role to play in this approach but was concerned that more than a decade of cuts had undermined local capacity within Councils; and
  - (f) that the Council continue to work collaboratively with both the UK and Scottish Government’s in our efforts to secure further investment that would help realise its ambitions for North Ayrshire.
- (4) a motion proposed by Councillor Ferguson, seconded by Councillor Marshall, in the following terms:

“That Council:

1. Notes that, 11 civil servants costing the taxpayer £700,000 p.a. have been assigned to work on the project to introduce legislation for a second independence referendum and believes these staff could be better employed working on how to close the attainment gap. And further
2. Agrees with the vast majority of people in Scotland that now is not the time to be undertaking this work. And finally
3. Asks the Chief Executive to write to the First Minister expressing grave concerns in relation to recent announcements that the Scottish Government have recommenced work on a second unwanted-independence referendum.”

As an amendment, Councillor Foster, seconded by Councillor Easdale, moved that the Council:

- “Notes that the original motion references staffing costs of £700,000 on 11 civil servants, and that £700,000 is close to the estimated final cost of the Conservative Group throughout this term
- Agrees that both sums could be better employed to serve the people of North Ayrshire
- Agrees that the role of local Councillors is to represent the interests of their constituents on the Council, primarily focusing on local matters of importance to the area and not on flags and the constitution and
- Agrees that the Chief Executive should write to the Leader of the Conservative Group expressing the concerns of members that the Conservative Group continues to indulge in flag-waving political gestures whilst delivering very poor value for money for the North Ayrshire taxpayer”

In response to various points of order in respect of the personal nature of elements included in the preamble to Councillor Foster's amendment, the Monitoring Officer asked that the Member curtail his remarks.

As a further amendment, Councillor Gurney, seconded by Councillor McClung, moved as follows:

"Council notes:

1. That the failing Tory Westminster government, in a futile attempt to find any positives, has now introduced a complete government department for "Brexit Opportunities"
2. That this department will incur a massive drain on the public finances requiring, as it does, a full complement of civil servants, special advisers, expenses, accommodation and the concomitant salaries, capital and revenue expenditure far in excess of any Scottish Government department
3. That the servicing of this motion has already cost the taxpayers of North Ayrshire a considerable sum
4. That responsibility for constitutional issues does not lie with North Ayrshire Council and therefore I move that:

Council gives consideration to modifying standing orders to specifically exclude motions outside the remit of this Council to determine."

Members asked questions of clarification of the movers and seconders of the motion and amendment.

Councillor Foster was invited, in terms of Standing Order 14.5, to consider altering his amendment to include elements of the further amendment by Councillor Gurney, seconded by Councillor McClung, but declined to do so.

There followed debate and summing up.

On a division and roll call vote, there voted for the amendment by Councillor Foster, seconded by Councillor Easdale, Councillors Bell, Burns, Cullinane, Dickson, Easdale, Foster, Gallagher, Gurney, Hill, Larsen, Macaulay, McClung, McMaster, McPhater, McTiernan, Montgomerie, Donald Reid and Sweeney (18) and for the motion by Councillor Ferguson, seconded by Councillor Marshall, Councillors Barr, Billings, Ferguson, Gallacher, George, Glover, Marshall and Stalker (8), Councillors McNicol, Miller and Murdoch abstaining, and the amendment became the substantive motion.

On a further division and roll call vote, there voted for the further amendment by Councillor Gurney, seconded by Councillor McClung, Councillors Burns, Dickson, Gurney, Hill, Larsen, Macaulay, McClung, McMaster and McTiernan (9) and for the substantive motion by Councillor Foster, seconded by Councillor Easdale, Councillors Barr, Bell, Cullinane, Easdale, Foster, Gallagher, McPhater, Montgomerie, Donald Reid and Sweeney (10), Councillors Billings, Ferguson, Gallacher, George, Glover, Marshall, McNicol, Miller, Murdoch and Stalker abstaining, and the substantive motion was declared carried.

Accordingly, the Council agreed as follows:

- (a) to note that the original motion references staffing costs of £700,000 on 11 civil servants, and that £700,000 was close to the estimated final cost of the Conservative Group throughout this term;
  - (b) that both sums could be better employed to serve the people of North Ayrshire;
  - (c) that the role of local Councillors was to represent the interests of their constituents on the Council, primarily focusing on local matters of importance to the area and not on flags and the constitution; and
  - (d) that the Chief Executive should write to the Leader of the Conservative Group expressing the concerns of members that the Conservative Group continued to indulge in flag-waving political gestures whilst delivering very poor value for money for the North Ayrshire taxpayer.
- (5) a motion by Councillor Gallagher, seconded by Councillor Donald Reid, in the following terms:

“Scotrail currently led by Transport Scotland have just concluded a consultation to close station booking offices and, in our area, they propose to substantially reduce opening hours at our stations, causing concern that there will not be enough support to protect the security of the network and support vulnerable customers requiring assistance travelling.

We ask Council to agree that the Chief Executive should make formal representation to ScotRail’s Chief Executive and the Scottish Government’s Minister for Transport reaffirming North Ayrshire Council’s opposition to any potential future ticket office opening hours reductions or closures and any staff reductions.”

There being no amendment, the motion was declared carried.

The meeting ended at 8.05 p.m.

North Ayrshire Council  
2 March 2022

At a Special Meeting of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m. involving participation by remote electronic means.

**Present**

Robert Barr, John Bell, Timothy Billings, Marie Burns, Joe Cullinane, Scott Davidson, Anthea Dickson, John Easdale, Todd Ferguson, Robert Foster, Scott Gallacher, Alex Gallagher, Margaret George, John Glover, Tony Gurney, Alan Hill, Christina Larsen, Shaun Macaulay, Tom Marshall, Jean McClung, Ellen McMaster, Ronnie McNicol, Davina McTiernan, Jim Montgomerie, Ian Murdoch, Donald Reid, Donald L. Reid, Ronnie Stalker, Angela Stephen and John Sweeney.

**In Attendance**

C. Hatton, Chief Executive; R. McCutcheon, Executive Director, (Place); A. Sutton, Executive Director, C. Amos, Interim Executive Director, R. Arthur, Head of Service (Connected Communities) and L. Morris, Interim Head of Service (Education) (Communities and Education); C. Cameron, Director (Health and Social Care Partnership); K. Yeomans, Director (Growth and Investment); M. Boyd Head of Service, D. Forbes, Senior Manager, N. Graham and K. Macdonald, Team Managers (Financial Management (Finance); F. Walker, Head of Service (People and ICT); T. Reaney, Head of Service (Recovery and Renewal) and A. Craig, Head of Service, N. Shearer, Team Manager (Legal Services), M. McColm, Senior Manager (Communications), H. Clancy, A. Little and C. Stewart, Committee Services Officers and M. Anderson, Senior Manager (Committee and Member Services) (Democratic Services) (Chief Executive's Service).

**Apologies**

Ian Clarkson, Louise McPhater and Jimmy Miller.

**Chair**

Robert Barr, Depute Provost, in the Chair.

**1. Depute Provost's Remarks**

The Depute Provost welcomed those present to the meeting and dealt with preliminary matters, which included an announcement that the Council meeting would be live streamed.

**2. Apologies**

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

### **3. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest in terms of Standing Order 10 and Section 5 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

There were no declarations of the Party Whip.

### **4. General Services Revenue Estimates 2022/23 to 2024/25**

Submitted report by the Head of Service (Finance) on the Council's revenue spending requirements and anticipated funding for 2022/23 and 2024/25, the levels of reserves and fund balances held by the Council, and options to address the funding gap.

Appendices 1 and 2 to the report set out the revised expenditure requirements for 2022/23 and operational budget adjustments, respectively. Savings approved as part of the 2021/22 revenue budget and the expenditure requirements identified for 2022/23 to 2024/25 were detailed at Appendices 3 and 4. Appendix 5 summarised proposed savings, excluding the Health and Social Care Partnership, and Appendix 6 contained a list of charges with effect from 1 April 2022. The budget matrix for 2022/23 was set out at Appendix 7 to the report.

At the invitation of the Depute Provost, the Leader of the Council addressed the meeting on the Administration's budget proposals.

Councillor Cullinane, seconded by Councillor Larsen, then moved approval of the recommendations set out in the report and the setting of a 3% Council tax increase for 2022/23.

As the seconder of the motion, Councillor Larsen addressed the meeting on the motion.

Thereafter, Councillor McNicol, seconded by Councillor Murdoch, moved the following amendment:

"That the Council approves the recommendations set out in the report, subject to the amendments noted below:

- (a) The funding to support investment into the community-based energy support model is reduced by £1.726m;
- (b) The funding from earmarking of the anticipated 2021/22 underspend to supplement the Council's Investment fund is reduced by £0.410m; and
- (c) Council Tax is set at 2021/22 levels (0% increase) with a reduction in anticipated income of £2.136m in 2022/23 when compared to the planning assumption of 3% increase"



Councillor McNicol, as the mover of the amendment, then spoke to the amendment.

The Chief Executive invited Councillor McNicol to confine his remarks to the terms of the amendment and not to raise matters outwith the scope of the budget-setting exercise.

Councillor Murdoch then addressed the meeting as the seconder of the amendment.

Councillor Marshall requested the opportunity to address the meeting on behalf of the Conservative and Unionist Group and, seconded by Councillor Ferguson, sought to move a further amendment, the terms of which were identical to that already proposed by Councillor McNicol, seconded by Councillor Murdoch.

In terms of Standing Order 14.2, the Monitoring Officer advised that it was not competent to move two substantially similar amendments. However, given that convention should in this instance have permitted the Leader of the Conservative and Unionist Group to address the meeting immediately following the motion by Councillor Cullinane, seconded by Councillor Larsen, the Depute Provost agreed to allow Councillor Marshall, and his seconder if he wished, to address the meeting.

Councillor Marshall duly addressed the meeting on behalf of the Conservative and Unionist Group.

The Chief Executive invited Councillor Marshall to confine his remarks to the terms of the amendment and not to raise matters which had been considered at a previous Council meeting held in private.

In terms of Standing Order 14.7, Members sought clarification from officers on the following:

- the appropriate procedure in terms of dealing with two identical amendments; and
- the estimated Council Tax rise implications for 2023/24 arising from any decision to freeze Council Tax in 2022/23.

In terms of Standing Order 5.7, the Depute Provost agreed that the meeting be adjourned at 2.55 p.m. to allow the movers and seconders of the amendments to come to an agreement. The meeting reconvened at 3.50 p.m. with the same Members and officers present and in attendance.

The Depute Provost sought clarification on whether there were any further amendments, or alteration or withdrawal of the motion/amendment in terms of Standing Order 14.5.

Councillor McNicol intimated that he wished to invite Councillor Marshall to second his amendment in place of Councillor Murdoch. Councillor Marshall confirmed the withdrawal of his own amendment in favour of this proposal. The seconders of the original amendments confirmed their agreement.

In terms of Standing Order 14.7, Members sought clarification from officers on the Council's budget settlement for 2023/24 and whether this figure was known at this stage.

In the absence of debate, there followed summing up.

Thereafter, on a division and roll call vote, there voted for the amendment by Councillor McNicol, seconded by Councillor Marshall, Councillors Barr, Billings, Ferguson, Gallacher, George, Glover, Marshall, McNicol, Murdoch, Stalker and Stephen (11), and for the motion by Councillor Cullinane, seconded by Councillor Larsen, Councillors Bell, Burns, Cullinane, Davidson, Dickson, Easdale, Foster, Gallagher, Gurney, Hill, Larsen, Macaulay, McClung, McMaster, McTiernan, Montgomerie, Donald Reid and Sweeney (18), Councillor Donald L. Reid abstaining, and the motion was declared carried.

Accordingly, the Council, having considered the equality and children's rights impact of service changes, agreed as follows:

- (a) to note the anticipated funding available to meet expenditure requirements;
- (b) to approve the Council's expenditure requirements for 2022/23 and note the indicative requirements for 2023/24 and 2024/25;
- (c) to note the projected outturn position for 2021/22 and approve the earmarking of the anticipated underspend to supplement the Council's Investment Fund for delivery of sustainability projects outlined at Section 2.4.3 of the report;
- (d) to note the level of reserves and fund balances held by the Council and approve any use and contributions to and from these;
- (e) to approve the additional contribution to the HSCP noted at Section 1.9 of the report;
- (f) to approve additional investment proposals outlined at Section 2.7.6 of the report;
- (g) to approve efficiencies and savings to ensure a balanced budget for 2022/23, consequential and new proposals in future years;
- (h) to approve the schedule of Council fees and charges detailed at Appendix 6 to the report;
- (i) to set a 3% Council Tax increase for 2022/23;

- (j) to note the anticipated funding gap for 2023/24 and 2024/25;
- (k) to note the feedback from the community engagement sessions in helping inform budget plans and investment;
- (l) to note progress to date on the Council's Sustainable Change Programme and corporate Workforce Planning; and
- (m) to approve the budget matrix for 2022/23.

## **5. Capital Investment Programme 2022/23 to 2030/31**

Submitted report by the Head of Service (Finance) on the draft Capital Investment Programme to 2030/31.

The current capital programme to 2030/31, details of the proposed changes to the programme following the refresh, and the revised Capital Investment Programme covering the period from 2022/23 to 2030/31, were set out at Appendices 1-3 to the report, respectively. The revised Capital Investment Programme was provided at Appendix 4 to the report.

Councillor Cullinane, seconded by Councillor Bell, moved that the Council approve the recommendations set out in the report. There being no amendment, the motion was declared carried.

Accordingly, the Council agreed to:

- (a) approve the refreshed Capital Investment Programme to 2030/31 as set out at Appendix 3 to the report;
- (b) note that the programme would be reviewed on an ongoing basis, with the next major review to be completed during 2023/24; and
- (c) approve the refreshed Capital Investment Strategy set out at Appendix 4 to the report.

## **6. Revenue Estimates 2022/23 - Common Good Funds and Trusts**

Submitted report by the Head of Service (Finance) on the anticipated annual income and expenditure of the Common Good Funds and Trusts administered by North Ayrshire Council and seeking approval for the level of grant funding to be made available for disbursement in 2022/23.

The remaining smaller trusts and sundry bequests administered by the Council were listed at Appendix 1 to the report. Appendix 2 set out the 2022/23 revenue estimates for the Common Good Funds and registered charitable Trusts.

Members asked questions and received clarification in respect of the following elements of the report:

- the capital remaining in the Irvine Common Good Fund and the length of time funds would be available for disbursement based on current levels; and
- whether the Irvine Common Good Fund continued to require to meet grounds maintenance costs associated with the upkeep of various pieces of land owned by the Common Good.

The Head of Finance undertook to provide Members with further detailed information on charges associated with the maintenance of Irvine Common Good Fund land.

Councillor Cullinane, seconded by Councillor Bell, moved that the Council approve the recommendations set out in the report. There being no amendment, the motion was declared carried.

Accordingly, the Council agreed to:

- (a) approve the 2022/23 revenue estimates for the Common Good Funds and registered charitable Trusts detailed in Appendix 2 to the report;
- (b) approve the carry forward of funds from Irvine Common Good Fund to meet the costs of urgent and essential work required at Seagate Castle, as noted at section 2.3 of the report;
- (c) approve the amounts available for disbursement noted at section 2.10 of the report; and
- (d) approve capital spend from the dormant and low-value Trusts and the Irvine, Largs, Millport and Saltcoats Common Good Funds and instruct officers to seek approval from the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) prior to the disbursement of any grant which would result in winding up of a Trust.

## **7. Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2022-23**

Submitted report by the Head of Service (Finance) on the proposed Strategy for Treasury Management and Investment activities within the Council for the financial year 2022/23. The draft Strategy document was attached as an appendix to the report.

Councillor Cullinane, seconded by Councillor Bell, moved that the Council approve the recommendations set out in the report. There being no amendment, the motion was declared carried.

Accordingly, the Council agreed to approve the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy for 2022/23 set out at Appendix 1 to the report.

The meeting ended at 4.25 p.m.



North Ayrshire Council  
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

# LEADER'S REPORT

For the period covering: 7 February – 6 March  
2022

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

# LEADER'S REPORT

For the period covering: 7 February – 6 March 2022

## ***GREAT HARBOUR PROJECT VISIT, 8 February***

On 8 February, I was delighted to have a look at and discuss proposals for the Great Harbour Project which will see much-needed investment in the Harbourside area. Supported by £14 million of funding through the Ayrshire Growth Deal, proposals for Irvine's Maritime Mile include:

- Coastal Hub with a major new play facility at the Beach Park and improved outdoor facilities with longer-term plans for the landmark Pilot House and a café/restaurant facility
- Marina/Arts/Events/Food Hub which will feature a new waterfront plaza to help support events and give better access to marina and additional food offerings to increase the food options for the area
- The redevelopment of the Harbourmaster's House
- Maritime Hub which aims to create expanded facilities for the National Maritime Museum

North Ayrshire residents and stakeholders can have their say on proposals as part of the Council's consultation, launched on 15 February. This is the first in the series of engagements with the local community.

## ***ELM TREE PLANTING PROJECT, 10 February***

I was invited along to Elm Park in Ardrossan on 10 February to see plans by the Three Town's Growers and FRIENDS Conservation group for improving biodiversity and combatting climate change with their tree planting project.

Partly funded by North Ayrshire Council, who are investing £500,00 in tree planting initiatives, and East Ayrshire Woodland Trust, the plans will see the planting of 500 native broadleaved trees. The trees will help to mitigate some of the effects of climate change and create a natural woodland to increase biodiversity of local wildlife.

I would like to thank Dr Frank Clark and the Three Town Growers and FRIENDS for facilitating the visit and wish them well with their plans. I look forward to revisiting the park in the future to see how plans have progressed.

## ***HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS REGIONAL ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP MEETING, 14 February***

On 14 February I attended a second meeting of the recently established Highlands and Islands Regional Economic Partnership. Discussion focused primarily on the National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET) and what are anticipated to be the next steps in the process. The NSET is the Scottish Government's refreshed 10-year strategy which will aim to transform the Scottish economy by prioritising investment in the industries of the future to deliver new, green jobs.

There was also discussion on the national planning framework for Scotland up until 2045.

## ***SPRINGVALE OPENING CEREMONY, 21 February***

On 21 February I was pleased to attend the opening ceremony of the latest housing development in Saltcoats, located at Springvale Gardens. The development is part of an ambitious wider Council commitment to build 1,625 new homes across North Ayrshire. The Springvale site includes six general needs houses, six homes suitable for wheelchair uses and two amenity bungalows.

I am hugely proud of the investment this Council has made into housing, the largest in decades and one which will benefit many of our North Ayrshire residents.

## ***SOLAR FARMS AND i3 SITE VISITS, 21 February***

Also, on 21 February, I had the pleasure of visiting the sites for our Council-owned solar farms which will be based at Nethermain and at the former Shewalton landfill site. I also had the opportunity to visit the i3 industrial site in Irvine to hear more about plans to create renewable energy with the construction of three wind turbines.

Now approved by my Cabinet I am hugely excited about these groundbreaking projects which will see the solar farms being able to generate approximately 62% of the Council's future energy demand. Upon completion the i3 project will generate a staggering 214% of the Council's future energy demand.

The i3 renewable energy plan will make North Ayrshire Council a net-exporter of renewable energy. It is truly groundbreaking and is a demonstration of what can be achieved with the political ambition to deliver change.

Although there is further work to be done on the finances of the i3 project, we know that the financial return on our first two council-owned solar farms is around £25million. And the i3 project is 3.4 times the size in terms of energy generation. Even without the final financial details, it's safe to say the financial return on the i3 plan will be significant.

Of course, it is worth highlighting that the benefit of council ownership means that the income comes to the Council. That means tens of millions of pounds in income that will be reinvested in North Ayrshire, with 15% of the income directly available to community groups through our Community Benefit policy.

My thanks to North Ayrshire Council's Director of PLACE, Russell McCutcheon and to North Ayrshire Council's Head of Service for Sustainability, Transport and Corporate Property, David Hammond for their work on these projects and for facilitating the visit.

### ***VISIT TO AYRSHIRE COLLEGE, KILWINNING CAMPUS, 22 February***

On 22 February I was delighted to visit Ayrshire College campus in Kilwinning to meet some of the team there and hear plans for the new North Ayrshire Future Skills Hub which will deliver a flexible and dynamic space for future training in a variety of areas including engineering and renewable energies.

This is true partnership working with North Ayrshire having been involved in the asset transfer of land for the new building.

My thanks to Michael Breen and his team at Ayrshire College, including Cameron Bell, Head of Construction and Trades at the College for discussing the plans with me.

### ***ARDROSSAN TASK FORCE MEETING, 23 February***

I attended a meeting of the Ardrossan Task Force on 23 February which was chaired by the new Scottish Government Minister for Transport, Jenny Gilruth MSP. Attendees received an update on the vessel and on legal and commercial arrangements. There was also an update on the Troon Infrastructure Project.

### ***COSLA CONFERENCE AND CONVENTION, 24 & 25 February***

I attended the COSLA Conference on 24 February and COSLA Convention meeting on 25 February.



### ***TRADE UNION AND MEDIA BUDGET BRIEFINGS, 25 February***

On 25 February I attended two separate budget briefings with the Trade Unions and with local media. These were to outline some of the budget proposals in advance of the Council's budget meeting scheduled for 2 March.

### ***COSLA SPECIAL LEADERS MEETING, 25 February***

On 25 February I attended a COSLA Special Leaders meeting to discuss the following items:

- Coronavirus (Recovery and Reform) (Scotland) Bill Consultation
- Levelling Up White Paper and UK Shared Prosperity Fund
- Local Government Pre-Election Period and COSLA Planning
- Local Government Finance
- Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies

### ***ST MICHAEL'S WYND & FRIAR'S LAWN SITE VISITS, 28 February***

Also on 28 February, I visited a further two housing developments this time in Kilwinning. The first was at St Michael's Wynd which will see the construction of 79 new properties scheduled to be finished by the autumn of this year. The other site was Friar's Lawn which will have a further 22 new properties.

As previously stated, North Ayrshire Council is delivering one of the most ambitious housing programmes in Scotland for decades.

### ***AYRSHIRE ECONOMIC JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING, 28 February***

Later on 28 February, I attended a meeting of the Ayrshire Economic Joint Committee. Attendees received updates on the following:

- Ayrshire Growth Deal
- Ayrshire Growth Deal Draft Annual Report
- Ayrshire Growth Deal Draft Benefits Realisation Plan
- Ayrshire Growth Deal Digital Update

### ***VISIT TO LARGS PROMENADE (INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT), 1 March***

On 1 March, I visited Largs Promenade to see some of investment that has been made in physical infrastructure and open spaces. This follows approval of £4.034 million investment made by my Cabinet in June of last year. This investment recognises the importance of the physical environment and outdoors as part of the recovery from the pandemic and to ensure the Council has sustainable infrastructure for communities to enjoy and to help promote tourism. This amount will include investment in coastal playparks (£0.500m), development of a programme of parks improvement works including drainage and furniture upgrades (£0.150m) and street furniture improvement works targeted at tourist and coastal areas including new litter bins, benches and signage (up to £0.250m).

### ***MEETING WITH LORD OFFORD (STEP PROJECT), 2 March***

On 2 March, together with North Ayrshire Council Chief Executive, Craig Hatton, North Ayrshire Council Head of Service for Economic Development and Regeneration, Caitriona McAuley and Professor Declan Diver from Glasgow University, I attended a meeting with Lord Offord, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State to the Scotland Office to discuss the STEP Fusion Project.

### ***MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING, 3 March***

On 3 March I was delighted to sign a Memorandum of Understanding between North Ayrshire Council and the University of Stirling which is a key milestone in North Ayrshire's programme to capitalise on the blue economy opportunity. This is an exciting opportunity to work in partnership with a sector-leading academic expert providing a platform to develop our blue economy and Ayrshire Growth Deal plans. Throughout the partnership, we will identify our project development methodology for delivering an International Marine Science and Environment Centre at Ardrossan and a Firth of Clyde Living Laboratory, including identifying a network of public and private sector partners and resources that can support and lead delivery.

### ***VISIT TO BOOTH WELSH, 3 March***

On 3 March, together with North Ayrshire Council's Director of Growth and Investment, Karen Yeomans and North Ayrshire Council's Regeneration Manager, Marnie Ritchie, I visited Booth Welsh in Irvine to find out how plans have been progressing for the Digital Processing Manufacturing Centre (DPMC). Since the partners signing of the Memorandum of Understanding in August 2021 and Cabinet agreement of 30 November 2021, partners have been progressing the development of Phase 1, providing online training courses and preparing a related Collaboration Agreement that will be signed in March 2022.

Community Wealth Building opportunities for the project can be summarised as:

- Attracting an anchor institution to North Ayrshire;
- Procurement opportunities for local companies;
- Development of community benefits into contract clauses e.g. apprenticeships;
- Involvement of local schools and colleges in accessing the DPMC facility and creating a skills programme;
- Improving digital skills and capabilities within the local area; and
- Transformation of the manufacturing base and skills base through targeted investment by providing digital services and training, accessible to local people and businesses.

### ***COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING, 3 March***

Also on 3 March, I chaired a meeting of the Community Planning Partnership Board. The Board received reports and updates on the following items:

- Fall Fighters Receive report delivered by Ian McMeekin, Scottish Fire and Rescue Board
- Community Learning and Development Plan
- Local Outcomes Improvement Plan 2022-2030
- Locality Partnership Overview Report

### ***HEADS OF TERMS SIGNING, 3 March***

Also on 3 March, I was delighted to sign the Heads of Terms between North Ayrshire Council and Clyde Marina Ltd which is an exciting project which will look to develop an extension to the existing and successful Ardrossan Marina. The project is an important part of the wider £170M Ardrossan regeneration programme which will look to bring increased tourism, jobs and spend to central Ardrossan in the next 5-10 years.

Plans include the redevelopment of Ardrossan Harbour, the development of the new education campus, housing and commercial uses at North Shore, and the marina extension. This is a nationally significant regeneration programme which will help to establish Ardrossan as a centre for lifelong learning and academic achievement, a tourism destination of choice, a multi-modal transport hub, the gateway to Arran and the Clyde islands and through the marine sciences centre an exemplar in marine innovation and the blue economy.

## LEADER'S REPORT



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Joe Cullinane". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Councillor Joe Cullinane  
**Leader North Ayrshire Council**

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## NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

16 March 2022

### North Ayrshire Council

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<b>Title:</b>	<b>North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Board: Minutes of Meetings held on 3 March 2022</b>
<b>Purpose:</b>	To submit the Minutes of the meeting of the North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership Board held on 3 March 2022.
<b>Recommendation:</b>	That the Council notes the Minutes contained in Appendix 1.

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#### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 It was previously agreed that the Minutes of the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Board be submitted to North Ayrshire Council for information. The key matters arising from the minutes have been highlighted for the attention of Council and are detailed in Section 2.1.

#### 2. Background

- 2.1 Minutes of the meeting of the CPP Board held on 3 March 2022 are appended. Particular matters for the Council's attention include the following:

##### **Agenda Item 3**

CPP partners discussed the impact that falls can have on individuals and partnership services. The Board committed to promoting the RoSPA Fall Fighter programme across member organisations and the community.

##### **Agenda Item 4**

Board members received a presentation on the progress of the implementation of the Community Learning and Development Plan. Partners complimented the range and impact of this work.

##### **Agenda Item 5**

Partners considered the development of the new Local Outcomes Improvement Plan 2022-30 including the results of the consultation and needs assessment. The Board agreed the plan and to commit their organisations to its delivery.

## **Agenda Item 6**

Partners had a wide ranging discussion on the achievements of the Locality Partnerships, and the progress made since their establishment.

## **Agenda Item 7**

CPP Board members provided updates on key developments and joint working opportunities.

### **3. Proposals**

- 3.1 That the Council notes the Minutes contained in Appendix 1.

### **4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty**

#### **Financial**

- 4.1 None

#### **Human Resources**

- 4.2 None

#### **Legal**

- 4.3 None

#### **Equality/Socio-economic**

- 4.4 None

#### **Environmental and Sustainability**

- 4.5 None

#### **Key Priorities**

- 4.6 The CPP activities detailed within this report support the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.

#### **Community Wealth Building**

- 4.7 None

### **5. Consultation**

- 5.1 No consultation was required.

Audrey Sutton  
Executive Director, Communities and Education

For further information please contact **Morna Rae, Senior Manager (Policy, Performance and Community Planning)**, on [mrae@north-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:mrae@north-ayrshire.gov.uk).

### **Background Papers**

Appendix 1: CPP Board Notes (March 2022)

## **Community Planning Partnership Board**

Thursday 3 March 2022 at 11.00 am

Via Microsoft Teams



North Ayrshire  
Community Planning Partnership

### **Present**

#### **North Ayrshire Council**

Joe Cullinane, Elected Member (**Chair**)

John Bell, Elected Member

Marie Burns, Elected Member

Alex Gallagher, Elected Member

Anthony Gurney, Elected Member

Craig Hatton, Chief Executive

Audrey Sutton, Executive Director

Rhona Arthur, Head of Service

#### **North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership**

Caroline Cameron, Director

#### **DWP**

Susan Agnew

#### **KA Leisure**

Lorraine Tulloch, KA Leisure Board Member

#### **NHS Ayrshire and Arran**

Lesley Bowie, Chair NHS Ayrshire & Arran Board (**Vice Chair**)

Claire Burden, Chief Executive

Ruth Mellor, Consultant in Public Health

#### **Police Scotland**

Superintendent Derek Frew

#### **Scottish Enterprise**

Theresa Correia, Senior Manager

#### **Scottish Fire and Rescue Service**

Ian McMeekin, Area Manager

#### **Scottish Government**

Sam Anson, Location Director

#### **Skill Development Scotland**

Paul Zealey, Skills Planning Lead

#### **Scottish Partnership for Transport**

Allan Comrie, Senior Transport Planner

### **In Attendance**

Morna Rae (NAC), Angela Morrell (NAC), Jennifer McGee (NAC),

### **Apologies**

Cllr E McMaster (NAC), Cllr S Davidson (NAC), Carol Turnbull (Ayrshire College) Bob Martin (NA IJB), Karen Yeomans (NAC), Kaileigh Brown (TACT), Vicki Yuill (Arran CVS), Sheila Lynn (DWP).



## **1. Welcome and Apologies**

In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies for absence were noted.

## **2. Minute of the Previous Meeting and Action Note**

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 2 December 2021 were approved.

## **3. Fall Fighters**

Ian McMeekin provided the Board with a report in relation to fall fighter awareness raising. I McMeekin highlighted that falls can have a huge impact on individual's lives, as well as on our partner services. Falls are also the single biggest cause of accidental injuries in the home, and the largest cause of accidental death among over-65s in the UK.

Earlier this year the CPP Senior Officers Group received presentation from RoSPA. Following the meeting there were further discussions around the opportunities for partners to work closer together to address this issue.

RoSPA offer a free online Fall Fighter programme which can be undertaken individually or in group sessions. It raises awareness of the risks of falls and how to prevent them. A link to the online programme was embedded within the report issued to the Board.

RoSPA are very keen to work with all Local Authorities and Community Planning Partnerships and would welcome North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership agreeing to implement the awareness programme.

Hazel Borland highlighted that this is a very welcome opportunity. The work with SFRS and ambulance colleagues already taking place has been very valuable. H Borland also commented that she would be happy for the NHS Ayrshire and Arran Falls Co-ordinator to support and get involved in this work.

A Sutton highlighted that the opportunities for the Third Sector to take up some of this awareness raising would be welcomed.

R Mellor highlighted the risks of falling outdoors and asked for information on North Ayrshire's approach to gritting. C Hatton advised that the Council has an extensive gritting strategy, which focuses on higher footfall areas such as schools, town centres and sheltered housing units.

The Board agreed to promote the Fall Fighter programme across their organisations and will encourage members of staff, volunteers and the wider community to undertake the programme.

## **4. Community Learning and Development Plan**

Angela Morrell provided the Board with a six month update on the Community Learning and Development Plan.

A Morrell advised the Board that the North Ayrshire Community Learning and Development (CLD) Plan was submitted to the Scottish Government in October 2021. The plan is focused on a co-production model, there were a number of workshops, community focus groups and consultations to gather the information to create the plan.

The team identified key priorities under each of the CLD areas of work as per occupational standards. These are:

- Youthwork and work with young people,
- Community development/ community capacity,
- Adult education, literacies, employability, Gaelic and ESOL (English for speakers of other languages), and
- Unmet need.

A Morrell provided an overview of each of the key areas of work

**Youth Work** – the priorities that were identified are:

- Climate Change
- Poverty and inequality
- Digital connectivity
- Young people's voice and rights
- Positive destinations for 16-19 year olds
- Attainment
- Wider achievement
- Health and Wellbeing

Key areas have been discussed at a Joint Cabinet meeting and a robust action plan has been created to follow through on some of the issues raised by young people.

A member of the team will be receiving a lifetime achievement award at the National Youthlink Awards and there are also finalists for the Volunteer of the Year Award and the STEM and Digital Award.

**Community Development/ Community Capacity** - the priorities that were identified are:

- Food insecurities
- Community Asset Transfer
- Participation and Democracy
- Community Leadership
- Community Engagement
- Participation Request
- Networking
- Funding

To support this work, a refreshed community association handbook has been created in partnership with NAFCO (North Ayrshire Federation of Community Organisations). This handbook provides guidance and support for all community associations.

In terms of local food systems, a google map has been created to allow organisations and communities to check where their local larder is situated and their opening times. There are currently 11 larders in North Ayrshire with another three scheduled to open.

Three Participatory Budgeting (PB) events have taken place during the last reporting period:

- Youth PB – 4726 young people voted in this PB and £97,500 awarded to a variety of groups that are working with young people.
- Locality PB - £154,609 was allocated across all six localities. Supporting 154 groups to address their local priorities.
- Arts and Culture PB - £9408 was awarded to groups delivering arts and culture.

In terms of Adult Education, a CBAL Investment Plan has been created with the Third Sector Interface. £67,000 was awarded from the Scottish Government to support this work. 45 applications were received and 27 organisations have been successful in securing the funding they required.

We now have our first constituted ESOL group, who have already secured £11,500 funding during this reporting period to develop activities. They recently took over the Café Solace kitchen and provided free Syrian food.

In terms of unmet need, an engagement and participation structure has been created for older people which sees Council Chief Officers meeting with older people. A post has also been created to work with older people forums. Two face to face events have taken place and have received excellent feedback from those in attendance. The engagement hub/toolkit resources which were created pre-pandemic will be soft launched via the Community Engagement Network in March.

A Morrell highlighted that over the next six months the team will be working on:

- Implementing the Engagement Hub/toolkit resources that were created pre pandemic,
- Return to full programmes,
- Addressing the digital gap,
- Older peoples voice, and
- Updates to all Locality Partnerships.

L Bowie commented that it is amazing what the team has achieved and asked if there had been an opportunity to come together with other local authorities to showcase this work. A Morrell confirmed that the team are part of a collaborative with other Ayrshire Councils and Dumfries and Galloway Council.

Cllr Gallagher commended the work that has been done by A Morrell and her team.

Cllr Burns highlighted that as a Chair of one of the Locality Partnerships she sees how this work has impacted the work of the Locality Partnership. Cllr Burns also commented that staff within the team have been amazing and all go above and beyond their duties.

A Morrell thanked both Cllrs for their comments and advised that these would be passed on to the team.

A Sutton conveyed her thanks to the team for this work and highlighted that it is important to note that this is not a centralised plan but North Ayrshire wide. The real value is the reflection of all the communities within this plan.

The Chair thanked A Morrell for her update and stated that the Board would welcome a further progress report later in the year.

## **5. Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) 2022 – 2030**

Rhona Arthur and Morna Rae provided the Board with an update on the work of the LOIP 2022-2030.

R Arthur highlighted that the LOIP is our plan going forward about how we can work together and focuses on where Community Planning partners can make a difference. In North Ayrshire we have really strong working relationships with partners. This was evidenced in the 2020 Best Value report. The LOIP captures the power of everyone working together in our most vulnerable areas.

R Arthur also wished to convey her thanks to M Rae, K Brown and wider partners for their support with this work.

M Rae advised the Board provided information on:

- The provisions of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 s14 stating that the LOIP is a binding plan for CPP partners,
- From autumn 2021 there has been discussion at CPP Board and Senior Officer Group meetings, one to one meetings between the M Rae and CPP partners, and workshop discussions,
- The Stakeholder Reference Group which guided the participation process and ensured that the questions being asked were meaningful to our communities,
- The consultation process and the results of this,
- The Strategic Needs Assessment,
- The Health Impact Assessment carried out as part of the CPP commitment to health in all polices, and
- Research into other areas to identify best practice.

M Rae explained that in developing the LOIP we have used the rationale of not replicating existing work but what can we do more of, accelerate or do differently. The LOIP focusses on a smaller number of priorities, and each priority should address inequalities and be partnership in nature.

M Rae advised the Board that the LOIP is broken down in to three sections. Wellbeing, Work and World.

**Wellbeing** will focus on health and wellbeing:

- Addressing inequalities,
- Promoting children and young people's wellbeing, and
- Enabling community wellbeing.

**Work** will focus on economy and skills:

- Increasing employment,
- Developing volunteering, and
- Better supporting our young people to develop the skills they need to play a strong role in our local economy.

**World** will focus on climate change:

- Working together to reduce carbon emissions,
- Increasing active travel, and
- Increasing carbon literacy within our organisations and communities.

M Rae also highlighted the next steps for this work should it receive Board approval include finalisation of the LOIP document, and creation of an easy read version and LOIP on a page. Action planning in collaboration with our communities is required (an engagement plan will be created to support this) and a performance management framework will be developed.

R Arthur commented that the action plan will be a live action plan that will grow. Some of the actions will grow at a faster pace than others.

Partners commended the work and the approach taken. The Board agreed to approve the LOIP 2022-30 and commit partner organisations to its delivery.

## 6. Locality Partnership Overview

M Rae provided the Board with an update on the work of the six Locality Partnerships in North Ayrshire.

The report highlighted:

- Additional £3m funding for the Community Investment Fund (CIF) was approved in the Autumn 2021,
- The number of CIF Applications received and approved over the last six months,
- The common themes discussed across the six Locality Partnerships such as:
  - Health and Social Care Partnership service pressures and changing delivery models and the priorities addressed through the HSCP Locality Forums,
  - Education updates on the return to school, exam arrangements, roll out of 1140 hours and staffing,
  - Presentations on the range of grants that the Locality Partnerships have available for disbursement, and decisions on the allocation of grants,
  - Community Council Elections, and
  - Membership changes following the 2022 Local Government Election
- Specific items discussed at the six Locality Partnerships

R Arthur commented on the progress by the Locality Partnerships and conveyed her thanks to everyone involved. R Arthur also commented that it is amazing to see how the CIF supports projects in each of the six areas.

Cllr Bell highlighted that in terms of Garnock Valley one of the the success of the Locality Partnership has brought together the three Community Councils who have recently carried out a joint PB exercise.

Cllr Gallagher commented that the projects that have come from the North Coast have been fantastic achievements. Cllr Gallagher also spoke about the locality sub groups and options for the chairing of these.

Cllr Burns commented that the Locality Partnerships have come a long way over the last six years and conveyed her thanks to the Connected Communities team within the Irvine locality. Cllr Burns also explained that the launch of the chit chats in Irvine helped massively as discussions were much more localised.

The Chair thanked M Rae for her report.

## 7. Partner Discussion and Sharing on Key Developments and Opportunities

Scottish Enterprise – T Correia advised that Jane Martin will be the new Managing Director for Innovation and Investment. The National Strategy for Economic Transformation was published by the Scottish Government this week and will set the direction for Scottish Enterprise. Offices reopened on 28 February.

Connected Communities – R Arthur highlighted that an online consultation on period dignity will be launched next week. The aim of the consultation is to tackle period poverty and to improve the service provision by asking for community views, feedback and support on tackling the issue and helping to bring about positive change to reduce stigma and widen access to essential products. R Arthur encouraged the Board to share the consultation.

R Arthur also highlighted that the Council approved a statement of intent to develop a Participation Strategy which will set out the ways in which communities can have their say, take part, share decisions and take ownership.

SPT - A Comrie advised the Board that £1.85m funding has been agreed to support improvements on active travel in North Ayrshire.

Police Scotland – D Frew highlighted that Police Scotland have appointed Inspector Iain Murray to lead the work of the Community Wellbeing Unit. The unit will seek to better understand and prevent repeat victimisation, target vulnerable people and actively seek to include people who may not traditionally engage with the police.

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service – I McMeekin highlighted that the team are currently working on their strategic plan and there will be a plan for North Ayrshire. Following the consultation for unwanted fire alarm systems, [Option A](#) was agreed, however implementation has been postponed to April 2023.

I McMeekin also highlighted that the tri services group which is made up of representatives from Police, Fire and Ambulance services, recently looked at ambulance demand and capacity review. Both Ardrossan and Dreghorn fire stations will now be colocated with two additional ambulances being located in Ardrossan and one at Dreghorn.

A Sutton highlighted a conversation at the Public Protection Group this morning on The National Care Service and the potential implications they will have for partners.

## **8. AOCB**

No other business was discussed. The Chair conveyed his thanks to everyone in attendance.

## **9. Date of next Meeting**

The next meeting of the North Ayrshire CPP Board will be held on **Thursday 23 June 2022 at 11.00 am via Microsoft Teams.**

## NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

16<sup>th</sup> March 2022

### North Ayrshire Council

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<b>Title:</b>	<b>Best Value Assurance Audit Recommendations Update</b>
<b>Purpose:</b>	To advise on progress against our Best Value Assurance Audit Recommendations
<b>Recommendation:</b>	That Council: (a) Approve the update on our Best Value Assurance Audit recommendations; and (b) Agrees that recommendation actions can be deemed as complete with no further update necessary.

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#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 [North Ayrshire Council's Best Value Assurance Report](#) published in June 2020 presented the findings of the Best Value Audit undertaken in February and March 2020 (prior to the first Covid-19 coronavirus lockdown). The previous Best Value Audit took place in 2011.
- 1.2 The Best Value Assurance Report 2020 was extremely positive and demonstrated significant improvement since the previous Best Value Audit in 2011. It provides substantial assurance that North Ayrshire Council complies with its statutory obligations to secure Best Value.
- 1.3 The Commission commended the significant progress made since the 2011 Best Value report:
- 1.4 *"The core of this progress has been a good sense of self-awareness: The Council has been clear on how and where it can improve, has a well-defined strategy, and shares with its partners a strong vision for North Ayrshire. This strategic direction is reinforced by a record of collaboration: between Elected Members and officers; in engaging with staff in improvement; and in the empowering approach taken by the Council in its relationship with its communities."* (The Accounts Commission).
- 1.5 The Commission stated this is particularly encouraging due to the challenging demographic context of deprivation and demography in North Ayrshire.
- 1.6 The findings of the Best Value Audit were presented to Council on [23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020](#).

## **2. Summary of Key Messages**

- 2.1 A summary of key messages as at March 2020 are as follows:
- 2.2 The Council has a strong culture of continuous improvement. It has significantly improved and continued to make progress since the last Best Value report in 2011. Council priorities, plans, actions, and outcomes are clearly linked. Staff play an active role in identifying and driving improvement and the Council is delivering improvements for communities and residents.
- 2.3 There is a strong culture of collaborative working at North Ayrshire Council. Elected Members and officers work well together, and the Council works effectively with a wide range of partners including the Community Planning Partnership (CPP), the Integrated Joint Board (IJB) and private business. There is joint ownership of, and commitment to, delivering agreed strategic priorities. The Council Plan, the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan and local community plans are all clearly aligned and focused on addressing North Ayrshire's key challenges.
- 2.4 Despite significant economic and demographic challenges, the Council is performing well and is a frequent award winner and early adopter for national pilots. Performance management arrangements are clearly focused on priority areas and data is used to drive improvements.
- 2.5 The Council's arrangements for financial planning and management are good overall and it has significantly improved its asset management and procurement arrangements since the last Best Value Report. While the Council has made clear progress with its transformation agenda, including setting aside money to fund projects, its savings plans fall short of the estimated funding gap.
- 2.6 The Council is committed to community empowerment and is recognised by the Scottish Government and Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA) as a sector leader. The Council's approach is focused on embedding community empowerment in every-day business. The Council works well with a wide number of communities and groups including young people and tenants.



### 3. Recommendations

- 3.1 There are four recommendations arising from the 2020 Best Value Audit, these are summarised below.

#### **Recommendation 1**

The Council should fully develop and deliver detailed transformation plans to meet the current estimated funding shortfall. To achieve this, it should ensure sufficient arrangements are in place to support, monitor and deliver the expected outcomes. This includes:

- Developing the transformation themes into projects and further developing the governance arrangements to ensure the Council has the skills needed to implement the next stage of transformation.
- Developing a robust benefits realisation tracker to assess whether the Council has achieved its aims.

#### **Current Status**

The Transformation and Renewal Programme continues to be progressed. The broad outline of the programme was included in the Budget report to Council on 4th March 2021. The Governance structure which supports the programme is in place through Transformation Boards, aligned to the Council Plan themes of Inspiring Place, Aspiring Communities and A Council for the Future, as well as through the Executive Leadership Team. All the individual projects / activities have been assigned to individual owners and a new Sustainable Change Programme for 2022/23 and beyond (rather than Transformation and Renewal programme) was discussed by the ELT in November 2021 with further discussions in January 2022 prior to the start of the new financial year.

A new monitoring framework to track progress has been developed. This provides a medium to long term (10 years) framework which is split across agreed budget programme activity (approved on 4th March 2021) and budget pipeline activity i.e. projects / activities which continue to be progressed and developed. The impact on how this activity addresses the anticipated budget gap is also reflected in the framework. Importantly, the framework also captures any workforce implications for delivery and also the full time equivalent impact of any anticipated savings as well as capturing the anticipated key outcomes.

#### **Recommendation 2**

The Council must evolve workforce planning across all services, and clearly align service workforce plans to the transformation projects, in order to:

- Identify the numbers, cost and skills of the current and desired workforce.
- Effectively facilitate the transition from the current workforce composition to the desired workforce.

Workforce planning discussions recommenced in 2021 and have been updated at six monthly intervals for the majority of services. These meetings ensure that workforce planning is aligned with challenges, service reviews and the transformation agenda. In addition, the monitoring framework for transformation has been implemented and includes workforce information linked to transformation activity.

Heads of Service have two workforce planning meetings, Workforce Plan and Workforce Costs. The Workforce Plan covers the workforce demographics, transformation, PESTLE analysis and service review activity which helps shape the desired future workforce. The Workforce Costs meeting provides information on absence costs, overtime, vacancies etc. as well as key information that Heads of Service need to inform their planning in relation to their current and desired future workforce.

### **Recommendation 3**

The Council should work with locality partnerships to make clear what the intended impacts are of locality plans and make them publicly available.

Extensive work was undertaken in 2020 and 2021 on the refresh of locality partnership priorities. This led to five locality partnerships agreeing their ongoing priorities at their June 2021 meetings. A focus of this work was devising priorities which target local inequalities, as a result they are now clearer on the impact they want to achieve, e.g. Kilwinning moving from “traffic and parking” to “alleviating poverty and promoting equality of access to opportunities”. Work on the refresh of the Arran Locality priorities will continue into Quarter Four 2021/22 taking into account the development of the Island Plan.

Once the plans to support each locality’s priorities are agreed, these will be published on the Community Planning [website](#). This will add to the existing wide range of locality partnership information available such as meeting papers which include local progress updates, the current locality partnership priorities and impact summaries.

### **Recommendation 4**

The Council should review its Public Reporting online portal, North Ayrshire Performs, to make it more user friendly and accessible.

We have replaced our North Ayrshire Performs portal with a new Performance Dashboard developed in-house by the Corporate Policy, Performance and Elections Team and launched on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

The dashboard provides a much more user friendly and accessible way for our residents to access our performance data. We reviewed the information available to ensure it is as concise and relevant as possible; that it contains a link to the LGBF Benchmarking Tool; and includes our contact details. We ensured the layout is in line with our corporate and Annual Performance Reporting branding and can be updated with any changes.

The dashboard is available from our performance pages within our North Ayrshire Council website [www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/performance](http://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/performance) and linked to within our six monthly Council Plan performance reports.

Due to the innovative way we are presenting our information, we have been approached by several councils in Scotland including Midlothian Council and Aberdeenshire Council as well as Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council in Northern Ireland, to provide demonstrations and advice. We have worked closely with the GIS and Analytics Team to provide support on more technical areas such as Power BI licensing and integrating Power BI with performance management systems.

As the dashboard was developed inhouse we have full control of its evolution and will continue to make improvements based on general feedback as well as learning from the informal network being established through our demonstrations.

#### **4. Proposals**

It is proposed that Council: (a) Approve the update on our Best Value Assurance Audit recommendations; and (b) Agrees that recommendation actions can be deemed as complete with no further update necessary.

#### **5. Implications/Socio-economic Duty**

##### **Financial**

5.1 There are no financial implications.

##### **Human Resources**

5.2 There are no human resource implications.

##### **Legal**

5.3 This report confirms the arrangements for the Council's compliance with its duties under the Local Government Act 1992 and the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 and commitment to improving public performance reporting.

##### **Equality/Socio-economic**

5.4 There are no equality/socio-economic implications.

##### **Environmental and Sustainability**

5.5 There are no environmental and sustainability implications.

##### **Key Priorities**

5.6 This report helps to demonstrate the Council's delivery of its strategic priorities.

##### **Community Wealth Building**

5.7 There are no community wealth building implications.

## **6. Consultation**

- 6.1 Feedback from the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) informed the content of this report.

Craig Hatton  
Chief Executive

For further information please contact **Isla Hardy, Team Manager (Policy and Performance)** email [IslaHardy@north-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:IslaHardy@north-ayrshire.gov.uk).

### **Background Papers**

[North Ayrshire Council Best Value Assurance Report](#)