



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

North Ayrshire Council

A Meeting of North Ayrshire Council will be held remotely on **Wednesday, 17 February 2021** at **13:00** to consider the undernoted business.

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.

1 Apologies

2 Declarations of Interest

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

3 Previous Minutes

The accuracy of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 December 2020 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).

4 Provost's Report

Submit report by the Provost covering the period 7 December 2020 - 7 February 2021 (copy enclosed).

5 Leader's Report

Submit report by the Leader of the Council covering the period 7 December 2020 - 7 February 2021 (copy enclosed).

- 6 Minute Volume (issued under separate cover)**
Submit, for noting and for approval of any recommendations contained therein, the Minutes of Meetings of committees of the Council held in the period 14 September 2020 - 9 February 2021.
- 7 North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Board: Minutes of Meeting held on 2 December 2020**
Submit report by the Executive Director (Communities) on the Minutes of the meeting of the North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership Board held on 2 December 2020 (copy enclosed).
- 8 North Ayrshire Ventures Trust Ltd**
Submit report by the Chief Executive on the appointment of a new Director on the Board of North Ayrshire Ventures Trust Ltd (copy enclosed).
- 9 Ardrossan Harbour Update**
Submit report by the Director (Growth and Investment) on an update in respect of progress with the redevelopment of Ardrossan Harbour (copy enclosed).
- 10 Operation of Community Councils during COVID-19**
Submit report by the Head of Democratic Services on the application of some provisions within the Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils during the current COVID-19 pandemic (copy enclosed).
- 11 Questions**
In terms of Standing Order 12, submit:-

(1) a question by Councillor Donald L. Reid to the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care in the following terms:

"In the light of high levels of social isolation and loneliness experienced by many since the beginning of the Corona pandemic which began in March 2020, can the Leader (or relevant cabinet member) advise of the number of suicides in North Ayrshire which occurred between 1 January - 31 December 2019 and (if figures are currently available) for the period 1 January – 31 December 2020 (or to period in 2020 for which figures are available) and are any special measures currently in place to support those at risk of committing suicide?"

(2) a question by Councillor Donald L Reid to the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care in the following terms:

"Can the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care provide an update on the number of planned operations which have been cancelled at Crosshouse University Hospital between 1 April 2020 and 31 December 2020 due to the Covid pandemic; and what actions are being taken to reduce the operations backlog?"

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

"Can the Cabinet Member for Green New Deal and Sustainability provide Elected Members with an update on progress with the 2020/21 Roads Repair programme, with particular reference to roads in the Garnock Valley area included in that programme?"

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

"The report by Derek Feeley on the independent review of adult social care in Scotland was published this month. Amongst other recommendations it suggested the formation of a National Care Service.

Does the portfolio holder agree that:

- a. the Scottish Government's overhaul of Social Care 5 years ago, which was supposed to integrate Council community support services with the NHS through the setting up of Integrated Joint Boards, has failed?
- b. the formation of a National Care Service is yet another example of the Nationalist Government pursuing its Central Command and Control Policies to the exclusion of Local Councils?"

(5) a question by Councillor Murdoch to the Chair of the Planning Committee in the following terms:

"Can the Chair of Planning please confirm how many people have formally asked in writing to speak at the Planning Committee when it considers the Rigghill Wind Farm Application and confirm the date they were received?"

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

"Can the Leader of the Council please confirm what action North Ayrshire Council has taken regarding the incident at Hunterston Jetty on Tuesday 2nd February 2021 involving DS4 & DS8 Drilling Ships and will there be a full investigation?"

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

"In my Ward, I noticed electric car charging points have been installed in car parks in West Kilbride and Dalry. Can I ask the Leader who paid for these installations?"

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

“What percentage of goods and services paid for by NAC actually comes from businesses or suppliers with their headquarters or place of business within North Ayrshire?”

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

“During the discussion on setting the Hunterston DEPZ (Detailed Emergency Planning Zone), you said, “I have read the papers and listened for a year now to the advice we are getting and don’t see how we, within the framework that’s set for us as a Council, can make any other decision than the one that is recommended within the paper.” Does the Leader of the Council think that the whole process of being given the responsibility and then making the decision was fair and unrestricted and is he happy with the outcome?”

12 Motions

In terms of Standing Order 13, submit:-

(1) a motion by Councillor Billings, seconded by Councillor Ferguson, in the following terms:

"Over 10 years ago plans to enable a phased replacement of Scotland's subsidised ferries, including for the Arran route, were drawn up. Over 6 years ago at a public meeting in Brodick we were told there would be a new ferry for the Arran route coming into service in 2018 and that it would be designed to cope with Ardrossan harbour. Now in 2021 with over £150 million already spent, we are still waiting for that ferry that is in no way designed to cope with Ardrossan.

The cross-party Scottish parliamentary Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee enquired into what has happened to Arran's ferry, and published their report in December 2020. The report identified 'catastrophic' failings by those involved including the SNP Scottish government and the publicly owned ferry procurement company. The report includes recommendations to remedy the errors made. However, in response to the report the Scottish Minister for Energy, Connectivity and the Islands, Mr Wheelhouse, said in effect that the report is wrong, that the Scottish government is not at fault and that it did all it could to procure the Arran ferry.

If the Minister, Mr Wheelhouse, thinks that wasting £100s of millions of tax payers money to produce the shells of two ferries already over 3 years late is a good use of time and money, one does wonder what he is thinking about. Parliamentary committees are there to scrutinise the actions of the government, and the government is accountable to parliament. When errors are made, they must be recognised and changes made to make improvements. Otherwise further waste will result and it is our communities and economy that suffer.

I therefore move that North Ayrshire Council:

a. agrees that the Scottish Minister for Energy, Connectivity and the Islands must accept the findings of the ferry enquiry's report, and must establish new systems of working for the future procurement of ferries that take account of the report's recommendations so as to address the failings of the current processes;

and

b. directs North Ayrshire Council's Chief Executive to write to the Minister for Energy, Connectivity and the Islands informing him of the Council's opinions; reminds the Minister of the harm that is being caused to North Ayrshire's island communities due to the inadequate ferry services and asks the Minister to how he intends to address the issues raised in the report so that future ferry procurement processes are fit for purpose and produce ferries in a timely and cost effective manner."

(2) a motion by Councillor Ferguson, seconded by Councillor Marshall, in the following terms:

"The Council delivery plan which forms part of our strategic planning approach has helped to lay the foundations to counter the centralising approach of the Scottish Government towards local government, which has resulted in North Ayrshire being one of the lowest funded councils over the last decade.

We are concerned that this ongoing situation is having a detrimental impact on its ability to provide important public services for our citizens both now and in the future.

In order to look at alternatives to ensure North Ayrshire can reach its full potential we suggest that the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Scotland asking him if the UK government would consider dealing directly with COSLA and North Ayrshire Council in considering allocating grant funding, to ensure that North Ayrshire Council receives its fair share of funding.

We note the existence of the Scottish Government's document "Scottish Shared Prosperity Fund" and the UK Government's decision, announced in the Spending Review, to use its replacement for EU Structural Funds to work in partnership with local authorities and communities right across Scotland to ensure local accountability.

We move that the Council

1. agrees Devolution is the settled will of the Scottish people;
2. agrees Devolution has been beneficial for Scotland and the rest of the United Kingdom;
3. regrets that local government continues to be at the forefront of SNP austerity;
4. instructs the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Scotland asking him if the UK government would consider dealing directly with COSLA and North Ayrshire Council in considering allocating grant funding, to ensure that North Ayrshire Council receives its fair share of funding; and
5. instructs the Chief Executive to write to COSLA confirming that North Ayrshire Council supports the UK Government's localised approach which would allow North Ayrshire Council to spend our share of future UK Shared Prosperity Funding in line with the Council Delivery Plan which supports the Local Outcome Improvement Plan."

13

Urgent Items

Any other items which the Chair 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 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.

North Ayrshire Council Sederunt

Ian Clarkson (Provost)
Robert Barr (Depute Provost)
John Bell
Timothy Billings
Joy Brahim
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
Angela Stephen
John Sweeney

Chair:

Apologies:

Attending:

North Ayrshire Council
16 December 2020

At a Meeting of North Ayrshire Council at 2.05 p.m. involving participation by remote electronic means.

Present

Ian Clarkson, Robert Barr, John Bell, Timothy Billings, Joy Brahim, 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, Louise McPhater, Davina McTiernan, Jimmy Miller, Jim Montgomerie, Ian Murdoch, Donald Reid, Donald L. Reid, John Sweeney and Angela Stephen.

In Attendance

C. Hatton, Chief Executive; R. McCutcheon, Executive Director and J. Cameron, Senior Manager (Housing Strategy and Customer Service) (Place); A. Sutton, Interim Executive Director (Communities); K. Yeomans, Director (Growth and Investment); A. Sutherland, Head of Service (Children, Families and Criminal Justice) (Health and Social Care Partnership); and M. Boyd Head of Finance, A. Fraser, Head of Democratic Services, F. Walker, Head of People and ICT, A. Craig, Senior Manager (Legal Services), M. McColm, Senior Manager (Communications), E. Gray and D. McCaw, Committee Services Officers and M. Anderson, Senior Manager (Committee and Member Services) (Chief Executive's Service).

Also In Attendance

Duncan Cox, Interim Head of Dosimetry Services Department and CRCE Business Continuity Lead and Antony Bexon, Head of Radiation Assessments Department (Public Health England - Centre for Radiation, Chemical and Environmental Hazards); and J. McGeorge, Coordinator (Ayrshire Civil Contingencies Team).

Chair

Provost Clarkson in the Chair.

1. Provost's Remarks

The Provost welcomed Members and officers to the meeting, which was proceeding with Members in attendance on a wholly remote basis by electronic means. A particular welcome was extended to Duncan Cox, Antony Bexon and Jane McGeorge, who were in attendance in connection with Agenda Item 8 (Determination of the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ) for Hunterston A and B Nuclear Power Stations).

The Provost dealt with preliminary matters, including an announcement that the meeting would be live streamed.

The Provost also intimated that an urgent item, in the form of a motion by Councillor Foster, would be considered at the end of the meeting and invited the Head of Democratic Services to address the meeting on the terms of the motion.

2. Apologies

The Provost invited intimation of apologies for absence. There were none.

Given the virtual nature of the meeting, the Provost then invited the Clerk to read the sederunt.

Councillor McNicol lost his electronic connection and effectively left the meeting at this point.

3. Declarations of Interest

In terms of Standing Order 10 and Section 5 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, the following Members declared an indirect pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 13(1) (Motion) as a result of having a family member(s) who was an employee of North Ayrshire Council:

Councillors Hill, McClung, McMaster, McPhater, Montgomerie, Murdoch, D.L. Reid and Sweeney.

The above Members intimated that, as the nature of their interest was remote/insignificant, they intended to remain and participate in the determination of this item.

There were no declarations of the Party Whip.

4. Previous Minutes

The accuracy of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 November 2020 was confirmed and the Minutes signed in accordance with Paragraph 7(1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

5. Provost's Report

Submitted report by the Provost for the period from 2 November – 6 December 2020.

The Provost highlighted the following elements of his written report:

- Remembrance Sunday events on 8 November 2020, including the laying of a wreath and participation in a 'doorstep' two-minute silence;
- the launch of the Christmas Gift Appeal on 19 November 2020; and
- Irvine Burns Club's monthly social event and Irvine Lasses Burns Club St. Andrew's Night celebrations, both of which took place virtually

The Provost then made reference to the case of a Three Towns resident who had found himself destitute in the Philippines, and to the extraordinary demonstration of community spirit and kindness which had helped to bring him home. The Provost invited Councillor Montgomerie, who had played an integral part in this, to speak.

Councillor Montgomerie addressed the meeting on the circumstances surrounding the resident's return and extended thanks to everyone within the Council who had provided assistance and advice, particularly the Chief Executive, Executive Director (Place), Head of Democratic Services, Interim Head of Service (Commercial) (Place) and Senior Manager (Homeless and Community Safety (Place).

The Provost concluded his report by extending his best wishes to all for a happy and safe Christmas and a better New Year.

Noted.

6. Leader's Report

Submitted report by the Leader of the Council for the period from 2 November – 6 December 2020.

The Leader highlighted the significant milestone reached in terms of the signing of the Ayrshire Growth Deal. Councillor Cullinane recorded his thanks to all of the officers involved in reaching this point and looked forward to progress on the individual Growth Deal projects in the coming year.

The Leader also made reference to continued progress in relation to the Community Wealth Building Strategy, including the recruitment of staff, involvement in a number of events and participation in local and national meetings. Councillor Cullinane referred in particular to a productive meeting which had taken place with representatives of Strathclyde Pension Fund.

Noted.

7. Council Minute Volume

Submitted for noting, the Minutes of meetings of committees of the Council held in the period 4 September – 2 December 2020.

Noted.

8. Annual Review of Governance Documentation

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the key Governance documentation regulating the operation of Council, its committees and officers.

Members asked questions, and received clarification, on the following in terms of proposals relating to Standing Orders:

- the intention to preclude a two-minute preamble for supplementary questions; and
- whether consideration had been given to including broader provision for emergencies beyond those relating to a public health matter

Councillor Barr, seconded by Councillor Glover, moved that the Council approve the recommendations set out in the officer's report.

As an amendment, Councillor Dickson, seconded by Councillor Burns, moved that the Council approve the recommendations set out in the officer's report, subject to deletion of the proposed provision within Standing Orders intended to clarify that no additional two-minute preamble should be permitted for a supplementary question.

There then followed debate and summing up.

On a division and a roll call vote, there voted for the amendment, Councillors Brahim, Burns, Cullinane, Davidson, Dickson, Foster, Gurney, Hill, Larsen, Macaulay, McClung, McMaster, McNicol, McPhater, McTiernan, Montgomerie, Murdoch, Donald L. Reid and Sweeney (19) and for the motion, Councillors Barr, Bell, Billings, Clarkson, Easdale, Ferguson, Gallacher, Gallagher, George, Glover, Marshall, Miller, Donald Reid and Stephen (14), and the amendment was declared carried.

Accordingly, the Council, having reviewed the Governance documentation, agreed to approve with effect from 1 January 2021 the revised versions of:

- (i) the Standing Orders for Meetings and Proceedings of the Council attached at Appendix 1 to the report, subject to deletion of the final sentence of Standing Order 2.4 which proposed removal of any provision for a two-minute preamble for a supplementary question;
- (ii) the Scheme of Administration attached at Appendix 2 to the report;
- (iii) the Scheme of Delegation to Officers attached at Appendix 3 to the report (the delegation to the Head of Democratic Services contained at para 53(d) on page 19 of the Scheme of Delegation to come into effect immediately); and
- (iv) the Financial Regulations attached at Appendix 4 to the report.

Councillor McNicol re-joined the meeting during consideration of this item. Councillor Stephen temporarily lost her electronic connection to the meeting during consideration of this item. The Head of Democratic Services confirmed that the Members in question were not precluded from participating in the determination of this item.

9. Determination of the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ) for Hunterston A and B Nuclear Power Station

Submitted report by the Head of Democratic Services on the extent of the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ) for Hunterston B Nuclear Power Station, under the Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations 2019 (REPPiR).

On 18 May 2020, the Chief Executive agreed under Emergency Governance arrangements (a) to determine that the boundary of the DEPZ for Hunterston B should be 2.4km to maintain the current status-quo in practice; (b) that this boundary should be fully reviewed at the first Council meeting after 1 December 2020; and (c) to determine the DEPZ for Hunterston A at 0k.

The Head of Democratic Services presented the report. The Provost invited Duncan Cox and Antony Bexon of Public Health England to provide some additional technical information.

Members then asked questions, and received clarification from the Head of Democratic Services, the representatives of Public Health England and the Ayrshire Civil Contingencies Team representative, in respect of the following:

- the duration of the current DEPZ given that Hunterston B would soon cease production;
- the usual review period for the DEPZ and opportunities for earlier review in the event of a material change of circumstance;
- the difference between the regulatory arrangements in place within the UK compared with France and elsewhere;
- the relevance of any potential impact on house prices arising from an area's inclusion within the DEPZ;
- the need for ongoing safety measures at Hunterston B once it had ceased production;
- the provision, use and effectiveness of stable iodine tablets, as well as pre-distribution arrangements;
- actions which might be taken with regard to road traffic within the DEPZ at the time of any incident;
- the rationale for seeking to apply broadly the same DEPZ provision across the whole country, notwithstanding locally relevant factors such as geography or roads infrastructure;
- off-site contingency planning arrangements with regard to the adjacent village of Fairlie and surrounding areas, including Cumbernauld;
- the effectiveness of contingency planning arrangements and factors which might impact on the effective distribution of stable iodine, including adverse weather and the current Covid-19 pandemic; and
- the extent, and limitations, of the Council's powers with regard to setting the DEPZ

In terms of Standing Order 5.7, the Provost agreed that the meeting be adjourned at 3.25 p.m. for a comfort break. The meeting reconvened at 3.35 p.m. with the same Members and officers present and in attendance.

Members then asked further questions, and received clarification, in respect of the following:

- any impact on neighbouring Councils of seeking to extend the DEPZ significantly beyond the radius recommended;
- the arrangements in place with regard to the distribution of stable iodine to areas outwith the DEPZ; and
- the effectiveness of stable iodine in general and their use by different age profiles and those with particular medical conditions

The Chief Executive then provided Members with further information and reassurance on the emergency planning arrangements in place, the significant scrutiny to which arrangements were subjected, and the degree to which plans were rehearsed.

Councillor Cullinane, seconded by Councillor Bell, moved that the Council approve the recommendations set out in the officer's report.

As an amendment, Councillor Murdoch, seconded by Councillor Hill, sought to move that the Council agree to increase the DEPZ around Hunterston to 20km; take note that those living within 20km of a nuclear power station within France have the option of having stable iodine within their homes; and provide the same option to residents in North Ayrshire living within 20km of Hunterston.

The Head of Democratic Services advised the Provost that, in terms of Standing Order 13.5, as the amendment was likely to give rise to a contravention by the Council of an enactment or rule of law, it should not be accepted. In terms of Standing Order 14.5, Councillor Murdoch, with the agreement of his seconder, agreed to withdraw his amendment.

As a further amendment Councillor Billings, seconded by Councillor Burns, moved as follows:

“That the Council accept the proposals in the report, but further ask the Council to raise the concerns made during this discussion with the relevant bodies involved, and to gather and make public advice and information about the organisation of protective measures for those who live in the Outer Protective Zone, so that people have confidence that appropriate measures are in place.”

In terms of Standing Order 14.5, Councillor Cullinane, with the agreement of his seconder, agreed to withdraw his motion in favour of Councillor Billings' amendment. This became the substantive motion.

There being no further amendments, the substantive motion was declared carried.

Accordingly, the Council agreed as follows:

- (a) to retain the status quo that the boundary of the DEPZ for Hunterston B should include all properties currently within the DEPZ, as shown delineated in black on the plan at Appendix 3 attached to this report; and
- (b) that officers (i) raise the concerns made during discussion of this item with the relevant bodies involved and (ii) gather and make public advice and information about the organisation of protective measures for those who live in the Outer Protective Zone, so that people have confidence that appropriate measures are in place.

Representatives of Public Health England and Ayrshire Civil Contingency Team left the meeting at this point.

10. Long-Term Financial Outlook 2021/22 to 2030/31 and Medium-Term Financial Outlook 2021/22 to 2023/24

Submitted report by the Head of Service (Finance) on the financial challenges facing the Council over the next 10 years and examining the likely financial position of the Council's General Fund in the medium term, in order to inform the development of budget proposals.

Members asked questions and received clarification in respect of:

- the viability of local government over the next 10 years, given the funding gap reported last year and the predicted funding gap now reported; and
- whether any discussion had taken place nationally with regard to the implementation of an alternative to the Council Tax

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

Accordingly, the Council, having considered the Long-Term Financial Outlook 2021/22 to 2030/31 and the financial challenges identified in the Medium-Term Financial Outlook 2021/22 to 2023/24, agreed as follows:

- (a) to note the scale of the financial challenges which the Council faced over the medium and longer terms; and
- (b) that officers bring forward proposals to a future meeting of the Council to set a balanced budget for 2021/22 and beyond.

11. Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Investment Programme, Revenue Budget and Rent Levels for 2021/22

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Place) on the proposed HRA capital investment programme and revenue budget for 2021/22 and the consequential rent levels.

The Leader of the Council and Leader of the Opposition, together with other Members, expressed their appreciation of the work of officers in bringing significant levels of investment to communities while successfully minimising the recommended rent increase.

Councillor Cullinane, seconded by Councillor Bell, moved that the Council approve the recommendations set out in the officer's 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 2021/22, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (b) to approve the HRA revenue budget for 2021/22, as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report;
- (c) approve a rent increase of 1.90% in 2021/22 for council houses, garage sites, lock-ups and sheltered housing service charges; and
- (d) to note the indicative rent increases of 2.50% for 2022/23 and 2.50% for 2023/24.

12. Events Support for Community Organisations

Submitted report by the Interim Executive Director (Communities) on support for community events.

At a meeting of the Council on 19 September 2018, a motion was approved instructing officers to establish a short-term Member/Officer working group to investigate the support provided to community groups, clubs and societies organising events across North Ayrshire and the challenges that they faced. The Community Events Support Working Group was subsequently established and worked with the Council's Transformation Team, IT and key stakeholders.

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

- whether there might be any scope to support individual community events to form a co-ordinated string of events across North Ayrshire; and

- the timescale for recruitment of the temporary post referred to within the report and arrangements for raising awareness of the new resource among community groups;

Members recorded their appreciation of the support provided to local groups and the work carried out to seek to streamline and co-ordinate processes.

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

Accordingly, the Council agreed as follows:

- (a) to note the progress made by the Community Events Support Working Group; and
- (b) authorise officers to continue to implement the Community Events Support Working Group's project plan.

13. Questions

In terms of Standing Order 12, submitted:

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

"The SNP conference recently passed a motion in favour of a four-day week, which would cost Scotland's public services at least £2.5 billion in the middle of a pandemic. What would it cost North Ayrshire to enact this plan without cutting salaries or services if not funded in full by the Scottish Government and what percentage would the Council Tax need to be increased to fund this?"

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

"Councils are complex organisations, with thousands of employees working across different departments, with a mix of frontline and office-based staff and therefore there will be many different models that could apply to a four-day working week. In the absence of any detail on any proposed model, we can only make assumptions on what a model may entail. If any member wanted to ask officers to estimate costs for any one model, they would be more than happy to undertake such calculations on their behalf.

I should make Council aware, in the interests of openness and transparency, that in recent months, the Four Day Week campaign had requested meetings with myself and officers to discuss their campaign and test the Council's appetite for working on a pilot scheme. The think tank Autonomy were represented on those meetings. It is the case that whilst we recognise the potential benefits of a four-day working week in areas such as a better work-life balance, there are no proposals at this time to run a pilot nor have we asked officers to calculate the costs of a pilot. The complexity of the Council, as referred to earlier, means that any pilot would likely require different models across the workforce and there would be a requirement to recruit additional staff to deliver frontline services which we could not fund from our ever-reducing budget. We are however keen to learn any lessons should any council in the UK participate in a pilot and would volunteer to take part in a pilot should the Scottish Government decide to fund one.

At this present time, our focus remains on our Renewal approach from Covid, including the workstream on new ways of working. The trade unions are engaged as part of that work."

(2) a question by Councillor Murdoch to the Chair of Planning in the following terms:

"Does the Chair of Planning think that his constituents, our constituents, constituents in general in the North Coast and across North Ayrshire deserve the right to be represented by their Local Councillor at Planning Meetings?"

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

"The short answer is 'No'.

Councillor Murdoch refers to representing constituents at the Planning Committee. His question misunderstands the role of the Planning Committee and appears to propose that lobbying by individual councillors on behalf of either applicants or objectors, should be prioritised over other submissions received by the Planning Committee.

The starting point is that the determination of planning applications is a quasi-judicial process. In determining applications, the Committee are legally bound to apply a two-stage objective test:

- Does the application comply with the Local Development Plan (LDP)? If so, there is a presumption it should be granted unless there are material planning considerations which outweigh the LDP. If not, it should be refused unless outweighed by material planning considerations. Material planning considerations are those which relate to the use of the development site for the proposed use- no more, no less.
- What are the material planning considerations and do they outweigh the LDP?

The integrity of the planning process, and the trust which developers, objectors and communities have in it, depends on proper and transparent processes being followed. To support transparency, all submissions are published on the Planning website. Thereafter the planning report summarises all objections and representations, and considers the weight to be applied to each, prior to the determination of the application.

If local Members become involved in acting for, or lobbying on behalf of individual applicants or objectors, this can give rise to concern that undue influence is being applied behind closed doors, outwith the normal planning process. For that reason, the Councillors' Code of Conduct, prohibits Members from lobbying Members of the Planning Committee about applications.

The weight which the Planning Committee or officers give to the LDP and other material planning considerations, depends on the strength and relevance of that issue, not who is making an objection or representation. An individual objection or representation supported by a councillor cannot be given any more weight because a councillor is involved. To do so would be a disservice to all others who have chosen to submit objections and representations. Nor would it be fair to the other side. In other words, councillors need to be treated the same as anyone else and not given any priority

If any objectors including Councillors request to address the Planning Committee, they must frame their request in terms of the "*Guidance for Individuals Wishing To Address a Meeting of the Planning Committee*" as set out in the Guidance Notice on the Council's Website at <https://north-ayrshire.cmis.uk.com/north-ayrshire/Document>

As defined in Section 3 of the "Guidance" the objectors may decide up to a maximum of 3 people, who will speak, and will be limited to a maximum period of 10 minutes in total to present their case.

The applicants will then be invited to respond to the issues raised by the objectors in their presentation. The applicants will also be limited to a maximum of 3 people, who will be limited to 10 minutes in total to respond.

It is important that, given the Planning Committee is a *quasi judicial* body, both the applicants and the objectors get a fair and balanced hearing. It is also important that any Member who wishes to make representations on planning applications is aware of the rules and tests which the Council as Planning Authority has to legally follow."

As a supplementary question, Councillor Murdoch asked whether the Chair of Planning would consider allowing additional time to allow everyone wishing to address the Planning Committee when it considered the Righill planning application to do so.

Councillor Marshall responded by advising that it would be impractical to allow all interested parties to speak, given that the application in question had more than 100 objections. He reiterated that there were specific rules in place with regard to arrangements for addressing a meeting of the Planning Committee and that, as Chair, he was happy to groups of individuals to speak as long as it was within the context of those rules.

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

"Does the Leader of the Council think that there is an appropriate investment proposal from the Ayrshire Growth Deal in the established and recognised tourist destinations around North Ayrshire and can the Leader please state how much of the Ayrshire Growth Deal will be invested in tourism and improving the visitor experience on the Isle of Arran, Isle of Cumbrae and Largs areas?"

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

"The Ayrshire Growth Deal commits a total of £251m to an agreed portfolio of projects across Ayrshire. It is important to recognise that the Deal is based on the achievement of an inclusive economy for Ayrshire with a clear focus on addressing the issues of innovation and productivity, and inequality across the regional economy. AGD funding is granted for projects which are longer term game-changers. To attract UK and Scottish Government funding, proposals had to meet their strategic priorities

While marine tourism did not satisfy the criteria for UK Government funding, the Council successfully made the case for its inclusion in the Growth Deal, with funding of £18.5 million by Scottish Government, and a further £5 million from North Ayrshire Council.

The investments provide a geographical spread of investment, including at key locations around North Ayrshire's coast and our islands, that will provide the leverage and capacity to capitalise on our greatest natural asset within the region and its anticipated they will bring additional partner investment as well as secondary and commercial investments. The design of the projects at programme and project level is intended to take a community wealth building approach to providing skills development opportunities, sustainable employment opportunities and opportunities for businesses and communities to participate in and own the wider opportunities arising through investment, while seeking to anchor key stakeholders to the region.

In relation to the Arran and Cumbraes element of this, projects are:

A Cumbrae Transit Marina & Step Ashore Facility located in Millport Bay which will create a breakwater and transit/local berthing, coordinated with the flood defence works planned for Millport.

An Arran Transit Marina & Step Ashore Facility will be located in Brodick Bay or Lamlash Bay subject to final design studies and agreement with community sponsors.

It is important to recognise that the marine infrastructure proposed for Ardrossan, Arran and Cumbraes will not solely benefit these communities. Such enhanced facilities will increase the attractiveness of the Clyde as a sailing destination, leading to greater footfall along the entire coast, including Largs.

The member will also be aware that other AGD projects include £18million of investment in the centre for research into low carbon energy and the circular economy at Hunterston.”

As a supplementary question, Councillor Murdoch asked whether the Leader agreed with him that it would be better to invest more in the established destinations for tourism throughout North Ayrshire, where the tourists actually wanted to go.

Councillor Cullinane responded by suggesting that it would have been beneficial had the Member asked his question when elected in 2017 and not a month after the Ayrshire Growth Deal was signed. The Leader disagreed with any assertion that investments contained in the AGD related to places tourists would not wish to visit, citing Irvine Harbourside as an attractive destination. He asserted that investment into the Ayrshire economy benefitted all and urged the Member not to consider the matter through the lens of his own locality.

(4) a question by Councillor Stephen to the Leader of the Council in the following terms:

“I am sure that most, if not all, of my Councillor colleagues will have been contacted by business people at their wits end because they are falling through the gaps in Scotland's Covid financial support system. The initial Covid support structures were put in place in a hurry so that money could get out to support businesses and jobs, and there have been tweaks to the systems over the months. However, there are still significant numbers of businesses that are getting either no support or totally inadequate support. Without some prompt action these businesses will fail, taking with them the jobs and livelihoods of all involved.

There is a light at the end of the tunnel with the vaccines which the UK has already committed to and are now starting to come on stream. But for many businesses, such as coach operators, restaurants, and hotels - in fact any business that normally has people close to one another, it will be many months if not years of trying to keep going with hugely reduced capacity.

We need to ensure that the fabric of our society remains intact during the Covid crisis so that jobs and livelihoods can be saved.

Last week the Fraser of Allander Institute estimated that the Scottish government is still sitting on-around £1billion of Covid support money from the UK Government, which would indicate that it has the wherewithal to provide further help.

So my question is could you tell us what opportunities is the Council taking in its dealings with the Scottish government to highlight the harm being done to jobs and livelihoods by the failings of the current Covid business support system, and how can the Council encourage the Scottish government to undertake a full review of the support system to ensure that money is being directed to where it is needed both now and into the future?"

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

"Whilst no place has been immune to the economic impact of Covid-19, it is clear that regions that were already fragile will need specific and enhanced support to recover and renew. That is why the Council has taken a proactive approach to outlining the support required to ensure an inclusive and green recovery in North Ayrshire.

Our Economic Recovery and Renewal Approach published in September outlined a series of asks to the Scottish and UK Governments to support North Ayrshire's recovery given our fragile economy and the stark levels of regional inequality in Scotland. We included most of these asks in our submission to the Scottish Government's Advisory Group on Economic Recovery and a Scottish Parliament inquiry into economic recovery as well as evidence on the impact on the local business base and the labour market.

Throughout the duration of the pandemic we have worked in partnership with COSLA, SOLACE and SLAED to influence the development of business support grants with Scottish Government. We have long argued for the need for discretionary business grants to support local priorities and those most in need. A Local Authority Discretionary Fund of £30 million was announced on the 17 November, however we still await the details of any criteria or restrictions on its allocation and payment and COSLA Leaders have unanimously agreed that £30million is not enough with COSLA continuing to lobby Scottish Government for additional funding to support the many businesses impacted by the pandemic.

There have been a number of business support programmes throughout the pandemic, all of which have been implemented in a short space of time, with the Council playing a leading role in administering business grants with over £25million disbursed to local businesses since March.

Our islands have been uniquely impacted by Covid-19, that is why we commissioned the Fraser of Allander Institute to look at the specific impact of Covid-19 on the Arran Economy, and why the Council Leader wrote to the Scottish Government in June to seek financial interventions to support island businesses and the creation of a bespoke Island Fund aligned to Community Wealth Building.

It is important that the Scottish Government also supports the future resilience of the North Ayrshire economy and therefore the Council has written to the Scottish Government to ask for a Ministerial Taskforce focused on Hunterston given that the Hunterston B power station will cease operation two years earlier than previously announced.

And most recently we have been raising the need for support for businesses during our discussions with Ministers on Scotland coronavirus tier system.”

(5) a question by Councillor Hill to the Cabinet Member for Post Covid Renewal in the following terms:

"Following the excellent work done by NAC staff and volunteers from our Hubs across the council area throughout the pandemic, can the Portfolio Holder outline proposals for the future use of these facilities?"

Councillor McPhater answered in her capacity as Cabinet Member for Participatory Democracy, thanking the Member for his question and responding in the following terms:

“North Ayrshire staff and volunteers have worked effectively together since March to establish a network of Community Hubs across North Ayrshire. They proved a lifeline for many of our residents, providing essential services such as a prescription delivery service, hot meals, mental health support, befriending and foodbank distribution for those unable to access food due to shielding, self-isolation or financial issues.

Our partners in community-led hubs in Fullarton, Vineburgh, Whitlees, Woodwynd, Garnock Valley Café Solace and Cranberry Moss worked with us to serve communities and the teams together included over 600 current and new volunteers, the third and private sectors and the NHS. Their contribution is a credit to North Ayrshire.

From 31st March to 30th September, 27,387 calls were received; 66,753 food deliveries were made through Community Hubs (in addition to NAC Food Hub figures); and 12,407 prescriptions were delivered.

We have also distributed Scottish Government funding to support local community food larders and fridges, helping with fuel poverty and other poverty-related needs.

Through this collaborative approach, we have learned more about the needs of communities and the effectiveness of working together in different ways.

These outcomes, as well as ongoing discussions with volunteers, community groups and staff, continue to inform our renewal planning within the current Tier 3 Covid-19 conditions and beyond.

Further discussion with elected members and communities will resume early in 2021.”

(6) a question by Councillor Hill to the Leader of the Council in the following terms:

“Can I ask the portfolio holder what discussions have been had with Peel in terms of Ayrshire Growth Deal proposals or any other proposals for the site? What projects have been suggested or proposed? What plans does the council have to ensure the early and full consultation with the local community takes place on any uses of the site?”

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

“Discussions are currently underway with Peel Ports Group (PPG) and Scottish Enterprise (SE) to form a tri-partite agreement to create an innovation parc principally to support proposals around the blue economy. The funding from the AGD is via the UK Government whose principal focus is to support innovation and research and development led economic activity that would be of impact at a UK level as well as locally. The discussions are at a very early stage and appropriate consultation will be put in place.

In terms of any other proposals for the site, if these require planning permission, any application is published online and representations can be submitted as part of the planning process. The Hunterston Liaison Committee, set up in terms of a previous planning condition, also provides an opportunity for local community members to find out information and ask questions of Peel on potential and proposed uses.”

As a supplementary question, Councillor Hill referred to a recent Ferret online article on leaked proposals by Peel regarding the potential use of the Hunterston parc site for decommissioning nuclear submarines, contrary to the Local Development Plan. Councillor Hill asked the Leader to confirm that the Council would stand behind local residents and others in opposition to any attempt to use the site for such a purpose and commit the Council to do everything necessary to stop any such proposals in their tracks.

Councillor Cullinane confirmed that he had seen the Ferret article and it was the first he had been made aware of any such idea. The Leader advised that he did not know whether any discussions had taken place with officers on this matter but undertook to ask officers about this.

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

“There was a recent announcement that the Scottish government was making £30million available to local authorities to enable Councils to make discretionary payments to support local jobs. I was recently made aware that the Scottish government has changed its eligibility criteria for the Strategic Framework Business Fund, the effect of which is to remove payments from hotels, restaurants and food-based pubs not in Tier 4 that have been forced to close or severely limit their trading due to the Covid tier restrictions. Whilst the payments from this fund were totally inadequate they did at least offer at least a crumb of support. However, I am led to understand that at least some of these payments will continue because North Ayrshire will use its discretionary fund, and if that is the case then that is very much to be welcomed.

It would, therefore, appear to me that the £30million is not actually new money but rather that the Scottish government is recycling money its no longer giving to businesses. The worrying aspect of this is that it is almost as if the Scottish government appears to think that businesses in Tiers 2 and 3 which have closed without being forced to were 'at it' and happy to survive on state funds. The Scottish government does not seem to realise that there are many businesses that just don't have any customers due to the Covid restrictions and are closing as a last resort in order to survive. On Arran the majority of the island's hotels, pubs and restaurants are closed. Not because they fancy a bit of break, but because there are no customers due to the Covid restrictions of Tier 3 and temporarily shutting the doors is a painful survival strategy.

To enable us all to have a better understanding of this situation, could the Member tell me how many businesses in North Ayrshire will no longer be automatically eligible for a support payment under the Strategic Framework Business Fund, what proportion of the £30million has come to North Ayrshire for its discretionary use, and finally could he confirm how the Council is intending to use this discretionary fund to support local jobs?”

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

“The Strategic Framework Business Fund was launched on 2nd November and since then North Ayrshire has been in Tier 3. This provides support for those businesses required by law to close under this tier and qualify for a payment of either £2,000 or £3,000 every four weeks dependant on Rateable Value. Those businesses not required to close by law but specifically required to modify their operations due to the new Tier restrictions will receive a payment of either £1,400 or £2,100 based on their Rateable Value, again paid every four weeks. (An example would be a pub that continues to serve food but restricts its operating hours and serves no alcohol would be eligible for this payment).

To clarify the position and clear up any confusion that may exist for those businesses temporarily closing their doors, officers have sought guidance from Scottish Government on their criteria that a business needs to be actively trading and they confirmed that as long as the business is not in Administration it will be eligible for support. This then clarifies that every business who meets the eligibility criteria in North Ayrshire will receive the appropriate payment every 4 weeks.

Separate to the announcement on the tiered support, the Government announced on 17th November that a new Local Authority Discretionary Fund of £30m would be created and shared out amongst the 32 Local Authorities. We still await a formal offer on our allocation from Scottish Government and details on timescales.

Although the fund has been promoted by the Scottish Government as a local discretionary fund, no clear guidance has yet been received on the extent of the discretion that can be applied locally. When received, that guidance will inform and shape our arrangements locally.

Subject to the levels of local discretion, officers will develop a proposal that will deliver the greatest impact giving consideration to other funds that are available and local businesses and jobs most at risk. It is intended that the proposals for the local discretionary fund will be considered by Cabinet in the new year.

With regard to businesses on Arran, the council is very aware of the significant economic challenges being faced on the island. These were set out quite starkly in the Fraser of Allender Report that the council recently commissioned. A meeting is scheduled in the new year with Minister for Energy, Connectivity and the Islands, Paul Wheelhouse and these issues will be discussed with specific asks of support for our islands to support recovery and renewal of the local island economy.”

As a supplementary question, Councillor Billings thanked the Leader and officers for making representations on behalf of businesses and asked that, as soon as the situation became clearer, Members be advised of the details of the Discretionary Fund so that they could in turn advise businesses in their area.

Councillor Cullinane responded in the affirmative.

In terms of Standing Order 5.7, the Provost agreed that the meeting be adjourned at 5.30 p.m. for a comfort break. The meeting reconvened at 5.40 p.m. with the same Members present.

14. Motion

In terms of Standing Order 13, submitted:

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

“This council believes that no bonus is ever a sufficient alternative to a fair pay rise for public sector workers but given that the Scottish Government have announced a £500 payment for NHS and some social care staff, this Council calls on them to recognise the tireless efforts of the local government workforce in supporting our communities throughout the pandemic by making the £500 payment to council workers and all social care staff.”

Following a number of questions by Members with regard to the wording of the motion, including whether it intended to target or exclude particular staff groups and the extent to which it deviated from the wording of a similar motion recently considered by COSLA, the Provost agreed, in terms of Standing Order 5.7, to adjourn the meeting at 6.00 p.m. to allow clarification to be sought. The meeting reconvened at 6.10 p.m. with the same Members present.

As an amendment, Councillor Brahim, seconded by Councillor McMaster, moved that the Council approve the terms of the motion, subject to the following:

“delete everything after [the second reference to] “this council” and replace with “agrees to support the motion passed by COSLA Leaders, calling on the Scottish Government to ensure that it recognises the efforts across our “one workforce” in local government and lobby Scottish Government to ensure that this payment is extended to all Covid-19 responders and key workers across local government and that they are rewarded equally.”

As a further amendment, Councillor Marshall, seconded by Councillor Ferguson, moved as follows:

“Council welcomes the £500 bonus for NHS and social care workers that has been announced by the Scottish Government.

Council also welcomes the announcements from Tesco, Morrisons, Sainsbury's, Asda and other supermarkets to refund the business rates relief they received during the pandemic.

Council agrees to write to Scottish Government and request that any local backdated business rates payments be retained in North Ayrshire and used to support:

1. Local businesses that still face ongoing trading restrictions
2. Our own front-line employees working in the pandemic response”

Members asked a number of questions of clarification of the proposer and seconder of the motion and amendments.

On a point of order, the Head of Democratic Services was invited to advise on the competence of Councillor Marshall's amendment. He advised that the amendment did relate to the original motion to a sufficient extent to render it competent.

In terms of Standing Order 14.5, Councillor Brahim, with the agreement of his seconder, agreed to alter her amendment, to move that the Council approve the terms of the motion, subject to the following:

"delete everything after [the second reference to] "this council" and replace with "agrees to support the motion passed by COSLA Leaders, calling on the Scottish Government to ensure that it recognises the efforts across local government and lobby Scottish Government to ensure that this payment is extended to all Covid-19 responders and key workers across local government and that they are rewarded equally."

In terms of Standing Order 14.5, Councillor Marshall, with the agreement of his seconder, agreed to withdraw his amendment.

In terms of Standing Order 14.5, Councillor Foster expressed a willingness to withdraw his motion in favour of the remaining amendment, which would then become the substantive motion. As his seconder, Councillor McPhater did not consent, the Head of Democratic Services confirmed that the motion could not be withdrawn.

On a further point of order, the Head of Democratic Services was invited to advise on the competence of Councillor McPhater's wish to move a further amendment to include financial support for third sector and community groups. It was confirmed that, in terms of Standing Order 14.6 that, having seconded the original motion, Councillor McPhater could not move an amendment without first withdrawing her support for the motion.

The Council then moved to debate.

In terms of Standing Order 16.2, Councillor Gurney moved that the motion be now put.

On a division and a roll call vote, there voted in favour of moving to the vote, Councillors Barr, Bell, Billings, Brahim, Burns, Clarkson, Cullinane, Davidson, Dickson, Easdale, Ferguson, Gallacher, George, Gurney, Hill, Larsen, Marshall, Macaulay, McClung, McMaster, McNicol, McTiernan, Stephen and Sweeney (24) and in favour of proceeding with debate, Councillors Foster, Gallagher, McPhater, Miller, Montgomerie, Donald Reid and Donald L. Reid (7), Councillors Glover and Murdoch (2) abstaining.

Accordingly, the Council agreed to proceed to the vote.

On a division and a roll call vote, there voted for the amendment, Councillor Brahim, Burns, Davidson, Dickson, Gurney, Hill, Larsen, Macaulay, McClung, McMaster, McNicol, McTiernan and Donald Reid (13) and for the motion, Councillors Barr, Bell, Clarkson, Cullinane, Easdale, Foster, Gallagher, McPhater, Montgomerie and Sweeney (10), Councillors Billings, Ferguson, Gallacher, George, Glover, Marshall, Miller, Murdoch, Donald L. Reid and Stephen (10) abstaining, and the amendment was declared carried.

Accordingly, the Council agreed as follows:

“This council believes that no bonus is ever a sufficient alternative to a fair pay rise for public sector workers but given that the Scottish Government have announced a £500 payment for NHS and some social care staff, this Council agrees to support the motion passed by COSLA Leaders, calling on the Scottish Government to ensure that it recognises the efforts across local government and lobby Scottish Government to ensure that this payment is extended to all Covid-19 responders and key workers across local government and that they are rewarded equally.”

15. Urgent Item

The Provost agreed that the Council consider the following as a matter of urgency given that the motion related to an Education matter which required an early decision.

15.1 Motion

Councillor Foster, seconded by Councillor Montgomerie, moved as follows:

“Council asks that the Scottish Government allow all schools in North Ayrshire to move to remote learning for the last three school days of 2020.”

Members asked questions of clarification of the proposer and seconder of the motion.

As an amendment, Councillor Billings moved as follows:

“Council asks that the Scottish Government allow all pupils in North Ayrshire the option of moving to remote learning for the last three school days of 2020.”

Members then asked questions of clarification of the proposer of the amendment. There being no seconder, the amendment fell.

There being no further amendments, the motion was declared carried.

The Meeting ended at 7.20 p.m.



PROVOST'S REPORT

For the period covering: 7 December 2020 – 7
February 2021

The attached report gives a summary and brief details to Council, of
meetings and events attended by the Provost of North Ayrshire
Council, Councillor Ian Clarkson.

PROVOST'S REPORT

For the period covering: 7 December 2020 – 7 February 2021

Since the last meeting of the Council I have taken part in several events, including:

Consular Corps in Scotland, Online Reception, 11 December

On 11 December, I attended an online reception followed by a concert hosted by the Consular Corps in Scotland. The Corps represents over sixty international organisations including 55 countries. Membership is made up of career diplomats, honorary consuls and directors of international and cultural institutions. Events like these provide excellent networking opportunities and allow me to promote North Ayrshire to a wider audience.

Schools Christmas Concert, 22 December

On 22 December, the annual Christmas concert by our school pupils was available to view online. The concert had been pre-recorded and a lot of work went on in the background to make this happen, particularly as the pupils were unable to rehearse in person. As usual the concert was fantastic, and I was happy to be able to record my congratulations to all the pupils who took part and of course to the staff for their invaluable support.

Launch of 2021 PoppyScotland Manifesto, 18 January

PoppyScotland launched their manifesto on 18 January, I was delighted to take part in this event which was aired online. The use of evidence and hearing the voices of their beneficiaries and staff had been at the heart of Poppyscotland's manifesto development process, as they continue to support our Armed Forces community.

City of Guelph, Burns Celebration, 25 January

In early December, the Civic Museum team from Guelph, Canada invited Irvine Burns Club to become involved in its on-line celebration of Burns' Birthday. The outcome of that invitation was for the Irvine Club, despite being closed since March 2020, to create a 28-minute video which opened in Guelph's City Museum. Produced by a team from Irvine Burns Club, the video entitled "In the Footsteps of Burns and Galt" is introduced by Club President David Burns and included a special message from myself.

The composite video includes footage of Irvine Burns Club's Wellwood Museum, a guided tour of historical links between Irvine and Canada, an "Address to a Haggis" video and a collage of photographs of local landmarks and fascinating facts.

This is just an example of some the excellent work that is being carried out in our communities as we battle the Covid 19 pandemic.

Ambassador Liu Xiaoming Farewell, Online Reception, 25 January

On 25 January, I attended an online reception hosted by the Chinese Consul in Edinburgh, to mark the retirement of Liu Xiaoming, Ambassador of China to the United Kingdom. In recent years I have fostered links with the various consulates in Edinburgh and in turn have been able to promote North Ayrshire and share with them our proud cultural heritage.

Town Twinning Mayors Meeting, Online Event, 5 February

On 5 February, I took part in an online meeting with the Mayor Rosetti from Voisins, France which included the Mayor of Schenefeld in Germany. It was an excellent opportunity to touch base with our friends in Voisins and reaffirm the friendship agreement Voisins has had with Irvine since 2005.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ian Clarkson". The script is fluid and cursive.

Councillor Ian Clarkson
Provost North Ayrshire Council



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

LEADER'S REPORT

For the period covering: 7 December – 7
February 2021

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 December – 7 February 2021

COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING COMMISSION, 10 December

On 10 December our Community Wealth Building (CWB) Commission met to agree a refresh of the Terms of Reference to reflect changes in the membership and remit of the group. The Commission also discussed a draft work plan for the year ahead.

The refresh will now shift its focus from developing the North Ayrshire Council CWB Strategy to progressing and promoting an Ayrshire-wide collaborative approach. There is increased emphasis on the role of the Commission in encouraging wider local and regional Anchor institutions in CWB initiatives, sharing success stories and promoting good practice as well as receiving updates on the implementation of the Ayrshire Growth Deal's £3 million CWB Fund.

The workplan for the year will focus on three workstreams primarily:

- Procurement
- Fair Employment
- Land Assets

A Lead Officer Working Group, comprising officers appointed by the Commission and wider regional Anchor Institutions as required, will meet quarterly to take forward this programme of work to develop and embed Community Wealth Building practices across Ayrshire.

SCOTLAND EXCEL EXECUTIVE SUB COMMITTEE AND JOINT COMMITTEE, 11 December

I attended both the Scotland Excel Executive Sub Committee and Joint Committee on 11 December. Attendees discussed a range of subjects including Revenue estimates for 2021/22, income stream updates, a Brexit update and the Joint Operating Plan Performance Report. The Performance Report for April to December 2020 was measured against the following objectives for the year:

- Shaping the delivery of innovative public services
- Becoming sustainable in everything we do.
- Placing people at the heart of our business

- Delivering sustainable and scalable growth.

The next meeting of the Scotland Excel Executive Sub Committee will be held on 29 January.

COSLA LEADERS, 11 December

COSLA Leaders met on 11 December for their final meeting of 2020. Agenda items included Replacement of EU Structural Funds, an update on Local Government Finance, Early Years and Childcare – 1140 hours, the National Performance Framework and a Recovery paper on Lessons Learned from the Pandemic.

Work was carried out by the Recovery Special Interest Group (SIG) to find out the lessons learned from the response to COVID-19 to date by local authorities. In the draft report, North Ayrshire Council receives recognition for its swift implementation of the Community Support Hubs and the development of “Community Books”. The report further highlights numerous emerging areas of success such as:

- The development of new services in response to Covid
- Adaptation and Innovation
- Democratic accountability (making quick decisions, empowerment)
- Support for local economies
- Digital advancement
- Role of Local Resilience Partnerships/Community Planning Partnerships (CPP)
- Partnership working with the third sector

The report also identified several areas which were challenging. These include:

- Impact on local economies
- Budget pressures on local government
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Community engagement
- Sustainability of the third sector
- Environmental health
- How we use data across partnerships

Both sets of findings are similar to those of North Ayrshire Council and are covered in our Recovery and Renewal Strategy. The report concludes that Local Government has been essential in the response to COVID-19 and has taken significant steps to adapt and support our communities, including our most vulnerable groups, across Scotland.

ARDROSSAN TASK FORCE, 16 December

I attended a meeting of the Ardrossan Task Force on 16 December, chaired by Paul Wheelhouse, Minister for Energy, Connectivity and the Islands. Attendees received an update from the Ardrossan Steering Group and a vessel update from Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd. Discussion then focussed on next steps including proposed work landside and recommended interim works.

The Task Force will meet again in February to look at timings and progression of works.

MEETING WITH PAUL WHEELHOUSE, MINISTER FOR ENERGY, CONNECTIVITY AND THE ISLANDS, 12 January

On 12 January, together with my fellow Cabinet Member for Recovery and Renewal, Councillor Alex Gallagher, our Chief Executive, Craig Hatton and our Director for PLACE, Russell McCutcheon, I met with Paul Wheelhouse, Minister for Energy, Connectivity and the Islands. The meeting follows correspondence with the Minister last June in which North Ayrshire Council asked for a bespoke “Islands Fund” and support for island economic recovery.

As previously outlined to the Minister specific support is required to support island inclusive and green economic recovery which would include support for short/medium-term recovery and resilience by focusing on place-based initiatives including circular economy, digital innovation, sustainability and inclusive economy. North Ayrshire Council has had regular meetings with stakeholders both on Arran and Cumbrae in relation to economic recovery and specifically with the Arran Recovery Group (ARG). High-profile issues raised include the following: the reliance on visitors to the island to support the viability of local economic and social infrastructure, with no visitors meaning the closure of most businesses (despite the island only being in Tier 3 pre-Christmas – with no Tier 4 business closure support), and a knock-on supply chain impact and impact on island wellbeing. The need for a considered approach to the allocation of islands to tiers is evident. Moreover, a route map or ‘recovery exit plan’ for island tourism and wider business infrastructure recovery needs consideration.

In response the Minister has cited the £30 million commitment within the Infrastructure Investment Plan to support the delivery of the National Islands Plan. However, there is no detail as yet, on the allocation of this and we will continue to engage with the Minister on the exact details of how this will be allocated.

COSLA LEADERS, 29 January

On 29 January COSLA Leaders met to discuss a range of topics which included reports on the Social Renewal Advisory Board, National Taskforce on Human Rights, Suicide Prevention Guidance, UK-EU Post Transition, COSLA Constitution and Participatory Budgeting.

North Ayrshire Council is working to mainstream participatory budgeting in its everyday business. The Council's approach to community empowerment is recognised by COSLA, the Local Governance Review Team and the Scottish Government as good practice and this was noted in the 2020 Best Value Audit Report.

Indeed, our Council has worked hard to sustain the mainstream participatory budgeting approach during the period of the pandemic. In 2019/20 the Council spent 1.4% of its budget using mainstream PB approaches. It was the only local authority in Scotland to exceed the 1% target. It is on track to spend £5,987,571, or 1.67% of its £357,928,000 budget with the involvement of local people in budgetary- decisions in 2020/21.

Ways in involving local people in setting the Council budget priorities and decisions have strengthened in the last two years through budget engagement programmes. Work continues to broaden ways of involving local people in deciding local spend and identifying which parts of service budgets, they have real influence over.

And of course, Leaders also had a finance update with the Scottish Government publishing its draft budget for 2021-22 the day before. It is worth highlighting that Council Leaders voted to express their disappointment in the settlement for Local Government as it failed to address any of COSLA's pre budget asks. In a year when we are fighting the Covid pandemic and the national pay negotiations are about to start, the budget does not provide the funding to cover such costs. The decision of Council Leaders means that COSLA will continue to lobby MSPs, of all parties, to try and secure a better deal for Scotland's Councils through the budget process in Parliament.

AYRSHIRE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP BOARD, 29 January

Following on from COSLA Leaders, I joined a meeting of the Ayrshire Economic Partnership Board (AEPB) on 29 January. It was another packed Agenda which covered the following topics:

- Food and Drink
- The Visitor Economy

- Ayrshire Tourism Action Plan
- Space and Aerospace
- Clean Growth
- Digital workstream
- Skills
- COVID
- Ayrshire Wide Business Support
- Regional Business Support
- Community Wealth Building
- Ayrshire Growth Deal Programme Update
- Healthy Economic Project paper
- Strategic Transport Projects Review Update

The partnership is committed to ensuring that appropriate processes and procedures are in place to support the implementation of the Ayrshire Growth Deal and to maximise the benefit of this significant investment package. A comprehensive Governance document has been drafted which sets out the roles and responsibilities of partners and the processes for financial management, audit and change. Furthermore, the partnership will work with both Governments (UK and Scottish) to agree a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for the Deal in addition to developing an approved Benefits Realisation Plan which will detail the realisation of benefits across the Programme, to bring focus and alignment to wider regional cohesion and economic development benefits achieved by utilising partner resources.

A permanent staffing structure is being put in place within the Programme Management Office for the Ayrshire Growth Deal and the team will be tasked to monitor, review and update the Ayrshire Growth Deal Programme Business Case.



A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Joe Cullinane', written in a cursive style.

Councillor Joe Cullinane
Leader North Ayrshire Council

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

17 February 2021

North Ayrshire Council

Title:	North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Board: Minutes of Meeting held on 2 December 2020
Purpose:	To submit the Minutes of the meeting of the North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership Board held on 2 December 2020.
Recommendation:	That the Council notes the Minutes contained in Appendix 1.

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 2 December 2020 are appended. Particular matters for the Council's attention include the following:

Agenda Item 3

CPP partners received a presentation on employability support and had a focused discussion on the Kickstart programme. Partners agreed to consider how their organisation can support the delivery of youth employment opportunities through the scheme.

Agenda Item 4

An update on the Ayrshire Growth Deal was given. This included detail on the North Ayrshire projects of i3 Irvine, the Great Harbour, Ardrossan placemaking, marine tourism and Hunterston. CPP partners committed to share this within their own organisations.

Agenda Item 5

Partners considered work on the cost of the school day, including the themes covered by the working group and the value of the contributions by young people. It was agreed that

partners will consider how their organisation can contribute towards cost of the school day issues.

Agenda Item 6

The Board discussed Locality Partnerships and, in particular, the refresh of locality priorities and development of locality dashboards.

Agenda Item 7

Partners received an update on mental health and wellbeing, with a focus on young people and families. The range of approaches was discussed along with new opportunities.

Agenda Item 10

Board members considered the Engagement Centre of Excellence, the resources available within the engagement hub and mechanisms within North Ayrshire to support strong engagement and consultation processes. CPP partners agreed to promote the use of the engagement hub and adhere to best practice in community engagement.

3. Proposals

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

4. Implications

Financial:	There are no financial implications arising from this report.
Human Resources:	There are no human resource implications arising from this report.
Legal:	There are no legal implications arising from this report.
Equality: Children and Young People:	There are no implications relating to equality or children and young people arising from this report.
Environmental & Sustainability:	There are no environmental implications arising from this report.
Key Priorities:	The CPP activities detailed within this report support the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.
Community Benefits:	There are no community benefit implications arising from this report.

5. Consultation

5.1 No consultation was required.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Audrey Sutton
Executive Director, Communities

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

Background Papers

N/A

Community Planning Partnership Board
Wednesday 2 December 2020 at 11.00 am
Via Microsoft Teams



North Ayrshire
Community Planning Partnership

Present

North Ayrshire Council

Joe Cullinane (**Chair**)

John Bell, Elected Member

Marie Burns, Elected Member

Scott Davidson, Elected Member

Alex Gallagher, Elected Member

Tony Gurney, Elected Member

Ellen McMaster, Elected Member

Craig Hatton, Chief Executive

North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership

Robert Foster, Elected Member (Chair of IJB)

Ayrshire College

Michael Breen, Vice Principal

DWP

Valerie McGrory, External Relations Manager

KA Leisure

Ashley Pringle, KA Leisure Vice Chair

Police Scotland

Chief Superintendent Faroque Hussain

Scottish Enterprise

Mark Newlands, Head of Partnerships

Scottish Fire and Rescue

Ian McMeekin, Area Manager

Scottish Government

Sam Anson, Location Director

Skill Development Scotland

Claire Tooze, Area Manager (Sub for Katie Hutton)

Scottish Partnership for Transport

Allan Comrie, Senior Transport Planner

Third Sector Interface

Barbara Hastings, Ayrshire Community Trust

In Attendance

Audrey Sutton (NAC), Rhona Arthur (NAC), Morna Rae (NAC), Neale McIlvanney (NAC), Greig Robson (NAC), Vikki Kewney (Scottish Enterprise) Jennifer McGee (NAC).

Apologies

Lesley Bowie (NHS Ayrshire and Arran), John Burns (NHS Ayrshire and Arran), Vicki Yuill (Arran CVS), Sheila Lynn (DWP), Barbara Hastings (TACT), Katie Hutton (SDS).

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted.

The Chair also welcome Chief Superintendent Hussain to his first meeting of the Board.

2. Minute of the Previous Meeting and Action Note

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

3. Employability & Skills and the Kickstart Programme

G Robson, Senior Manager (Employability & Skills) provided the Board with an update on employability and skills as well as an overview of Kickstart Programme.

G Robson advised that pre-Covid North Ayrshire had amongst the highest levels of unemployment in Scotland. The team focussed on those groups often left behind by economic growth (people who are disabled, parents, care leavers etc). Post-Covid, there has been a shift in the delivery model, with interactions taking place online. Customers have adapted to this shift well.

The team continue to deliver an “all age, all stage” service. However, focus on:

- Young people
- Parents
- Disabled residents or those with health conditions

Services will also remain in place to support other excluded groups that might not fit under these headings. For instance, supporting those with a criminal record will continue as will support to Syrian community.

In terms of supporting young people, G Robson highlighted the work of the Kickstart Programme. The Programme provides funding to create new job placements for 16 to 24-year olds on Universal Credit who are at risk of long-term unemployment.

Employers of all sizes can apply for funding which covers:

- 100% of the National Minimum Wage (or the National Living Wage depending on the age of the participant) for 25 hours per week for a total of 6 months.

- associated employer National Insurance contributions.
- employer minimum automatic enrolment contributions.

Employers can spread the start date of the job placements up until the end of December 2021.

A Kickstart application must be for a minimum of 30 job placements. If a single employer cannot provide this many job placements, they can find a Kickstart gateway, such as a local authority, charity or trade body for help applying.

G Robson highlighted that North Ayrshire Council has applied to be a gateway with the intention to support 300 vacancies, to date, over 300 roles have been identified by the private sector alone. It is hoped that the first lot of vacancies will be advertised in December 2020 pending DWP approval. Every young person who joins will get wrap-around support through council provision.

The Council is keen that wage levels are topped up to Scottish Living Wage, rather than National Minimum Wage.

The team will now look to public and third sectors for contribution.

G Robson highlighted the work commissioned by Government during the first lockdown looking at what could be done for young people. The Young Persons Guarantee which is a 2-year ambition to have every 16-24 year old in employment, training, education, volunteering, or work experience. £30m of funding has been distributed to all Scottish Local Authorities to help support this work. North Ayrshire's allocation of the funding is £870k.

G Robson advised that types of services likely to be funded were:

- Enhanced key worker capacity
- Digital devices and skills
- Top up Kickstart to Scottish Living Wage
- Employer Recruitment Incentives

Cllr Burns asked about how we are reaching young people at the moment and how are they getting careers advice and guidance.

C Tooze confirmed that SDS Careers Advisors are keeping in touch with young people via telephone, online sessions and email. Around one month ago SDS re-opened the Ardrossan Office one day per week, for those who would like to meet face to face, however the big uptake in communication with young people has been via email and text message. SDS continue to link in with DWP and colleges. During first lockdown every summer leaver was contacted to ensure they had support.

V McGrory also highlighted that the DWP have been keeping in touch with customers during the Covid period. DWP have new youth employability coaches in place to support young people.

The Chair thanked G Robson for his presentation and invited members of the Board to contact G Robson directly should they wish to explore the Kickstart Programme further.

ACTION: CPP Partners to discuss involvement in the Kickstart programme within their own organisations and commit to support the scheme.

4. Ayrshire Growth Deal

K Yeomans and N McIlvanney provided the Board with an update on the Ayrshire Growth Deal (AGD).

K Yeomans advised the Board that Ayrshire Growth Deal got its full deal sign-off by the Scottish & UK Govts and Ayrshire Local Authority Leaders on 19 November 2020. This was a landmark signing which agreed to £251m direct investment in Ayrshire over a 10-15 year programme. It is anticipated that it will generate 7000 jobs and £350million investment.

K Yeomans highlighted the project commitments for the funding across Ayrshire:

- £80m investment in aerospace and space activity – primarily focussed around Prestwick.
- £69.5m to support economic infrastructure and the engineering and manufacturing sectors in Ayrshire.
- £23.5m on tourism development.
- £53m innovation into the investment of energy products and development.
- £14m to support world class digital infrastructure and connectivity across Ayrshire.
- £8.5m programme for skills and employability.
- £3m for new Community Wealth programme.

Detail was also given on the North Ayrshire Growth Deal project delivery and benefits.

This includes:

I3 Irvine – Building Digital Process Manufacturing Centre and Flexible Space

- £15m investment in premium quality advanced manufacturing business space.
- £6m investment in national Digital Process Manufacturing Centre.
- Subsea cable landing point providing high speed data carrying capacity direct to site.
- Significant capacity to reprofile i3 as nationally significant commercial location.
- Colocation with life sciences.

Great Harbour - Irvine

- AGD Investment - £14m.
- Leverage potential of circa £100m.
- Placemaking and destination development.
- Unlock potential for commercial leisure activity and marine tourism to create a regional destination of note.
- Significant Community Wealth Building potential through community-led approach (e.g. Harbour Masters House).

Ardrossan – A National Scale Placemaking Programme

- £150m+ Capital investment.
- Campus, harbour, marina expansion, Housing, Low Carbon Hub, town centre.
- National scale placemaking and regeneration programme.

Marine Tourism

- £5M enabling works for expansion of marina facilities at Ardrossan.
- £4M for the provision of transit marinas on Arran and Cumbrae.

Hunterston

- £18m investment to unlock manufacturing business space.
- Ministerial Taskforce to lead and provide multi agency coordination of decommissioning of Hunterston B station impact with the development of the approach to AGD.
- Blue economy strategic action plan critical to harnessing potential of assets at Hunterston, recognised as being nationally significant in terms of contribution to national energy requirements, and capable of developing blue and green credentials at Hunterston.
- Masterplan and socio-economic decommissioning strategy critical to sequencing, phasing and ensuring wider value captured – e.g. through skills transfer, supply chain etc.

K Yeomans also highlighted that the Ayrshire Growth Deal gives an excellent opportunity to deliver Community Wealth Building aspirations. This will allow us to underpin and make sure all projects in Ayrshire give the maximise impact for its residents.

Partners commented on the value and range of work under the Ayrshire Growth Deal plans, and of their organisational support for Community Wealth Building in particular. The Chair thanked K Yeomans for the presentation and highlighted that it is very exciting to have the agreement signed off and progressing towards delivering the projects.

ACTION: Partners note milestone and progress and share within own organisation. AGD progress update to be provided at next Board meeting.

5. Cost of the School Day

A Sutton provided Senior Officers with an update on the work on the cost of the school day (CoSD).

A Sutton advised that a short life working group had been set up and is chaired by Councillor Foster. The working group is focusing on:

- What contributes to the cost of the school day and the impacts this can have on families.
- Actions which can help reduce the CoSD.

- Examples of high-level structures, guidance and policies which have been put in place elsewhere including Dundee City Council's statements of intent around the CoSD.
- The importance of officers taking up roles which focus on implementing and pushing policies in respect of the CoSD.
- The requirement for visibility of policies and communication with families; and;
- The [Cost of the School Day](#) website where information, toolkit resources and practice examples are available.

The first meeting of the Group took place recently and the main topics of discussion were:

- Whether studies have been carried out elsewhere which have fully mapped the cost of the school day.
- Branded school uniform/equipment which is often raised as a major concern by families living in poverty.
- Cost can be a barrier to those looking to join after school clubs and trips.
- Costs can lead to stress and anxiety in children and parents.

The key areas of focus emerging from discussions were:

- Good relationships with families who may need support but might be reluctant to ask.
- The cost of branded uniforms can be too high for some families.
- Families in poverty will often require some sort of support for their children to attend extracurricular activities and school trips.
- Food support ties in closely as some children are not being fed properly at home and therefore come to school hungry without the same capacity to learn.

The aim of the working group is to agree an action plan/policy for Cabinet approval in 2021.

Cllr Foster advised that the CoSD work is very powerful as the actions have come from those with lived experience and encouraged partners to be involved in any way they could.

F Hussain highlighted that he is considering how young people's voices hold him to account in terms of the delivery of policing in North Ayrshire and getting young people involved. A Sutton offered support in this work.

The Chair thanked A Sutton for her presentation.

ACTIONS: All partners to consider how their organisation can contribute towards cost of the school day issues and liaise with A Sutton. F Hussain and A Sutton to progress engagement with young people on community safety issues.

6. Locality Partnerships

M Rae advised the Board that the current cycle of Locality Partnership meetings were taking place and the key themes being looked at are:

- Community Support
- Cost of the School Day
- Community Investment Fund
- Grant Applications
- Refresh of Locality Priorities

Initial discussions around the refresh of locality priorities took place at the September round of meetings, which was then followed up with a survey. To assist with this work, we are going to draw from the wide range of engagement currently taking place.

Plans are also being progressed to have online conference which will look at the current priorities, what needs refreshed and the increasing ambition to address poverty and inequalities at a local level.

In terms of the locality profiles, online dashboards are being created which will provide data at locality level. The dashboards will be hosted on the CPP Website and will be available for partners and community members to use. M Rae highlighted that she has been in contact with Council colleagues regarding data and that she will be in touch with partners in due course. These will be visual and engaging.

Cllr Gallagher commented that the locality dashboards would be a great addition and would bring more awareness of issues in each area.

Partners were supportive of this approach.

ACTION: M Rae to progress work on locality profiles, work on refresh of locality profiles to continue and update to be given to Board in due course.

7. Community Mental Health and Wellbeing

A Sutton provided an update on supporting Community Health and Wellbeing.

A Sutton highlighted that the key priorities are:

- Continue to embedding a more strategic and coordinated commitment to mental health improvement locally and nationally.
- Ensuring GIRFEC principles inform how services work together for mental health (recognising that it was not simply a 'health service' issue).
- Understanding the complex spectrum of issues with which children, young people and their families need support, including emotional distress.
- Ensuring the workforce has the skills and capacity it needs to address these issues.
- Providing the full range of support for those issues, including primary care, community support and alternative services to CAMHS in many communities.

A Sutton highlighted that last year the Clearer Minds young people's mental health project in the North Coast was granted funding via the Community Investment Fund. This continues with the school, some of this is arts-based work as well as peer support and training for young people and staff in the school.

In September 2020 Arran LP and Cabinet approved almost £50k of funding from the Community Investment Fund to Arran Youth Foundations to support peer support and training across the community on Arran.

There are also of number CIF application developments ongoing around social isolation and mental health.

In terms of new and ongoing opportunities:

- Scottish Government Health Improvement Project: putting children at the heart of all our work and ensuring their voices are heard.
- Youthlink funding: last week North Ayrshire Council were allocated the maximum amount of funding to look at how we can support young people's mental health and wellbeing through outdoor youth work.
- National Galleries – again maximum funding support allocated to support young people's mental health and well-being through arts-based work.
- Scottish Government Community mental health and young people funding: development of approach at CSSP to explore a much wider range of opportunities and activities for young people which might not be directly related to mental health and wellbeing, but will have a direct impact on the outcomes around that.

A Sutton asked partners to reflect the asks on the final slides and send any feedback to J McGee.

A Sutton advised that she would provide an update at a future meeting.

The Chair thanked A Sutton for her presentation.

ACTION: Partners to consider how they can link in and support this work. Update to be provided at a future meeting.

8. Caring For Ayrshire

J Burns was unable to join the meeting. The Chair asked for him to be contacted to check if he could attend the March 2021 Board meeting.

9. Risk Register

M Rae provided a report on the current CPP Risk Register and highlighted that as the circumstances in which we operate have changed significantly since December 2019 it is proposed that we review the road map to check its continued relevance. In order that we continue with a strategic approach we propose that we use a similar model.

The Board confirmed that they were happy with this format and formal agreement will be made at a future Board meeting.

M Rae thanked the Board and confirmed that she will be in contact with partners to share their current risk management information to support this work.

ACTION: M Rae to progress Risk Register update

10. Engagement Centre of Excellence

M Rae advised members that the online [Engagement Hub page](#) has been developed and is hosted on the Community Planning website. Within this section there is an overview of all open and closed consultations as well as engagement and consultation resources.

M Rae also advised that further resources are in development including an Engagement Toolkit, a 'Jargon Buster', and survey development information. It is planned that these resources will be launched on the Engagement Hub section of the website throughout December 2020 and January 2021.

M Rae highlighted that:

- A Teams site had been created which will act as a hub for all North Ayrshire Engagement Champions to share resources and information and develop an ongoing dialogue around engagement and consultation.
- The Community Engagement Network (CEN) meets quarterly to provide opportunity for partners to come together and share news, skills and experience in relation to their work around consultation and engagement.
- The CEN has welcomed a new chair, Carol Norton from Arran CVS.
- Moving into 2021, the focus for Centre of Excellence work will be using the skills and expertise of the CEN and Engagement Champions to finalise and publish online resources for the Engagement Hub.

M Rae also highlighted that she has been working with Supt D Frew around the wider engagement for the local police plan.

ACTION: Partners to promote use of consultation hub, the guides and to commit to adhering to best practice in community engagement

11. AOCB

A Comrie highlighted a consultation on the review of the concessionary travel scheme which looks at the financial sustainability of the scheme's objectives. A Comrie asked partners to share with their networks.

M Rae confirmed that this consultation had been posted on the CPP website.

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and conveyed his best wishes for the festive season.

12. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday 11 March 2021 at 11.00am via Microsoft Teams.

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

17 February 2021

North Ayrshire Council

Title: **North Ayrshire Ventures Trust Ltd**

Purpose: To approve the appointment of a new Director on the Board of North Ayrshire Ventures Trust Ltd

Recommendation: That the Council agrees to approve the appointment of Justin Jones to the Board of North Ayrshire Ventures Trust Ltd

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Articles of Association of North Ayrshire Ventures Trust (NAVT) stipulate that there will be five co-opted Directors. Two of these Directors, Zoe Nix and Alan MacDonald, have now resigned. At the Board meeting held on 9th February 2021 the Directors agreed to appoint Justin Jones as a co-opted Director to replace Zoe Nix. They further agreed to consider nominations for a suitable replacement for the remaining vacancy at a future meeting and a further report will be brought to Council in this regard at a later date.
- 1.2 The Articles of Association for NAVT stipulate that for such an appointment to proceed the identity of the proposed Director be approved in writing by the Council, such approval to be demonstrated by a letter to be signed by the appropriate officer of the Council.

2. Background

- 2.1 The full Council has approved the appointment of all the co-opted Directors. The present Directors are Louise McPhater, Alan Hill, Craig Hatton, Audrey Sutton being Appointed Directors and the co-opted Directors are Billy Kirkwood, Derek McCrindle, and Ann Robertson.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 The Board has agreed to appoint Justin Jones as co-opted Director. He attends a local secondary school and has been actively involved in youth work across North Ayrshire for many years. He is currently the chairperson of Irvine Youth Forum and sits on the North Ayrshire Youth Council Executive Committee. He has played an active part in various initiatives including food poverty, inequality and insecurity. He is part of the North Ayrshire Cost of the School Day Working Group and the North Ayrshire Youth Participatory Budgeting Steering Group. On a national level, he is part of the Young People's Guarantee Panel, set up by the Scottish Government and has played an active part in engaging with young people as part of the consultation process for the Bill on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

His appointment will benefit NAVT from the perspective of having a young person on the Board and from the broader reach the Trust will develop through his advocacy and promotion. He has agreed to accept the appointment.

- 3.2 The Council is, therefore, invited to approve the proposed appointment in order that NAVT can comply with its Articles of Association and to authorise the Head of Democratic Services to write to the Board of Directors of NAVT confirming the Council's approval.

4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty

Financial

- 4.1 None arising from this report.

Human Resources

- 4.2 None arising from this report.

Legal

- 4.3 The approval of the Council is required so that the Board of Directors of NAVT can legally comply with their Articles of Association.

Equality/Socio-economic

- 4.4 The appointment promotes the importance of young people in our communities and the benefits and contributions that they bring.

Environmental and Sustainability

- 4.5 None arising from this report.

Key Priorities

- 4.6 None arising from this report.

Community Wealth Building

4.7 None arising from this report.

5. Consultation

5.1 There are no consultations required.

Craig Hatton
Chief Executive

For further information please contact **Aileen Craig, Senior Manager, Legal Services**, on **01294 324322**.

Background Papers

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NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

17th February 2021

North Ayrshire Council

Title: Ardrossan Harbour Update

Purpose: To provide an update on progress with the redevelopment of Ardrossan Harbour.

Recommendation: That Council notes:

- a) Progress on the development of designs for the marine and landside infrastructure;
- b) The current projected budget position and business case for the Council's investment;
- c) Progress on funding and legal agreements;
- d) The review of the mainland port for the Arran and Kintyre services during the construction works; and
- e) The intention to engage with the Arran and mainland communities on the project.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the redevelopment of the marine and landside infrastructure at Ardrossan Harbour.
- 1.2 Scottish Ministers confirmed Ardrossan as the mainland port for the Brodick and Campbeltown ferries in 2017. Subsequently, Transport Scotland concluded that to secure the long-term resilience of Ardrossan Harbour, a more comprehensive redevelopment of the harbour was required including the realignment of the Arran Berth.
- 1.3 A draft design for the landside works is nearing completion and following public engagement, the designs will be used to procure the works through a joint procurement exercise with Peel Ports Group. This will also require the conclusion of associated legal and funding agreements to protect the Council's investment in the project.
- 1.4 The current project programme indicates a construction period of two years from autumn 2022, with the new Glen Sannox vessel due to come into service in late 2022. While a long-term commitment to Ardrossan is in place, Transport Scotland are currently giving consideration to whether the service may operate from an alternative mainland port (Troon) during the construction period through consideration of issues including service reliability, cost, service and economic impacts.

- 1.5 The report provides an update on design, funding and legal agreements, the project programme and the intention to undertake public engagement on the proposals.

2. Background

- 2.1 Previous reports have provided updates on the redevelopment of Ardrossan Harbour, with the project seeking to deliver improved marine and landside infrastructure and improved resilience on the Arran and Kintyre ferry routes. Officers continue to work with partners from the Ardrossan Harbour Task Force to develop the project and lead on the landside works.

Design Development

- 2.2 In November 2019, a design team was appointed to prepare an exemplar design for the landside works. The design process which has since been undertaken has been informed by:
- An earlier review which confirmed the general layout of uses through a site Masterplan (confirmed that parking, marshalling space and the terminal building would continue generally in their existing locations);
 - Lessons learned in relation to the redevelopment of Brodick Ferry Terminal;
 - A Sponsor's Requirement Statement (SRS) prepared by Transport Scotland; and
 - Input from Ardrossan Harbour Task Force partner organisations.
- 2.3 The design process has been led by the Council and Peel Ports Group (PPG), as the harbour authority and landowner. It has been informed by input from key stakeholders including Transport Scotland (TS), Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited (CMAL) and CalMac Ferries Limited (CalMac). It has considered how the design can respond to operational requirements including the introduction into service of the new Glen Sannox vessel and the increasing passenger numbers on the route.
- 2.4 While the design of the marine works has been concluded, the development of the landside designs is yet to be completed. Substantial progress has however been made in reviewing the design to:
- Minimise the length of the Passenger Access System to maximise accessibility for passengers.
 - Confirm arrangements for the provision of the Liquified Natural Gas (LNG) facilities by CMAL including consultation with the Health and Safety Executive
 - Review the internal space within the terminal building to accommodate sufficient space for passenger queuing and waiting.
- 2.5 Appendix 1 includes a general layout drawing, which will be accompanied by additional detail and allow public engagement on the project.

Budget and Funding

- 2.6 During the Save Our Ferry Campaign, the Council and PPG submitted a costed proposal for the improvement of the harbour, which was accepted by TS in April 2017. The subsequent decision by the Task Force in April 2019 to pursue a realignment of the Arran berth led to a review of project costs with the overall scheme increasing in cost from £15M to around £35M.
- 2.7 For the landside elements for which the Council will contribute financially and jointly procure with PPG, the January 2017 base case originally identified a project cost of £9.3M, with the most recent cost projections indicating an increase on this to over £11.6M. The issue of increased cost emerging through the landside design process and emerging from the decision to depart from the base case was raised with TS in early 2019. This led to a claim for the following additional costs:
- Additional landside works relating to the realignment of the Arran berth;
 - Construction cost inflation;
 - Additional contract management costs; and,
 - Officer and consultancy costs relating to the design process.
- 2.7 The costs were agreed in principle by Transport Scotland in early January 2020. An associated Grant Offer Letter (GOL) subsequently received in November 2020 and this is currently under review.
- 2.8 The business case for the Council's investment continues to be reviewed, with the most recent position reflected at 4.1. Current assumptions on cost and budget would allow the tender process to proceed.
- 2.9 That is however subject to resolution of the GOL with Transport Scotland and agreement in relation to the approach should projected costs be exceeded through tender returns. It is noted that a recent harbour redevelopment tender exercise in Scotland resulted in a single tender submission at a value substantially over budget. Despite several cost reduction exercises being undertaken, insufficient savings were identified to allow a contract award. This has resulted in the retender of the project with associated programme delays. Mitigation measures currently in place for such a risk in relation at Ardrossan include the ongoing review of budget estimates informed by independent advice, survey work to reduce contractors' risk allowances and ongoing liaison with the market to establish interest in tendering.

Agreements

- 2.10 A range of legal agreements are being developed to confirm roles and responsibilities, to formalise governance arrangements and mitigate risk to the Council in relation to the project. Expert independent legal advice has been sought from Brodies LLP in relation to the funding agreements, procurement, leases and contract management. Progress with these agreements is summarised at 4.3.
- 2.11 Key in protecting the Council's investment in the project are the commitment by Transport Scotland to the retention of the Arran service operating from Ardrossan for a 25-year period, and the proposed lease of the terminal building to CMAL for a similar period.

Operation of Service During Construction Period

- 2.12 It is envisaged that works will commence in autumn 2022 for a 21-month period. Within this, the Glen Sannox vessel which is currently under construction is due to commence service on the Arran route in late 2022.
- 2.13 Consideration has been given by the project steering group to the continuation of the Arran and Kintyre services during the construction works. This assessment is considering of the use of Ardrossan and an alternative mainland port (Troon), and of:
- Service resilience. It is projected by CalMac that operating from Ardrossan during the construction works would see an average winter cancellation rate of 20-25%. This is due to the service having to operate from the Irish berth, which is more exposed to the prevailing south westerly wind. The projected rate of cancellation assumes that one cancellation within a day would require all of that days sailings to be relocated;
 - Capital Cost, considering the capital cost investment required to support the operation of the service from Troon, and the provision of a temporary works package at Ardrossan;
 - Revenue Cost, considering the increased operating costs associated with a Troon service; and,
 - Economic Impact, which has identified that up to 100 jobs could be lost from within North Ayrshire, should the service be relocated from Ardrossan to Troon during the construction works. That would arise from the loss of spend in the Three Towns, a slight reduction in day trips to Arran given a longer journey time via rail, and the difficulty encountered by employees who currently access work on Arran from the Three Towns.

Public Engagement and Next Steps

- 2.15 It should be noted that a Ministerial Task Force meeting is due to take place on 17th February 2021 and further updates may be available following this meeting.
- 2.16 The Scottish Government, as well as North Ayrshire Council, enter a 6-week purdah period in advance of the Scottish Parliamentary elections on 6th May. Ministerial approval to proceed with the project will therefore be required by late March to allow the programme referred to above to be met, i.e. a construction start in Autumn 2022. Significant progress of relevant funding and legal agreements will therefore be required at or immediately after the Ministerial Task Force Meeting to allow this, and otherwise further delay of around 3 months is likely to occur.
- 2.17 An information update was provided in December 2020 with input from Task Force partners to update communities and other interested parties on the progress of the overall project to date. This included updates on the progress of the Task Force, on the marine and landside works, on LNG and PAS facilities, and ferry timetabling and service continuity.
- 2.18 Further engagement on the draft designs for the marina and landside infrastructure will be undertaken once sufficient progress has been made on funding and legal agreements.

3. Proposals

3.1 It is proposed that Council notes:

- a) Progress on the development of designs for the marine and landside infrastructure;
- b) The current projected budget position and business case for the Council's investment;
- c) Progress on funding and legal agreements;
- d) The review of the mainland port for the Arran and Kintyre services during the construction works; and
- e) The intention to engage with the Arran and mainland communities on the project.

4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty

Financial

- 4.1 While costs are subject to the market response once the project is tendered, current cost projections for the landside infrastructure indicate a cost of up to £11.613M based on three separate cost estimates. Contributing sources of funding are outlined below:

Source	Value	Current Position
North Ayrshire Council	£3,650,000	Secured – formed part of the base case
North Ayrshire Venture Trust	£1,980,000	As above
Peel Ports Group	£2,196,000	Agreed in principle – formed part of the base case and subject to legal agreement with PPG
External Funding	£1,480,000	Secured through successful applications to Strathclyde Partnership for Transport's (SPT) and the ERDF
Transport Scotland	£390,000	Secured – Additional funding referred to at 2.6.
Transport Scotland	£1,067,000	Agreed in principle, subject to the terms of the TS and NAC funding agreement.
Total	£10,763,000	(against projected cost of £11.613M)

The commitment the Council made to the project in 2017 accepted a degree of risk in relation to the delivery of external funding support against the £9.3M cost projection. The risk of the Council having to cover any shortfall on the external funding projection contained within the base case scenario has been eliminated as outlined above.

In seeking to address the £0.85M projected cost overspend identified above, the following options will be considered:

- Additional survey work including in relation to asbestos, ground investigations, drainage and ground penetrating radar surveys. This will reduce the amount of risk the contractor prices within the project and potentially identify cost savings;
- Securing additional funding, with an application submitted to SPT's Capital Programme for additional funding towards the transport interchange element of the landside works; and
- Additional Council borrowing, with a degree of flexibility available based on income/borrowing assumptions

Human Resources

4.2 None

Legal

- 4.3 A range of legal agreements are being developed to confirm roles and responsibilities, formalise governance arrangements and deal with risk in relation to the project, and expert independent legal advice has been sought from Brodies LLP. The agreements will include:

Funding agreements. Negotiations with TS on the terms and conditions of the GOL are on-going. A simplified agreement was proposed by TS in late November and is being reviewed by Brodies. This cannot be concluded until further progress is made on negotiations on funding between TS and PPG.

Lease of land by NAC from AAHCL. Ardrossan Harbour Company Limited (AHCL) / PPG has secured a Harbour Revision Order from TS. This enables the lease of land at the Harbour to the Council and CMAL in excess of the previously permitted seven-year period. A lease is being developed between the Council and Ardrossan Harbour Company Limited / PPG for the extent of the landside works and for a 30-year period. This will be informed by the requirements of the GOL.

Lease of terminal building from NAC to CMAL. TS confirmed in August 2020 that CMAL would take on the lease of the terminal building, for a period equivalent to the Council's lease of land from AHCL. The building will be leased based upon a market rent, and this will enable the proposed investment by the Council and ability to service the borrowing repayment. The terms of the lease will be informed by the requirements of the AHCL lease, GOL and funding agreements.

Procurement – A procurement strategy identifying PPG as the lead for the procurement and construction phases of the project has been agreed between all parties. A Procurement Co-operation Agreement prepared by Brodies identifies the roles and responsibilities for all parties under this strategy. This is currently under review by PPG. A Construction Contract Agreement will also be prepared by Brodies. This will set out the responsibilities in terms of payments, risk and the management of contract variations for the construction phase.

Assurance is also being sought via TS that Ardrossan is formally confirmed as mainland terminal for Brodick and Campbeltown Services for a period of 25 years, removing any risk of the service being relocated. While that risk is low, the confirmation is required given the commercial nature of the investment. This assurance is critical to the project's delivery and negotiations are on-going to this end. These are currently being developed through the Appropriate Berthing and Direct Agreements between TS and PPG. Comparable assurances are being sought for the Council's investment.

Equality/Socio-economic

- 4.4 The proposals will form part of a major capital investment programme in Ardrossan, with positive socio-economic impacts for the town. The design process has been informed by an Equality Impact Assessment.

Environmental and Sustainability

- 4.5 Any environmental implications of the project will be addressed as part of the relevant regulatory processes. AHCL / PPG has secured Marine Scotland approval of the Harbour Modifications and dredging works.

Key Priorities

- 4.6 The proposed investment will support the Council Plan outcomes of:
- We will provide well-maintained travel and transport networks, supporting alternative and sustainable transport; and
 - We will work with partners to make sure there is sustained investment in our roads, ports and harbour infrastructure to ensure that travel is resilient and reliable.

Community Wealth Building

- 4.7 Local benefits in terms of employment and skills are being sought through the procurement process for the capital works. In addition, the proposed lease agreements illustrate how the use of land and commercial income can be used to secure investment for community benefit.

5. Consultation

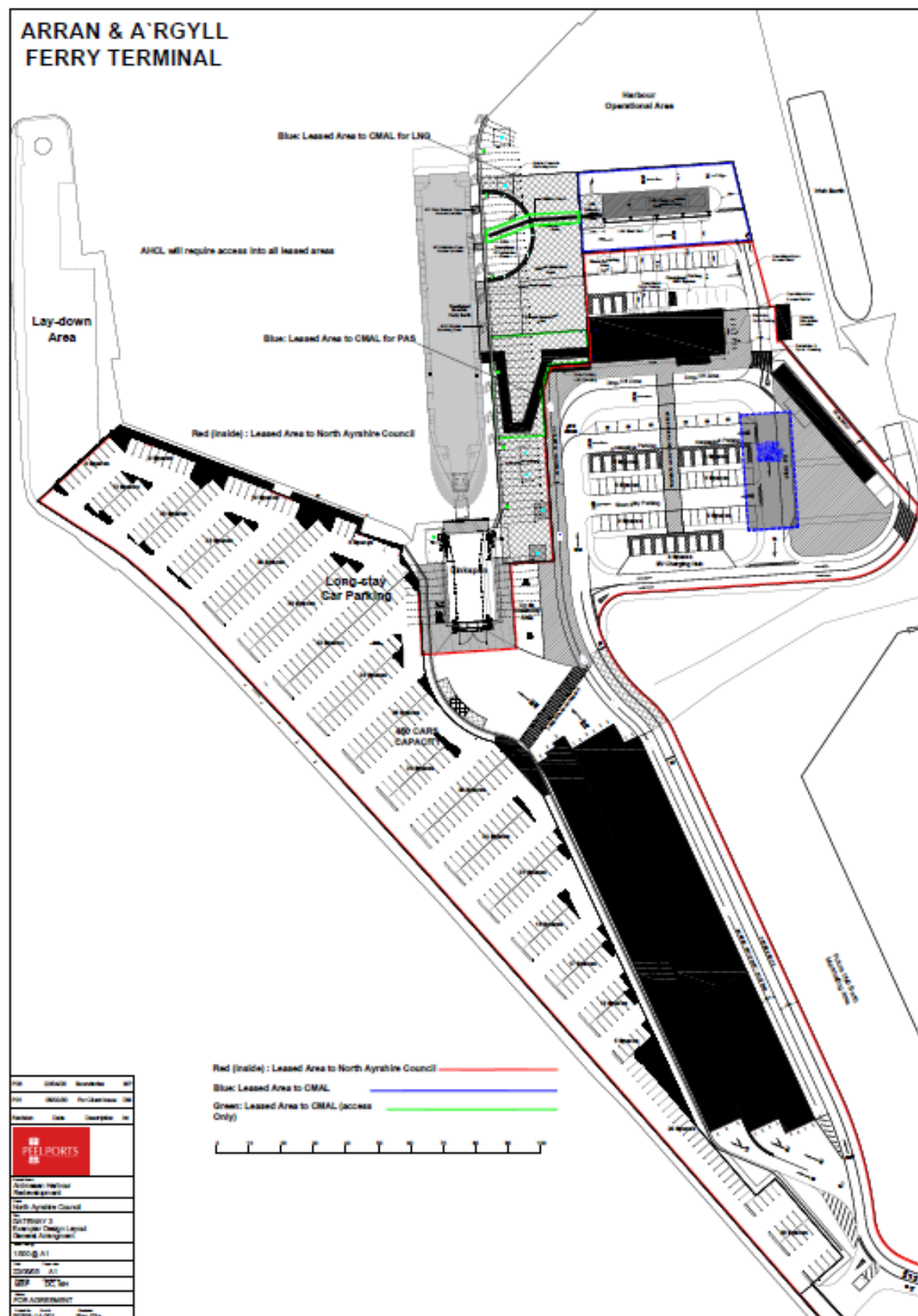
- 5.1 The design process to date has been informed by input from key stakeholders including TS, CMAL and CalMac. An information update was provided to local communities in December 2020 on the progress of the overall project to date. Wider stakeholder consultation is required and planned to allow a broader spectrum of interested parties to contribute to the design process and ensure that the final exemplar design meets users' needs and aspirations.

Karen Yeomans
Director (Growth and Investment)

For further information please contact **Alasdair Laurenson, Senior Manager, Growth and Investment Manager**, on **01294 324758**.

Background Papers
N/A

Appendix 1 – General Layout



NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

17 February 2020

North Ayrshire Council

Title:	Operation of Community Councils during COVID-19
Purpose:	The report makes recommendations in respect of the application of some provisions within the Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils during the current COVID-19 pandemic.
Recommendation:	<p>That the Council agrees as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) in terms of community council elections, (i) that the 'ordinary' elections for Arran, Cumbrae, Dalry, Fairlie, Irvine, Kilbirnie & Glengarnock, Kilwinning, Largs, Skelmorlie and West Kilbride which were rescheduled to take place in Spring 2021, are further postponed until September/October/November 2021, (ii) to note that the existing 'ordinary' election arrangements for Beith & District, Saltcoats in Autumn 2021 and Stevenston Community Council in 2022 remain in place and (iii) that, in the event of a request from 20 electors to establish a community council in Ardrossan, Dreghorn, Girdle Toll & Bourtreehill or Springside, no action be taken prior to November 2021; (b) that, in respect of any ordinary elections in 2021, authority be delegated to officers to make such adjustments to the election procedures set out in the Scheme as might be required in light of COVID-19; (c) the term of office of existing community councils and their members which would otherwise have come to an end on 30 April 2021 in terms of the previous Emergency Governance decision, be extended until 30 November 2021 (or effectively until the postponed ordinary elections have taken place); (d) in the interim, whilst community councils may meet on a remote basis, they are not required to do so, nor are they subject to the usual requirement to meet at least six times per year, and any decisions which community councils require to take during this period may be taken remotely

via consultation with their members, including decisions relating to the appointment of new members; and

- (e) the Council will not exercise the power to dissolve a community council during this period.
-

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 As a result of the developing COVID-19 pandemic, the decision was taken in April 2020 under Emergency Governance arrangements to suspend until 30 April 2021 those provisions within the Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils which relate to the minimum number of meetings a community council would ordinarily require to hold over the course of a year and the minimum level of membership which would normally need to be maintained for a community council to remain active. In addition, a number of ordinary community council elections which would otherwise have taken place in Autumn 2020 were postponed until Spring 2021.
- 1.2 Given the ongoing impact of the pandemic, it is recommended that the elements of the Community Council Scheme mentioned above remain suspended until the end of November 2021 and that the ordinary elections originally postponed until Spring 2021 now take place in the Autumn (September/October/November) 2021 along with those ordinary elections already scheduled to be held at that time.

2. Background

Meetings and Membership

- 2.1 Paragraph 15 of the Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils requires that community councils hold a minimum of six quorate meetings annually. Similarly, Annexe 1 to the Scheme sets the standard in terms of the minimum level of membership which must be maintained for a community council to remain viable. In terms of Paragraph 24 of the Scheme, where a community council's ordinary membership falls below the required minimum or where it fails to meet at least six times a year, the community council in question may be dissolved.
- 2.2 Although physical meetings cannot take place at the moment, the Scheme does not preclude community councils from meeting on a remote/virtual basis and, indeed, some are now doing so during the current COVID-19 restrictions. The circumstances of individual community councils and their members vary widely, however. While a great many are continuing to play an important role in supporting their communities during the pandemic, including as volunteers and key workers, formal meetings of the community council may not be considered feasible or a priority at this time. In recognition of this and of the challenges associated with filling any casual vacancies which might arise, it was agreed under Emergency Governance arrangements that:
- the term of office of existing community councils and their members which would otherwise have come to an end in 2020 be extended until 30 April 2021 (or effectively until ordinary elections take place);

- in the interim, community councils would not be subject to the requirement to meet at least six times per year and decisions which they required to take during this period could be taken remotely via consultation with their members, including the appointment of new members; and
- the Council would not exercise the power to dissolve a community council during this period.

Community Council Elections

- 2.3 Paragraph 11 of the Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils provides that, at the discretion of the Council, ordinary community council elections take place every four years, in September/October/November.
- 2.4 Arran, Cumbrae, Dalry, Fairlie, Irvine, Kilbirnie & Glengarnock, Kilwinning, Largs, Skelmorlie and West Kilbride Community Councils were originally due to hold their ordinary elections in Autumn 2020. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the decision was taken under Emergency Governance arrangements that these elections would be postponed until Spring 2021.
- 2.5 Ordinary elections for Beith & District and Saltcoats Community Councils are currently scheduled to take place in Autumn 2021. Stevenston Community Council will hold its next ordinary election in 2022.
- 2.6 Ardrossan, Dreghorn, Girdle Toll & Bourtreehill and Springside Community Councils are not currently active. In terms of paragraph 10 of the Scheme, on receipt of a request from 20 electors, Council would ordinary require to organise an initial election within 6 weeks.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 Clearly, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to be felt and associated restrictions are likely to remain in place for some time. It is recommended, therefore, that the Council continues to exercise its discretion to suspend those elements of the Community Council Scheme relating to membership, meetings and elections beyond the period originally agreed.
- 3.2 Given that some COVID-19 restrictions may still be in place in Autumn 2021, it is also recommended that officers are delegated authority, if required, to vary the election procedures set out in the Scheme, in order to allow the elections to be conducted safely, whilst respecting the integrity of the voting process.
- 3.3 The Council is, therefore, invited to agree as follows:

- (a) in terms of community council elections, (i) that the 'ordinary' elections for Arran, Cumbrae, Dalry, Fairlie, Irvine, Kilbirnie & Glengarnock, Kilwinning, Largs, Skelmorlie and West Kilbride which were rescheduled to take place in Spring 2021, are further postponed until September/October/November 2021, (ii) to note that the existing 'ordinary' election arrangements for Beith & District, Saltcoats in Autumn 2021 and Stevenston Community Council in 2022 remain in place and (iii) that, in the event of a request from 20 electors to establish a community council in Ardrossan, Dreghorn, Girdle Toll & Bourtreehill or Springside, no action be taken prior to November 2021;
- (b) that, in respect of any ordinary elections in 2021, authority be delegated to officers to make such adjustments to the election procedures set out in the Scheme as might be required in light of Covid-19;
- (c) the term of office of existing community councils and their members which would otherwise have come to an end on 30 April 2021 in terms of the previous Emergency Governance decision, be further extended until 30 November 2021 (effectively until the postponed ordinary elections have taken place);
- (d) in the interim, whilst community councils may meet on a remote basis, they are not required to do so, nor are they subject to the usual requirement to meet at least six times per year, and any decisions which community councils require to take during this period may be taken remotely via consultation with their members, including decisions relating to the appointment of new members; and
- (e) the Council will not exercise the power to dissolve a community council during this period.

4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty

Financial

- 4.1 None arising from the recommendations of the report. Administrative expenditure incurred by community councils continues to be met on a 'top up' basis following the usual audit of accounts. Costs associated with the administration of elections will be met at the appropriate time.

Human Resources

- 4.2 None arising from the recommendations of the report.

Legal

- 4.3 The Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils provides the framework for the operation of community councils in North Ayrshire and includes the opportunity for the Council to apply a degree of discretion in terms of the application of its provisions.

Equality/Socio-economic

- 4.4 There are no significant equalities, socio-economic or island-proofing impacts associated with the recommendations of the report.

Environmental and Sustainability

- 4.5 None arising from the recommendations of the report.

Key Priorities

- 4.6 None arising from the recommendations of the report.

Community Wealth Building

- 4.7 None arising from the recommendations of the report.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 The Council's Committee and Member Services team works closely with Connected Communities on matters relating to community councils. The recommendations set out in the report are intended to reflect the circumstances of community councils themselves and are also informed by the experience of the Community Council Liaison Officers group.

Andrew Fraser
Head of Democratic Services

For further information please contact Melanie Anderson, Senior Manager (Committee and Member Services), on telephone number 07385 417274.

Background Papers

The Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils in North Ayrshire

