

COUNCIL: 8 DECEMBER 2021

RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Please find below some supplementary information provided in relation to matters raised at the 8 December 2021 Council meeting. Responses are shown in red font.

12. Boundaries Scotland: 2019 Review of Electoral Arrangements

The Head of Democratic Services undertook to provide (i) requested clarification on the boundary between the Saltcoats and Stevenston ward and the Ardrossan ward; (ii) a briefing note on the new electoral arrangements early in the new year, to guide existing Elected Members and prospective candidates on campaigning in the local government elections; and (iii) clarification on the position of Blair Park in terms of the new electoral arrangements.

Response

A briefing note detailing all electoral arrangements in full is being issued under separate cover.”

14. Questions

- (3) a question by Councillor Marshall to Councillor McPhater in her capacity as a Council appointee on North Ayrshire Ventures Trust

The Head of Democratic Services clarified that funds which had been transferred from the former Irvine Bay Regeneration Company could only be used to support projects within the Irvine Bay area, but undertook to provide further information to Members on the detail of the funding arrangements.

Response

“North Ayrshire Ventures Trust Ltd is a charitable company and separate entity from the Council and was established in 1999. Directors are appointed by the Council and include two Councillors, two Officers along with co-opted directors who have suitable skills and experience to further the objects of the company. The directorships are unpaid. The objects of the company are as follows:

- To relieve poverty among the residents of North Ayrshire
- To advance education among the residents of North Ayrshire particularly among the unemployed;
- To promote training in skills of all kinds, and particularly those to help residents of North Ayrshire in obtaining paid employment;

- The advancement of citizenship or community development in terms of Section 7(2)(t) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005; and
- To promote other schemes of a charitable nature for the benefit of the residents of the North Ayrshire

The original fund held by NAVT known generally as “the core fund” distributes grant funding to voluntary, community and social enterprises which make applications falling within the above criteria. The details of the various organisations in receipt of recent grants from that fund were detailed in the response to the Council question on 8th December.

Following the winding up of Irvine Bay Urban Regeneration Company and Irvine Bay Developments Ltd (IBRC) funding was transferred to NAVT in relation to capital regeneration projects in the Irvine Bay area. Some projects had been agreed but not delivered by IBRC prior to their wind up (the “ongoing projects”) and NAVT was obliged to use the funding committed to have those projects completed. There was also a list of “reserve projects” which IBRC identified as priorities. Transfer Agreements were signed by the Council, NAVT and Scottish Ministers which govern the use of the IBRC legacy funding with restrictions in terms of purpose and area. The Transfer Agreements restrict grants to projects within the “Operating Area” of IBRC.

The “Operating Area” in which the IBRC legacy funding can be used is, in general terms, Irvine, Kilwinning, Stevenston, Saltcoats and Ardrossan. A map outlining the Operating Area is attached to this briefing note. There is no scope for the funds to be used elsewhere. In North Ayrshire.

The projects IBRC had agreed to support, prior to wind up and which NAVT was bound to fund from the funds transferred are as follows:

- Quarry Road Irvine
- Gateway Site, Irvine Enterprise Area
- Saltcoats Public Realm
- Annickbank, Irvine
- Strategic Investment Site Irvine
- Irvine Community Sports Club
- Fullarton Community Hub

A list of “reserved projects” is included in the Agreements which detail the projects which can be considered for funding should there be sufficient funds available. At the time the Agreements were signed, it was recognised that there would be insufficient funding to progress all of the listed projects using the IBRC funding. The aspirations for each project are detailed in the Agreements. The projects listed are as follows:

- Irvine Town Centre phase 2
- Irvine Harbourside – Ardeer
- Medicine Manufacturing Innovation Centre (MMIC) - not proceeding

- Ardrossan Coastal Regeneration
- i3 Irvine Enterprise Area Advance Manufacturing Space
- Industrial Biotech Upscaling Facility – not proceeding

In conclusion, whilst grant funding to voluntary and community organisations can be distributed from the “core fund” across North Ayrshire provided the purpose of funding meets the criteria, funding from the IBRC legacy fund can only be disbursed for suitable regeneration projects within the operating area of the former IBRC and in accordance with the terms of the Agreements.”

(12) a question by Councillor Billings to the Cabinet Member for Green New Deal and Sustainability

As a supplementary question, Councillor Billings referred to the potential for contamination associated with placing biodegradable disposables in recycling bins and asked whether changes would be made to ensure that the effectiveness of the Council’s recycling was not adversely affected.

Councillor Cullinane responded by undertaking to ask officers to provide Members with details information on alternative use products and their disposal. The Leader noted that, as a local authority, North Ayrshire had one of the best recycling rates in the country, but improvements could always be made, such as those implemented especially within schools in respect of the colour of bins.

Response

“The Waste Service is currently engaging with Zero Waste Scotland, the Renewable Energy Association and the Council’s waste processing contractors to develop clear guidance for citizens to advise which compostable items are suitable for recycling via the Council’s current recycling collection services. Once the draft guidance is available, expected to be around Spring, this will be shared with Elected Members for feedback and any further questions.

The Council’s primary objective is to encourage citizens to move away from using disposable items of any type, encouraging the use of reusable items where possible to avoid waste being produced in the first instance, such as encouraging the use of reusable coffee mugs instead of single-use disposable cups. The Council’s ‘Plastic-Smart’ campaign will aim to encourage reuse as the preferred option, before encouraging the use of more environmentally friendly disposable items and only where reusable items are not a feasible option.

There are a wide array of new products being placed on the market by suppliers to replace those single-use items that were previously made from plastic, many stating that they are “biodegradable”. Unfortunately, not all the products that are currently sold as being biodegradable are suitable for commercial or domestic scale composting due to the time that these materials can take to break down through that process.

One way to understand the difference is that certified compostable packaging is guaranteed to decompose under specific conditions, whereas biodegradable packaging has no fixed timeframe to break down.

To be recovered by a commercial scale composting process, material must be certified to conform to the standard BS EN 13432, and it must also be acceptable to the processor. For example, the food waste liners that the Council issues are accredited to this standard and acceptable to our waste processing contractor. As previously mentioned, officers are working with national colleagues to develop clearer guidance around the disposal of items marked compostable or biodegradable to help provide additional clarity for residents.”

(17) a question by Councillor Murdoch to the Leader of the Council:

“Can the Leader of the Council please provide details of North Ayrshire Council’s involvement during the COP 26 events in Glasgow?”

As a supplementary question, Councillor Murdoch asked, if the Council was going to take COP26 seriously, what action would be taken in terms of fly tipping, littering, dog fouling, organic and chemical discharges and emissions into the atmosphere and coastal waters.

Councillor Cullinane responded by undertaking to have a detailed response provided.

Response

“The Streetscene Operational service area is responsible for enforcement of littering, flytipping and dog fouling. Our internal bespoke prevention initiatives include an anti-roadside litter campaign, the OB-litter-ATE campaign to address lunchtime litter issues at schools and the dash cam initiative which encourages the public to report offences captured on dash cam and CCTV together with effective partnership working with colleagues in Housing private sector team and Waste Services to reduce potential offences as well as supporting our ever growing numbers of volunteers. Our teams are active members of national campaigns, working in partnership with service providers such as Police Scotland, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Keep Scotland Beautiful and Zero Waste Scotland examples of this partnership approach are Operation moonbeam – Safer shores initiative – My beach your beach.

Our enforcement techniques are well established with neighbouring local authorities often consulting with our officers to help improve their existing procedures. North Ayrshire has a fixed penalty recovery rate of 65% -75%. Officers actively patrol areas of concern and hold offenders accountable for their actions. A slight increase in penalties were evident during lockdown however this is now stabilising figures are detailed in the table below:

Fixed penalties	
Year	Number of penalties
2017 - 18	237
2018 - 19	217
2019 - 20	181
2020 - 21	331
2021 - 22	262

The enquiry also asked around chemical discharges and emissions into the atmosphere and coastal waters. The authority with statutory powers in relation to these matters is the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA). I can confirm that in the past and where required the Council has and would work with SEPA in relation to any environmental crime or discharge of emissions into the atmosphere or coastal waters.”