



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

North Ayrshire Council

A Meeting of North Ayrshire Council will be held remotely on **Wednesday, 27 October 2021** at **14:00** 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 Ordinary Meeting held on 8 September 2021 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 for the period 30 August - 17 October 2021 (copy enclosed).

5 Leader's Report

Submit report by the Leader of the Council for the period covering 30 August - 17 October 2021 (copy enclosed).

- 6 Minute Volume (issued under separate cover)**
Submit, for noting and for approval of any recommendations contained therein, the Minutes of Meeting of committees of the Council held in the period 24 May - 1 October 2021.
- 7 North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Board: Minutes of Meetings held in June and September 2021**
Submit report by the Interim Executive Director (Communities and Education) on the Minutes of the meetings of the North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership Board held in June and September 2021 (copy enclosed).
- 8 Hybrid Committee Meetings Pilot**
Submit report by the Chief Executive on the outcome of the hybrid committee meetings pilot which took place in October 2021 (copy enclosed).
- 9 Questions**
In terms of Standing Order 12, submit:-

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

“Recent media speculation suggests that many Irvine residents are still not fully aware of the proposed developments in the harbour area as a result of the Ayrshire Growth Deal. Can the Leader summarise the plan for this area, highlighting the key changes and improvements that will be visible to the local community when the project is completed?”

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

"Our older people in Sheltered Housing complexes in North Ayrshire are living in virtual isolation, unable to access communal areas where they previously enjoyed meeting for coffee mornings or simply to chat on a daily basis. North Ayrshire Council continually say they are taking a slow and measured approach to opening communal areas because of the fear of spreading Covid, but perhaps don't fully appreciate the mental anguish caused by this restriction on normal life over the past 19 months.

Our older folk have been double jabbed to reduce the likelihood of catching Covid. In Kilbirnie and Beith they tell me they want the communal areas opened up as soon as practicable.

Can the Cabinet Member for Green New Deal and Sustainability advise when North Ayrshire Council will permit these areas to be opened up to residents; and what steps are being taken to keep residents advised of potential time-scales?"

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

“Will the Council as a matter of urgency and public safety, look into the amount of road signs and street lights that are hidden or partially hidden behind overgrown bushes or trees, and have the required remedial work done order to make them totally visible again?”

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

“Before the start of the next fishing season in March 2022, will the Council construct an anti-poaching fence at the weir on the River Irvine, similar to successful such fences elsewhere?”

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

“Concerns have once again been expressed by clergy and others in Kilbirnie about NAC plans for a future cemetery in Kilbirnie. Can the cabinet member for Place advise of the current available capacity in Kilbirnie Cemetery and advise on what plans are in place for a future cemetery in the town?”

(6) 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 an update on current progress with the Garnock Valley Flood Plan?”

(7) 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 an update on NAC plans to resolve the recurring flooding issue on the B777 Longbar to Glengarnock Road specifically on the bend located between the Garnock Campus and the Glengarnock Railways Bridge which creates major problems for traffic and pedestrians in heavy rain?”

(8) 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 advise on the level and extent of domestic violence in North Ayrshire during the pandemic (March 2020 – August 2021 or figures as available) and express a view on what further steps might be taken to tackle domestic violence generally in North Ayrshire?”

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

"Will the Leader of the Council inform Members why the people who responded to the Public Consultation on the Future of Early Years, Primary and Secondary Education in Ardrossan were not made aware of the highly toxic content of the land before they responded to the consultation?"

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

"Last week saw the introduction of facial recognition systems in our schools to allow children to access school dinners.

These systems use technology that does not simply match "pictures" of the user. Instead aspects of each user's features are captured and recorded. It is these aspects, which in general stay constant throughout your life, that are used to complete facial recognition.

In other words the data captured in our schools today can be used to identify our children for the rest of their lives.

Following the introduction of facial recognition system for children to access school dinners and the privacy issues this clearly raises would be the Member please tell me:

1. Who stores the information gathered - this council or the system supplier?
2. Who is the designated data controller?
3. Is the information stored shared with any third parties?
4. Does the agreement permit sharing of this data in the future?
5. Which rights will users of the system be required to waive?
6. Following so many well publicised data breaches from all sectors, what steps are being taken to protect the data gathered?
7. In the event of a catastrophic data breach what remedies are available to users of the system?"

10 Motion

In terms of Standing Order 13, submit:-

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

“Scotland has a long and proud fishing history and has had access to a wide range of marine habitats that provided a wide variety of both fish and other seafood. However, we are all aware that fishing is in crisis caused by overfishing leading to dwindling catches. To try to mitigate these losses fishing has moved to ever more mechanised and damaging ways of fishing. Whilst that provided short-term solutions it is clear that the damage caused to marine habitats is leading to further reductions in catches.

So much of our coastal seas are regularly scraped by dredgers and trawlers looking for scallops and other seafood. This destructive action has destroyed and damaged vast expanses of seabed creating virtual seabed deserts that have only a fraction of the marine life they once supported. The varied marine life that used to support healthy and diverse populations of fish no longer exists, and we have an increasingly impoverished, unhealthy and unproductive marine environment. The catastrophic collapse of the once abundant fish stocks in the Clyde in the 1980s and loss of jobs and income that these fisheries supported is a graphic illustration of the problem.

Changes in our climate is causing levels of CO₂ in seawater to rise leading to acidification of the water further damaging and inhibiting the growth of shellfish and other marine life. Coupled with stresses caused by warmer waters it is clear that this is not a sustainable situation. Our fishing industries face an ecological crisis on many fronts. Major change is required to avert the potential total collapse of our fishing industry.

Healthy inshore marine environments not only act as essential nursery areas for young fish and other sea creatures, but the carbon capture by marine animals and plants (such as seaweeds and sea grasses) capture CO₂ from the water thereby reducing atmospheric CO₂ and help to neutralise the water. The importance of 'blue carbon outcomes' was much discussed at COP25, and will be an important part of COP26. As a seagoing nation we must play our part in including the marine environment in our zero-carbon planning.

The work and research undertaken by Community of Arran Seabed Trust (COAST) in Lamlash, in collaboration with universities and researchers, has shown that with active protection and management our coastal marine environment damaged areas recover to become naturally varied, productive and resilient habitats. This will benefit both our coastal communities and our environment.

With the current focus on the climate change crisis, it is time to press the Scottish government to take the action that it has talked about for so long. The Scottish government has over the years agreed that something needs to be done. It has published reports and had numerous discussions but very little has actually changed. There have been

significant vested interests in maintaining the status quo, but the climate, biodiversity and fishing crises are now upon us. The time has come for the Scottish government to take decisive action to proactively manage Scotland's marine environment for the long-term survival of its fisheries, coastal communities and for the hugely positive contribution healthy seas have for the climate.

We in North Ayrshire have announced a climate change emergency. If we are serious about that emergency, we must take a stand for positive action.

I therefore move that North Ayrshire Council agrees that:

1. The control of bottom-towed fishing within our inshore coastal waters will enable the damaged seabeds to return to varied, productive and resilient marine habitats, thereby benefiting the environment and the long-term sustainability of fishing,
 2. The Council asks Scottish Government for provision of support to existing fishing businesses which will enable them to transfer to using low environmental impact methods of fishing, thereby protecting existing fishing jobs and the provision of long-term sustainable employment in our local communities,
- and
3. That the Chief Executive writes to the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands to request that the Scottish Government implements control of bottom-towed fishing in inshore coastal waters and provides the necessary support to existing fishing businesses to enable them to change to low environmental impact and sustainable methods of fishing which directly link to the government's objectives set out in the "Future Fisheries: management strategy 2020-2030".

The effect of such action will provide positive benefits for those working in Scotland's coastal communities and make a significant contribution to mitigating climate change."

11 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/Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being recorded/live-streamed.

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

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

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact dataprotectionofficer@north-ayrshire.gov.uk.

North Ayrshire Council Sederunt

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

Chair:

Apologies:

Attending:

North Ayrshire Council
8 September 2021

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

Present

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

In Attendance

C. Hatton, Chief Executive; C. Cameron, Director (Health and Social Care Partnership); R. McCutcheon, Executive Director (Place); K. Yeomans, Director and A. Laurenson, Senior Manager (Growth and Investment); C. Amos Interim Executive Director and R. Arthur, Head of Connected Communities (Communities and Education); M. Boyd, Head of Service (Finance), A. Craig, Head of Service, N. Shearer, Team Manager (Legal Services), M. McColm, Senior Manager (Communications), H. Clancy, D. McCaw and C. Stewart, Committee Services Officers and M. Anderson, Senior Manager (Committee and Member Services) (Democratic Services) (Chief Executive's Service).

Chair

Provost Clarkson in the Chair.

Apologies

Jimmy Miller.

1. Provost's Remarks

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

The Provost extended a particular welcome to Councillor Ronnie Stalker who was attending his first meeting of the full Council following the recent Ward 6 Dalry and West Kilbride By Election.

2. Apologies

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

3. Declarations of Interest

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

There were no declarations of the Party Whip.

4. Previous Minutes

The accuracy of the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 9 June 2021 and the Special Meeting held on 23 June 2021 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 31 May – 29 August 2021.

The Provost highlighted the following elements of his written report:

- a nationwide event to mark 100 years of the Royal British Legion, including a local wreath-laying ceremony and service in Saltcoats on 19 June 2021;
- Armed Forces Day celebrations in Irvine in June 2021;
- the official opening on 25 July 2021 of the new-look Ayrshire Hospice Store in Largs;
- the Marymass Festival, which took place on a virtual basis again this year;
- participation in one of the organised Harbourside Heritage Walks in mid-August 2021;
- attendance at a successful Irvine Burns Club Zoom event on 18 August 2021; and
- the launch in late August 2021 of a documentary entitled "Fakers and Forgers: Counterfeiting Robert Burns".

Noted.

6. Leader's Report

Submitted report by the Leader of the Council for the period from 31 May – 29 August 2021.

Noted.

7. Council Minute Volume

Submitted for noting and for approval of any recommendations contained therein, the Minutes of meetings of committees of the Council held in the period 4 December 2020 – 18 August 2021.

Noted.

8. North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Board: Minutes of Meeting Held on 11 March 2021

Submitted report by the Interim Executive Director (Communities and Education) on the Minutes of the meeting of the Community Planning Partnership Board held on 11 March 2021.

The Chief Executive highlighted the following matters which had been discussed by the CPP Board:

- work on the Local Policing Plan, which had included a health inequalities self-assessment workshop;
- an update on Community Justice Ayrshire;
- actions arising from work undertaken on the cost of the school day; and
- the Community Food System and its links with Community Wealth Building.

Members asked a question in respect of the timing of submission of the CPP Board Minutes to the Council for noting and the publication of these Minutes on the Community Planning website. The Head of Service (Connected Communities) undertook look into this matter.

Noted.

9. Report of the Returning Officer

Submitted report by the Returning Officer on the outcome of the North Ayrshire Council Ward 6 Dalry and West Kilbride By-Election and on the Declaration of Acceptance of Office by the new Elected Member for that Ward.

Noted.

10. Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies

The Council was invited to consider a number of committee and outside bodies nominations, for noting and approval, as appropriate.

Members asked a question on the financial implications of an appointment to the Licensing Board, in terms of the cost of the associated training and test. The Head of Democratic Services undertook to circulate the requested information to Members.

Councillor Marshall, seconded by Councillor Ferguson, moved that Councillor Stalker be appointed to serve on the Licensing Committee and Licensing Board.

There being no amendment, the motion was declared carried.

Accordingly, the Council agreed as follows:

- (a) to appoint Councillor Ronnie Stalker to serve on the Licensing Committee and Licensing Board; and
- (b) to note:
 - (i) in terms of Standing Order 7.2, Councillor Stalker's appointment to the Police and Fire and Rescue Committee in place of Councillor Todd Ferguson, effective from 30 August 2021,
 - (ii) the appointment of Councillor Stalker to the Spier's Trust, in his capacity as a Ward 6 Member and
 - (iii) Councillor Stalker's intention to serve on the Garnock Valley Locality Partnership.

11. Committee Timetable 2022

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on a proposed committee timetable for the period from January 2022 until the conclusion of the current Administration. The draft timetable was set out as the Appendix to the report.

The Council unanimously agreed (a) to approve the committee timetable for the period January – May 2022 set out in Appendix 1 to the report; and (b) to note that the dates for meetings referred to at Section 2 were subject to confirmation separately, in addition to those for any ad hoc committees and Special Meetings which may be required over the course of the year.

12. Hybrid Meetings

Submitted report by the Head of Democratic Services on progress in terms of the introduction of hybrid meetings.

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

- the cost of hybrid meeting equipment; and
- whether consideration might be given to supporting Locality Partnership and community councils in terms of hybrid meetings in future.

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

Accordingly, the Council agreed as follows:

- (a) agree that a hybrid meetings pilot take place prior to the next ordinary meeting of the Council in October 2021, involving a meeting(s) of the Licensing Committee and Integration Joint Board, subject to:
 - (i) consultation with the Health and Social Care Partnership with regard to the IJB arrangements,
 - (ii) any applicants/licence-holders attending the Licensing Committee do so on a remote basis only;
 - (iii) any hybrid meetings during the pilot proceeding as remote meetings (with physical participation) with no more than 50% of committee Members attending in person and on the basis that any failure of the hybrid equipment would result in the meeting reverting to a remote platform;
 - (iv) the pilot being suspended in the event of a reintroduction of social distancing requirements; and
 - (v) the extent of the pilot being dependent on the availability of sufficient staff resources
- (b) note that no further amendment to Standing Orders is required at this time in relation to hybrid meeting arrangements, but that officers use learning from the pilot to inform a Hybrid Meetings protocol for use by Members, Officers and other meeting participants;
- (c) agree that a further report be submitted to the Council meeting in October 2021 on:
 - (i) the outcome of the pilot;
 - (ii) options for the expansion of hybrid/physical meetings and
 - (iii) future public gallery provisions; and
- (d) note that any pilot hybrid meetings held in September 2021 would not require to include a physical public gallery but that, from October 2021, some public gallery provision would be needed for any meetings with a physical attendance component.

13. Ardrossan Strategic Regeneration Programme and Enabling Infrastructure Investment

Submitted report by the Director (Growth and Investment) on the progress of a nationally significant development programme in Ardrossan and the infrastructure investment required to enable the regeneration of a major strategic site.

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

- whether statutory consultation respondents were aware of the contaminated nature of the site prior to responding;
- the guarantees to be provided by the companies engaged to remove contamination;
- whether the views of potential house-builders and hotel operators had been sought with regard to the issue of contamination;
- the funding mechanism for meeting the cost of enabling infrastructure works referred to in the report and whether any alternative loan sources might be identified;
- the likely impact of an increase in traffic volume on neighbouring streets;
- whether the Council had taken action with regard to any financial liability for decontamination costs which the previous operator of this site might bear;
- the availability of detailed information on the likely impact of the proposed expenditure on the Council's future capital programme;
- the rationale for the proposed phasing of the project, particularly with regard to the timing of the residential and commercial development of the site;
- the funding mechanism which might be associated with future maintenance of new seawalls/walkways at this location;
- the name of the site and plans for branding; and
- progress in respect of negotiations with Transport Scotland and Peel Ports.

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

In terms of Standing Order 14.3, Councillor McNicol asked that his dissent be recorded.

Accordingly, the Council agreed, Councillor McNicol dissenting, as follows:

- (a) to note progress to date of the Ardrossan North Shore outline business case; and
- (b) to approve further provision of up to £14.3M of investment in enabling infrastructure to support the development of a major strategic site.

14. Processes for Future Consultations

Submit report by the Interim Executive Director (Communities and Education) on how future consultation would address the issues raised during the Review of Libraries, Halls and Community Centres and Development of Community Hubs.

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

Accordingly, the Council agreed as follows:

- (a) to approve the recommendations for future consultations set out in Section 2 of the report; and
- (b) that it be remitted to officers to implement the improvements.

15. Questions

In terms of Standing Order 12, submitted:

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

“Smoking is one of the voluntary threats to health right across society. I am particularly interested in how smoking has impacted on our young people in North Ayrshire during the Covid-19 pandemic because, whilst the risks to young people of having the Covid-19 and variant vaccinations is reputedly extremely small, taking up smoking has lifetime health implications.

I would be pleased to receive from the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care any figures which might be available in relation to young people in North Ayrshire taking up smoking during the Covid-19 lockdowns (period March 2020 – August 2021 or figures as available) and advise of what steps might be taken in North Ayrshire to encourage our young people not to smoke. Secondly, please advise of any available figures on the uptake of the Covid-19 vaccination and what steps are being taken to encourage an even fuller uptake by our young people.”

Councillor Foster responded in the following terms:

“Specific information in relation to young people and smoking is normally collected and collated via school health and wellbeing surveys. Unfortunately, prolonged lockdown periods have meant there has been significant disruption to gathering this valuable information.

The NHS Ayrshire and Arran Smoking Cessation teams have continued to function this year. However, this service has been severely curtailed by staff members being redeployed to support the pandemic response, in particular to support with contact tracing to manage the COVID-19 cases.

Peer support is the most effective way to reduce the numbers of young people starting to take up smoking or vaping. Nicotine is highly addictive and young people require significant support to stop smoking /vaping. Working with schools, colleges or other areas where young people access to provide positive messages and cessation services is the most effective way to reduce the numbers of young people smoking. Encouraging parents, grandparents, other carers to access smoking cessation is an effective way to tackle intergenerational smoking. Many children are introduced to tobacco or vaping via their parents or other family members. A focus on the expense of smoking rather than health benefits is more effective with young people, highlighting the opportunity costs of spending cash on tobacco or vaping materials can be a powerful incentive and through consultation with young people, different needs are highlighted for different areas.

For North Ayrshire as at 7 September 2021 across adult members of the population 94.2% have had their first vaccination and 88.2% have has both doses. For our younger people aged 16 to 17, so far 47.8% have come forward for their first vaccination and 10% have had both doses, the vaccination programme roll-out and promotion to the younger group continues and is planned to be completed by the end of September. To encourage uptake, we have provided many drop-in vaccination clinics for young people and targeted media to encourage them to register online and access clinics. These targeted messages have also been aimed at those young people who are clinically vulnerable or who live with someone who is clinically vulnerable.”

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

“My personal view is that our Waste Management Team in North Ayrshire have done an incredible job of work ensuring continuity of uplift of bins between March 2020 and the present. I would make special mention of the front-line team emptying our bins throughout the pandemic and sincerely thank them for their service during this difficult time. It would be remiss not to also acknowledge the organisational work of our NAC Waste Management team who have had to be innovative to support the front-line team through a challenging period.

Can the Portfolio Holder for Green New Deal and Sustainability advise on the current constraints faced by Waste Management in delivering a quality service during still challenging times and, in particular, make any comment in relation to brown bin uplifts in the Garnock Valley area which seem to be experiencing difficulty in continuity of service as detailed in the NAC calendar.”

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

“As all Members are aware, nationally, the pandemic has resulted in unprecedented difficulties for a range of sectors over the last 18 months and waste management is no exception.

A combination of factors, including more people at home generating additional waste, physical distancing requirements in our vehicles, and the impact of self-isolation on employee numbers, has presented significant resourcing challenges.

During the first phase of the pandemic, officers were able to mitigate this resourcing impact by training and redeploying colleagues from Streetscene and Roads Services from their normal duties. This swift action meant that we were able to continue our normal waste services uninterrupted, in stark contrast with most other local authorities across Scotland, who had to suspend one or more of their waste collections services for weeks and, in some cases, months.

During 2021, the challenge has shifted up a gear. The easing of restrictions nationally created visitor management challenges due to good weather and high levels of demand, particularly in our coastal areas, and resources have had to be returned to Streetscene to manage this effectively. In addition, the recent increase in positive cases has had an inevitable impact on levels of self-isolation absence. A continued factor is increased tonnages of waste for us to manage due to more people being at home. All employees have worked tirelessly to ensure waste collections remain as uninterrupted as possible and, in the main, our grey, blue and purple bin collections have been largely uninterrupted, with the occasional instances of brown bins being uplifted the day after their allocated day. To counter this, several Saturday shifts have been working during the summer period to ensure that brown bin service delivery is up to date by the end of the working week. Officers have sought to keep members and the public up to date with regular service updates being provided where areas have been affected.

Officers continue to monitor waste management activity on a daily basis and are responding dynamically to the challenges as they develop. As garden waste tonnages naturally reduce now as we move into autumn, we expect this to ease the recently experienced service pressure significantly.”

Councillor Montgomerie concluded by expressing his appreciation of the efforts of all frontline and other Council staff during the pandemic.

- (3) a question by Councillor Donald L. Reid to the Cabinet Member for Participatory Democracy in the following terms:

“NAC Connected Communities have been “cautious in their approach to reopening community centres and halls.” They are now open. Whilst this approach is understood, concern has been expressed by some voluntary groups about the detailed form that each group is required to submit, signed by an office bearer on behalf of each group, before they are allowed to resume activities in NAC community centres and halls.

The form, drafted by NAC, headed: “*Conditions for Letting During Covid-19 (Version 6 – August 2021)*” has 28 individual sections which require to be completed. Issues raised by voluntary groups about this form include:

Item 8. I have read, understood and agree to the general terms of let provided to me. This requires one person to comply with the rest of the document.

Item 9. Relates to stopping people entering the hall. An individual volunteer has no right to stop anyone entering any NAC premises or indeed send anyone home who develops Covid-19 symptoms. Nor can a volunteer force anyone to wear a mask.

Item 12. A volunteer involved in running a group may have no knowledge about exemptions for wearing masks.

Item 13. A volunteer can have no control over individuals with regards to maintaining social distancing and has no control over NAC staff on the premises.

Item 14: How is this one individual who has to sign the form, the ability to promote the NHS Test and Protect app with service users?

Item 15: This asks for far too much information. At best it should be a simple contact number for one person.

Item 16: How can one person be expected to keep up with Government guidelines. A volunteer helping to run a group or club based in the community centre has a difficult enough job. It has been suggested that better wording for the section might be: “We can agree to endeavour to keep the guidance issued by the Community Association and North Ayrshire Council. As this is already different from the Government guidelines then it should be only these guidelines we are asked to follow.”

Item 17: A volunteer has no rights to control people entering an NAC building. A volunteer can only advise people to abide by rules set by the Community Association. People can be invited to leave the building in certain circumstances, but a volunteer has no right to evict them.

Item 18: A volunteer has no authority or medical knowledge to question or assess vulnerable people.

Item 19: For reasons already outlined above, a volunteer cannot force people to use the hand sanitiser, only request them to do so. It might be possible to promote the requirements, but difficult to control how this might operate in different parts of the building. Control the use of 'Catch Kill It' bins. How do you do that?

Items 20 & 23: A volunteer cannot spray or sanitise all equipment as this could damage the equipment viz camera club equipment. They can only use reasonable endeavours to ensure equipment is safe to use.

Item 25: Contact insurance holder to see if the group is covered for the let. This implies that the volunteer is legally responsible for any claims that might arise by individuals with reference to Coronavirus. Moreover, is there any insurance company that covers claims for Covid-19?

The whole document transfers the responsibility for Covid-19 virus control to one individual who may not be knowledgeable about Covid-19 and has no medical qualifications. In addition, the document applies standards of control that appear to be contrary to government expressed requirements. To comply each group would in reality have to set up a control group who would be monitoring the behaviour of all the members in all parts of the hall during a club meeting.

Although the document is initially stated as a survey it also states "Conditions for letting during Covid-19," implying it is part of the leasing contract. This is reinforced by statements within the document.

In essence this entire document is problematic for the individual required to sign on behalf of a club, group or organisation.

Put simply, it can be sorted by simplifying that the club, etc will make its best efforts to comply with the general requirements of the community centre.

Can the Cabinet Member for Participatory Democracy advise if this complex document can be simplified to reduce the onerous duties placed on the individual signing the NAC 'Regular Lets' booking form?"

Councillor McPhater responded in the following terms:

"We are currently reviewing the toolkit and form as part of the next stage of the phased return of Community Facilities and will take these comments into account.

The NAC 'Regular Lets' booking form is part of the service restart toolkit. When a 'let' is agreed, it forms a legal contract with the individual signing it. As such, the individual signing the contract must be completely clear about their responsibilities with regard to preventing the spread of COVID-19."

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

“Can the Cabinet Member confirm if any child has been assessed and placed in Early Years at Lockhart Campus?”

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

“Assessment of current need in the early years population is ongoing and assessment already undertaken has established that, at present, our local early years centres and classes can appropriately meet the needs of the children beginning this stage of their education.

Therefore, no child under the age of 5 is accommodated in Lockhart Campus at this time.”

As a supplementary question, Councillor Larsen asked the Cabinet Member to clarify what he would do to ensure that assessments and reviews were carried out as a matter of urgency to avoid delays in respect of any early years placements at the campus, and advise when the new Lockhart Campus uniform would be available.

Councillor Bell responded by reiterating that Lockhart Campus could accommodate early years children should an individual assessment point to it as the best fit for their specific needs. Councillor Bell advised of the commitment to provide inclusive and nurturing environments across the early years centres to allow children to flourish.

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

“To ask the Cabinet portfolio holder for Education to advise this Council how many primary and secondary school children in North Ayrshire have received a free laptop or a tablet, and a free internet connection as per the SNP election promises made in May 2021?”

Councillor Bell thanked the Member for his question and prefaced the following written response by advising that the Council had already purchased 1,000 devices and connectivity in session 2019-20 to enable home learning during the first lockdown, as reported to Cabinet in June 2020:

“During session 2020-2021, a total of 1734 devices were distributed to children and young people in North Ayrshire and a further 509 connectivity solutions. These devices were funded by the Scottish Government Digital Inclusion Grant Funding and do not form part of the SNP Election commitments from May 2021. We are still awaiting further detail around the arrangements for academic session 2021-2022. In addition to Scottish Government funding, NAC has invested in additional devices for pupil home use by creating a digital families fund and has committed £250,000 per year to provide access to devices and connectivity for online learning and activities.”

As a supplementary question, Councillor Ferguson asked whether the Cabinet Member would work with him in seeking to push the SNP Government to keep its promise to provide free laptops.

Councillor Bell responded by expressing confidence that the Council’s Education staff would be working to ensure that the best equipment was provided to our young people.

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

“To ask the Cabinet portfolio holder for Education how many school-aged children have received a free bike in North Ayrshire as per the SNP election promises made in May 2021?”

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

“None, the Scottish Government has announced the first six pilot projects selected to offer free bicycles for school age children who cannot afford one. North Ayrshire Council is not one of the initial pilot projects selected.”

Councillor Ferguson referred to the consistently reported levels of deprivation in North Ayrshire and, as a supplementary question, and asked whether the Cabinet Member would work with him to ensure that every child from a disadvantaged background was given access to a bike and to press for North Ayrshire to be included in a recently announced pilot.

Councillor Bell responded by expressing confidence that Education and other Council staff would be working to ensure that they got the best equipment for young people in North Ayrshire. Councillor Bell also expressed a wish that governments, when making promises about education, would reverse the cuts to councils in order to enable an increase in areas such as teacher numbers and classroom and support, as well as other initiatives.

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

“To ask the Cabinet portfolio holder for Green New Deal and Sustainability to advise this council how many trees have been planted by the council in North Ayrshire since this council declared a climate emergency in 2019?”

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

“This Council declared a climate emergency in summer 2019. Recognising the vitally important role of trees in tackling climate change, in March 2020, the Council allocated £500,000 of funding for a major tree planting programme. Despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, work progressed on a detailed Tree Planting Strategy, which was approved by Cabinet in January 2021. This set out our ambitious plans to plant 108,000 trees across North Ayrshire this decade as part of the Council’s commitment to be ‘net-zero’ by 2030.

Officers have been working closely with our community partners, and together we have already planted 2,660 trees at a variety of locations since the climate emergency was declared. Officers are also continuing to collaborate with partners on a large pipeline of various projects, ranging in scale from a few hundred trees to tens of thousands. One of the larger projects will be as part of our major Community Wealth Building regeneration initiative at Lochshore in Glengarnock and this is scheduled for planting to commence in this coming growing season with an anticipated 20,000 trees being planted overall when completed. Officers are also engaged with a number of local schools to develop local planting initiatives with young people which will see 4,000 saplings donated by Woodland Trust for school tree planting sites across the whole of the school estate. This planting will commence shortly. The overall tree planting programme will create a new woodland resource in North Ayrshire by 2030, with an ambition to complete all the planting required by the 2025/26 growing season to ensure that saplings are well on their way to maturity by the 2030 target.”

As a supplementary question, Councillor Ferguson asked if the Cabinet Member would work with local Ward 6 Members to identify sites for future tree-planting.

Councillor Montgomerie responded in the affirmative.

In terms of Standing Order 5.7, the Provost agreed that the meeting be adjourned at 3.30 p.m. for a comfort break. The meeting reconvened at 3.45 p.m. with the same Members and officers present and in attendance and resumed consideration of Agenda Item 14 (Questions):

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

“It has been reported that the Scottish Government does not agree with the proposed funding arrangements for the development of Ardrossan Harbour. Reports indicate that the Scottish government wants the port’s owner to take a greater responsibility for the funding of the work. At the meeting of North Ayrshire Council in February 2021 we were told that if the work on the development of the harbour didn’t start by this summer there is no way that the port would be ready to take the new Glen Sannox ferry, which we are told will come into service in 2022.

Please could the Leader of the Council provide members with an update on what is happening with the Ardrossan Harbour project?”

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

“Discussions between Transport Scotland and Peel Ports Group continue on the commercial arrangements for the delivery of the project. Scottish Ministers continue to advise us that they are committed to the ferry service operating from Ardrossan and that they are working to secure a cost-effective solution that delivers the upgrade of Ardrossan Harbour. NAC remains in on-going dialogue with officers in Transport Scotland and the Minister to try and bring this to a satisfactory conclusion as soon as possible enabling these much-needed works to progress.

Given the significant delays that have been caused to this project because of the failure to conclude satisfactory agreements on the Harbour redevelopment, it is virtually impossible that construction works at Ardrossan could be completed in time to accommodate the new Glen Sannox when it comes into operation between July 2022 to September 2022.”

Councillor Billings referred to the possibility of an alternative style of ferry ultimately coming into operation and, as a supplementary question, asked what assurances had been given that the planned works to Ardrossan Harbour would make it suitable for whatever type of ferry might operate from the harbour in future.

The Leader responded by advising that a request had been made for the Minister to convene a meeting of the Ministerial taskforce, which had not met since the start of the year, and that this would provide an opportunity to discuss the design work in detail. Councillor Cullinane advised that, in the meantime, there appeared to be confidence that tendering would soon be undertaken with regard to the design work. Councillor Cullinane also indicated that he was looking forward to speaking with the Minister in the coming week, as well as the Cabinet Secretary for the Islands and a number of stakeholder groups.

Councillor Hill left the meeting at this point.

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

“Consequent on the power-sharing deal between the SNP and the Greens the latter have been empowered to bring forward proposals for rent controls in the Private Rented Sector (PRS).

What benefit, if any, will accrue to the PRS in North Ayrshire?”

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

“Rent controls can take many different forms and there are currently no details as to what mechanism will be proposed. The member will be aware for example that the Scottish Government previously responded to Living Rent’s campaign for rent controls with the legislative power for local authorities to introduce rent pressure zones – a mechanism which has proven completely ineffectual with not a single local authority in Scotland introducing a RPZ due to the hurdles placed in front of them by the Scottish Government’s legislation.

Last year, we did respond to Labour MSP, Pauline McNeil’s, Fair Rents (Scotland) Bill consultation in which we supported, in principle, proposals to include caps on annual rent increases in the private sector at CPI plus 1%, and the introduction of a mechanism to allow a tenant in a private residential tenancy to apply to have a ‘fair open market rent’ determined by a Rent Officer.

The benefits of proper, meaningful, and effective rent controls would be felt by tenants. This would particularly be the case in a locality such as Arran where the housing situation is very pressurised making it much less affordable for the islands young people and those who rely on the islands tourism industry as their principal employment.

Only once we have seen the detail of the proposed mechanism of rent controls will be able to fully assess their impact on the local housing market.”

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

“Does the Leader of the Council agree that an Elected Member should represent their constituents, constituency and local environment, as best they can, asking questions and raising concerns on subjects that may have an impact or effect on public and environmental wellbeing?”

Councillor Cullinane thanked the Member for his question and responded by advising that he was unsure of the purpose of the question, but was certainly not going to suggest that an Elected Member should ever go out of their way not to represent their Ward to the best of in their ability. The Leader noted Councillor Murdoch's reference to asking questions and acknowledged that questions were one of the tools available to Members in undertaking their duties. However, Councillor Cullinane considered that there were many others, including tabling motions, providing input into the development of policies and strategies, and being a member of committees.

Councillor Murdoch referred to consideration of the new Ardrossan Campus at the last meeting of the Council on 23 June 2021 and to the Leader's characterisation of Councillor McNicol's contribution to the discussion as "absolutely shameful". As a supplementary question, Councillor Murdoch asked whether the Leader regretted the statement as too harsh and whether he felt he owed Councillor McNicol an apology.

Councillor Cullinane responded by declining to apologise for the statement. The Leader provided examples of a number of initiatives which Councillor McNicol had opposed and reiterated his view that this was not the legacy which any councillor seeking to represent their constituency should want to leave.

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

"Can the Leader of the Council please provide any examples of a North Ayrshire Sole Trader winning a tender for work with NAC through the Community Wealth Building Initiative and can you please provide details of how many North Ayrshire Sole Traders or small businesses with one or two employees are on the tendering list?"

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

"Procurement is one of the key pillars of the Community Wealth Building Strategy. From Council spend analysis in 2019/20, 20% of total procurement spend, equating to £43.2m, was spent on a total of 851 local suppliers. Spend data covering the 2020/21 financial year is currently in the process of being finalised and we would anticipate a further improvement on this position as we work towards the Council Plan target of 26% of spend to local enterprises by the year 2024. Public sector procurement do not operate a tendering list as such, this is something which occurs in the private sector. Public sector procurement is represented by various procurement exercises including quick quotes and tenders for each individual contract and framework. Procurement spend includes a range of activity and the type of procurement route is determined by the contract value, with lower value spend of up to £10,000 governed by verbal and written quotes, contracts up to £50,000 for supplies and services and £100,000 for works being the area where Quick Quotes operate and tenders operating above these thresholds.

The procurement route for Sole Traders and small businesses is determined by their scale and capacity to deliver (usually measured by turnover) and relevant insurance thresholds. To set some additional context around procurement frameworks, a total of 7 frameworks were put in place during 2020/21 with a value of £39.9m. This included 151 suppliers of which 108 are local suppliers.

Examples of procurement awards specific to small businesses across a range of procurement activities from April 2020 has been provided to elected members for information. Based on the way data is captured this includes 26 small local businesses recorded as having up to 4 employees. It is also recognised however through spend analysis that local businesses of all sizes benefit through high volume, low value spend (under £10,000).

Community Wealth Building aims to continue to build capacity within the small business base and the Business Development Team this financial year have provided over 120 instances of support for businesses from ranging from specialist consultancy, support to access new supply chains, specific help in bidding for local work, access to training support and introduction to new businesses.”

As a supplementary question, Councillor Murdoch asked what the Council was doing to make local businesses aware of Community Wealth Building and how the system could be simplified to allow sole traders and small businesses to get involved.

Councillor Cullinane responded by referring to the final paragraph of his written response which illustrated the work being done to build capacity within the small business base.

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

“Can the Leader of the Council please provide details of any future tourism related investment in the North Coast other than the Millport Flood Defence or Largs Seawall-related projects?”

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

“The Ayrshire Growth Deal contains a programme related to marine tourism, which provide £9.5m investment for expansion of Ardrossan Marina (£5.5m) and the remaining £4m to support development of transit or destination marinas on Arran and Cumbrae. Council officers are currently working to develop the transit marina projects. Progress to date includes appointment of marine tourism manager, co-funded through the Council’s partnership with Crown Estate Scotland; engagement with the Millport flood protection scheme team to identify project interdependencies, preparation of a technical brief to identify options for the transit marina facilities, engagement with communities to identify priorities and discussions with Crown Estate Scotland to identify potential funding support for the projects. Although there is significant project development work to take place, it is currently targeted that the marina developments will be implemented shortly following the completion of flood protection works, which is understood to be the optimal development phasing.

A Visitor Management Officer Group has been set up to identify external funding to address the impact of increased visitor numbers. A successful application to NatureScot’s Green Recovery Better Places Fund has enabled the Council to provide additional Street Scene services (operatives, volunteer litter picking packs and additional bins) to cover the summer season at key tourism sites. An application is currently in progress to the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund to provide a network of visitor service hubs around Arran and Cumbrae that aims to alleviate visitor pressure points and provide facilities for motorhome facilities. If successful, additional funding will be sourced to extend this project at other visitor pressure point sites along the coast. In June 2021, Cabinet approved initial investment proposals totalling £900,000, specifically related to play park, park and other public realm improvements. Officers have been working up detailed project proposals for expenditure of this funding to help improve amenities for both residents and visitors to North Ayrshire.

For the North Coast ward, this will involve a share of this investment, and officers have already scheduled ward by ward discussions with members to discuss draft proposals for feedback and finalisation. The projects include upgrades to play parks, and new street furniture, including bins and benches. Decorative lighting columns at Largs and Millport shorefront are also scheduled for repainting.

The project to replace the sea front car park charging infrastructure is well-advanced, and discussions are progressing with regards to investment proposals for upgrade of the Gallowgate toilets and other toilet blocks in Largs.

Millport CARS: Millport Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS), due for completion in March 2022, is supporting Cumbrae’s tourism economy by investing in the community, local businesses and heritage assets and by delivering physical improvements to the conservation area and its environs. The overall scheme represents a total investment of approximately £2.2M.

Millport Town Hall: The Regeneration of Millport Town Hall will deliver further investment on Cumbrae, totalling approximately £2M and including grants from the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF) (£1.5M), Crown Estates (£0.118M) and £50k from the Town Centre Fund. This community led project will be delivered in partnership with Connected Communities and Regeneration. It will deliver 3 holiday lets, a café, performance venue and community facilities including Men Shed. This project is currently at tender stage, and once a contractor is formally appointed, it is hoped that works will commence on site at the end of September 2021, with completion anticipated in June 2022.

Largs Promenade: Officers are developing a brief to procure a consultant to undertake a feasibility and design exercise to inform the upgrade of the Promenade to support active and sustainable travel and tourism. This will identify a coherent route for the National Cycle Network (NCN) through the town going forward. It will be developed through extensive community and stakeholder consultation and inform future funding applications for implementation.

Place Framework Pilot Project: A funding application was submitted to the UK Government's Community Renewal Fund for a pilot project to develop Place Frameworks for Largs and Saltcoats. This is aligned to a £40k allocation under the Place Based Investment Programme recently approved by Cabinet. This will build on earlier planning and community engagement work and will progress from the identification of need and issues, to the generation of solutions and new initiatives. They will inform Council and community led action to create attractive and successful places through:

- A new future and strengthened position for our town centres;
- Town Centre living that meet our residents' needs;
- Development on strategic regeneration sites for direct economic benefit and to signal positive change;
- Responding to derelict land and property in town centres;
- Articulating and developing the Town Centre First approach; and
- Applying the Place Principle and 20-minute Neighbourhood concept
- Supporting environmental, economic and social recovery of our coastal communities.

The Place Frameworks will identify actions under the Regeneration Delivery Plan going forward and for implementation under funding streams such as the Place Based Investment Programme. The outcome of the application is anticipated in Autumn 2021. A member/officer Tourism Forum is to be established, and officers are conducting a round of ward member discussions to explore issues arising from increased domestic tourism and priorities for development a wider visitor management and tourism strategy.”

As a supplementary question, Councillor Murdoch asked, given the huge number of visitors to Largs, Cumbrae and the North Coast, what steps the Council was taking to promote visitor attractions and the surrounding infrastructure.

Councillor Cullinane responded by suggesting that, in respect of Millport, the level of public investment per head of population probably exceed that of any other community in Scotland. The Leader referred to the significant sums being invested in the projects mentioned and the levels of investment going into the North Coast generally and every part of North Ayrshire.

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

“When will North Ayrshire Council have a Policy in place on Motor Homes and Camper Vans?”

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

“The Council intends to develop a strategic position relating to the use of motor homes and camper vans. It is noted that there has been an increase in domestic tourism over the summer of 2021, due to the global pandemic. While this is having a positive effect on North Ayrshire visitor economy business base, it has also presented operational challenges related to place management through additional pressures.

It is currently targeted that a visitor management strategy will be developed in advance of the 2022 peak summer season. The strategy development will be guided by an operational steering group comprising officers from a cross-representation of related services.

A series of meetings with all members (grouped by ward) have been arranged to establish issues and priorities within each ward and this will inform the establishment of a visitor management and tourism member forum to guide strategy development.

In advance of the establishment of a clear policy position, promotion materials will be published to encourage responsible tourism and the Council has been successful in early funding rounds of VisitScotland’s Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund designed to support the management of the impact of increased domestic tourism in rural areas. Additionally, specific issues have been addressed at Bowencraigs Car Park adjacent to Largs Yacht Haven, and fronting the water, to install a temporary height barrier to manage the location of motorhomes at this site.”

Councillor Murdoch expressed his objection to a new height barrier installed by a private business in the public car park adjacent to Largs Marina and, as a supplementary question, asked whether the Council would take into account that this had resulted in the displacement of a significant number of motor homes to residential areas of Largs and ensure that a policy was in place before March 2022.

Councillor Cullinane responded that the plan was to have a strategy in place for the peak summer season in 2022 and that he would endeavour to involve local Members in the proposed forum.

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

“Will North Ayrshire Council be reconsidering how public toilets are funded, maintained and accessible to members of the public as a result of Covid-19 and the need for public facilities to assist with public hygiene, health and wellbeing and tourism?”

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

“Under the previous Administration, the annual budget meeting in 2016 considered a proposal to close all remaining public toilets. This followed a previous year’s budget decision to remove all automated public conveniences. Two separate amendments to the 2016 proposal were put forward and accepted at the meeting: firstly, to retain the public toilets in Largs through recurring funding from the Largs Car Park Fund for their upkeep and maintenance; and secondly to retain the facilities in Saltcoats and Ardrossan by making savings in other General Services revenue budgets.

Since the budget meeting of 2016, the financial position of Scottish Local Government has continued to be challenging with disproportionate cuts to core Council budgets. In light of this challenging financial climate, no Councillor, of all political parties and of none, has proposed to invest more general revenue funding in public toilets by cutting budgets in other areas of service provision.

I can confirm that all available budgets for managing our public conveniences are fully committed and that in addition, recognising the challenges presented by COVID-19 and the unprecedented footfall in our coastal towns over the summer months, additional staff resources have been deployed to provide more frequent cleaning. Temporary support was also arranged over the summer period for facilities operated by local community groups.

Options are currently being explored for the upgrade of the public conveniences in Largs, which will require the use of cash available from Largs Car Park Fund. Officers are also working with local community groups who manage public conveniences to pursue opportunities for external grant funding to enable the upgrade of their premises. Officers continue to monitor the public toilets in Saltcoats/Ardrossan to determine required maintenance needs.

Officers will also continue to work with partners to ensure that adequate signposting is available – both physical and virtual - to direct the public to their nearest available facility.

The budget process for 2022/23 will commence in the coming months. Elected Members may choose to use this process to change the current level of provision. Any such motion or amendment would require to be fully costed, equality impact assessed, and a corresponding level of savings identified in order to return a balanced budget. Council officers are available to support Elected Members through this process.”

As a supplementary question, Councillor Murdoch asked whether the Leader considered it appropriate that public conveniences be run by the community on Cumbrae but that the costs of the facilities in Largs should be borne by the Largs Seafront Car Park Fund.

Councillor Cullinane responded indicating that the position around public toilets was inherited and that a change in policy would require a funding proposal to bring the operation of these facilities back in-house. Councillor Cullinane invited Councillor Murdoch to consider the benefits of having an income stream in Largs and the potential to use this to enhance the public realm works.

16. Motions

In terms of Standing Order 13, submitted:

- (1) a motion proposed by Councillor Marshall and seconded by Councillor Ferguson in the following terms:

“MOTION PREAMBLE

While we appreciate that there is high-level planning for future specific projects particularly those associated with the Ayrshire Growth Deal such as the Great Harbour Project and Marine Tourism, there has been little if any involvement by Local Elected Members nor attention to current Tourism issues in the established Tourist resorts. Currently given the huge increase in the staycation market and noting that Tourism is the main industry of our coastal towns, islands and villages, the Council is failing to scrutinise performance related to tourism related service delivery and the implementation of strategy policy and service plans as they relate to tourism issues. Specific performance issues that require scrutiny include rural car parking policy, ferry service issues, provision of campervan facilities, operation of high-quality public toilets, tourist signage, quality of the public realm along seafronts, etc etc

I have attempted to raise this issue with a senior Officer and a Member of the Council specifically questioning who is in charge of tourism, what is the staffing, what is the budget, how does the Council relate to the Trade and is there support for a Tourism committee or Member Officer working group? Answers came there none.

MOTION

Councillor Marshall seconded Councillor Ferguson moves that recognising the importance of a reinvigorated tourism market in North Ayrshire, the Council agrees to appoint a Tourism Member/ Officer working group. This Group would comprise Members whose Wards contained significant Tourist businesses and would initially have the following remit:

1. to consider and recommend the introduction of new policies or changes to existing management policies to manage tourist pressures through the preparation of a visitor management plan
2. to consider and recommend the introduction of investment priorities for new facilities for visitors and in maintenance of existing facilities
3. to consider the wider socio-economic reports on the impact and value of the tourism sector in North Ayrshire.
4. to develop and review a tourism strategy
5. To report its recommendations to Cabinet periodically”

As an amendment, Councillor Dickson, seconded by Councillor Larsen, moved the terms of the motion subject to deletion of the phrase “whose Wards contained significant Tourist businesses”.

As a further amendment, Councillor Cullinane, seconded by Councillor Bell, moved as follows:

“Council notes that:

- Sessions have been arranged for Elected Members to establish issues and priorities within each ward and this will inform the establishment of a visitor management and tourism member forum.
- The sessions will also allow local Elected Members to input into the planned investment in coastal playparks and infrastructure approved by Cabinet in June 2021.
- The Member/officer forum will assist with the development of a new visitor management strategy to be prepared in advance of the 2022 peak summer season.
- At a regional level, an Ayrshire Visitor economy strategy is just being commissioned through the Ayrshire Visitor Economy Steering Group, chaired by Malcolm Roughead CEO of Visit Scotland which will scope out the vision for tourism in Ayrshire, key priorities and actions. North Ayrshire Council will participate fully in this work and Council agrees that the new Member/officer forum should engage in supporting the development of the regional work.”

In terms of Standing Order 14.5, Councillor Dickson, with the agreement of her seconder, agreed to withdraw her amendment in favour of the amendment by Councillor Cullinane, seconded by Councillor Bell.

In terms of Standing Order 14.5, Councillor Marshall, with the agreement of his seconder, agreed to alter his motion to remove the phrase “whose Wards contained significant Tourist businesses”.

Members then asked a question of clarification of the mover of the amendment, including confirmation sought and received by Councillor Marshall that the forum proposed by Councillor Cullinane’s amendment would be convened at the earliest opportunity.

Thereafter, in terms of Standing Order 14.5, Councillor Marshall, with the agreement of his seconder, agreed to withdraw his motion (as amended) in favour of the amendment by Councillor Cullinane, seconded by Councillor Bell. There being no further amendment, the amendment was declared carried.

Accordingly, the Council agreed as follows:

- (a) to note that:
 - (i) sessions had been arranged for Elected Members to establish issues and priorities within each ward and this would inform the establishment of a visitor management and tourism Member forum;
 - (ii) the sessions would also allow local Elected Members to input into the planned investment in coastal playparks and infrastructure approved by Cabinet in June 2021;
 - (iii) the Member/officer forum would assist with the development of a new visitor management strategy to be prepared in advance of the 2022 peak summer season; and
 - (iv) at a regional level, an Ayrshire Visitor economy strategy was being commissioned through the Ayrshire Visitor Economy Steering Group, chaired by Malcolm Roughead CEO of Visit Scotland, which would scope out the vision for tourism in Ayrshire, key priorities and actions and that North Ayrshire Council would participate fully in this work; and
- (b) that the new Member/officer forum should engage in supporting the development of the regional work.”

Councillor Davidson left the meeting during consideration of the following item of business.

(2) a motion by Councillor Sweeney, seconded by Councillor Gallagher, in the following terms:

“This Council notes:

- 1 in 10 workers have experienced ‘fire and rehire’ - told to reapply for their jobs on worse pay, terms and conditions or face the sack, with BME workers facing this at twice the rate of white workers, since March 2020 (TUC research, January 2021). A quarter of all workers have experienced a worsening of their terms and conditions – including a cut in their pay - since the pandemic began.
- That while the Prime Minister has called the practice “unacceptable” he has continually refused to take action to outlaw the practice, raising concerns that he will not intervene in this race to the bottom as an escalating number of employers across all sectors using our weak employment protections employers as they force their staff to accept worse terms and conditions, leaving many having to work longer hours and for lower pay, with what can be devastating consequences for workers and their families.
- Even before the pandemic, 1 in 9 workers – 3.8 million people – were already ‘insecure’, meaning they did not have access to basic rights at work and could be dismissed at will; including those on zero hour contracts and agency workers.

This Council therefore resolves to:

- Ensure local residents are protected against such unscrupulous employers and agrees to ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Prime Minister demanding he outlaw fire and rehire and act now to keep his promise to local residents to protect their employment terms and conditions.
- Not use fire and rehire itself as an employer and to prevent, where possible, its use by council contractors, and to ensure the council has a procurement practice that ensures we are working with contractors that have good employment, trade union, equality and environmental records.
- Continue to work with the increasing number of progressive local employers prioritising their employees’ standard of living and their wellbeing, work with our anchor institutions and key partners to bring forward plans to ensure all have best practice employment and to work with recognised trade unions on this.
- Support the TUC campaign for a ‘New Deal for Working People’.”

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

- Notes that North Ayrshire Council is committed to ensuring that all local residents have the best possible terms and conditions of employment and are protected against unreasonable acts by employers who seek to unilaterally diminish their employees' terms and conditions. The Council welcomes recent announcements by the Minister for Small Business, Consumers, and Labour Markets which directs ACAS to produce specific requirements and guidance to ensure employers explore all options before considering dismissal and re-engagement of their workforce.
- Asks the Council's Chief Executive to write to the Prime Minister expressing North Ayrshire Council's support for the ongoing work by the UK Government to strengthen workers' rights by controlling the use of 'Fire and Rehire', and to urge the Prime Minister to introduce appropriate legislation and good-practice guidelines once ACAS finalises its current work.
- The Council commits to being an industry leader of best employment practice and will engage with its workforce through a fair and reasonable negotiation process that involves the recognised unions and follows employment best practice.
- The Council commits, where it is possible, to ensure that the suppliers the Council uses do not use 'Fire and Rehire' practices as a method to renegotiate the employment terms and conditions of their employees and should instead seek to engage with their workforce through a fair and reasonable negotiation process that involves the recognised unions and follows employment best practice.

Members then asked questions of the mover of the motion and amendment.

There followed debate and summing up.

On a division and roll call vote, there voted for the amendment by Councillor Ferguson, seconded by Councillor Billings, Councillors Barr, Billings, Ferguson, Gallacher, George, Glover, Marshall, McNicol, Stalker and Stephen (10), and for the motion by Councillor Sweeney, seconded by Councillor Gallagher, Councillors Bell, Burns, Clarkson, Cullinane, Dickson, Easdale, Foster, Gallagher, Gurney, Larsen, Macaulay, McClung, McMaster, McPhater, McTiernan, Montgomerie, Murdoch, Donald Reid, Donald L. Reid and Sweeney (20), and the motion was declared carried.

Accordingly, the Council agreed as follows:

- (a) to note that:
 - (i) 1 in 10 workers had experienced 'fire and rehire' - told to reapply for their jobs on worse pay, terms and conditions or face the sack, with BME workers facing this at twice the rate of white workers, since March 2020 (TUC research, January 2021) and a quarter of all workers had experienced a worsening of their terms and conditions – including a cut in their pay - since the pandemic began;
 - (ii) that while the Prime Minister had called the practice “unacceptable”, he had continually refused to take action to outlaw the practice, raising concerns that he would not intervene in this race to the bottom as an escalating number of employers across all sectors using our weak employment protections employers as they forced their staff to accept worse terms and conditions, leaving many having to work longer hours and for lower pay, with what could be devastating consequences for workers and their families; and
 - (iii) even before the pandemic, 1 in 9 workers – 3.8 million people – were already ‘insecure’, meaning they did not have access to basic rights at work and could be dismissed at will, including those on zero-hour contracts and agency workers; and
- (b) to ensure local residents were protected against such unscrupulous employers and to ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Prime Minister demanding he outlaw fire and rehire and act now to keep his promise to local residents to protect their employment terms and conditions;
- (c) not use fire and rehire itself as an employer and to prevent, where possible, its use by council contractors, and to ensure the Council had a procurement practice that ensured it was working with contractors that had good employment, trade union, equality and environmental records;
- (d) continue to work with the increasing number of progressive local employers prioritising their employees’ standard of living and their wellbeing, work with anchor institutions and key partners to bring forward plans to ensure all had best practice employment and to work with recognised trade unions on this; and
- (e) support the TUC campaign for a ‘New Deal for Working People’.”

Councillor Gallacher lost his connection to the meeting during the following item of business and effectively left the meeting at this point.

(3) a motion by Councillor Foster, seconded by Councillor McPhater, in the following terms:

“On 6th October, over 10,000 families in North Ayrshire (according to a recent study by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation) are set to lose £1,034 per year as a result of the UK Government cutting Universal Credit by £20 per week.

North Ayrshire Council expresses its outright opposition to this cut which will push more families into poverty.

Council agrees:

- that the Chief Executive write to the Chancellor calling for the planned cuts to Universal Credit to be abandoned
- that the Council uses Challenge Poverty Week to campaign against cuts to Universal Credit and for a more humane social security system that provides a dignified standard of living for every citizen of this country”

At the invitation of the Provost, the Head of Democratic Services provided advice to Members on the competence of second bullet point of the above motion, which, as the Council’s Monitoring Officer, she considered may be in breach of the prohibition of political publicity, in that it was identifiable as the view of one political party and not of another.

On the advice of the Head of Democratic Services, and in terms of Standing Order 5.7, the Provost agreed that the meeting be adjourned at 5.00 p.m. to allow him to consider the advice provided and to afford the mover and seconder of the motion an opportunity to consider revising it. The meeting reconvened at 5.10 p.m. with the same Members and officers present and in attendance.

The Provost, having considered the advice of the Head of Democratic Services as Monitoring Officer, determined, in terms of Standing Order 5.7, that the second part of the motion by Councillor Foster, seconded by Councillor McPhater, was not competent and invited the mover of the motion to submit a revised motion.

On a point of order, Councillor Burns, sought clarification on the ruling. The Monitoring Officer provided further information on the terms of the Local Government Act 1986 which prohibited political campaigning.

Councillor Foster agreed, in terms of Standing Order 14.5 and with the agreement of his seconder, to amend the second part of his motion, to read as follows:

“That the Council uses Challenge Poverty Week to promote the importance of the benefits system in alleviating poverty and the benefits of the Council’s Community Wealth Building approach to improving the standard of living of every citizen in our area.”

On a point of order, Councillor Ferguson objected to Councillor Foster’s use of the term “Tories” and “right-wing” in the preamble to his motion, on the basis that the language was derogatory. In terms of Standing Order 5.7, the Provost reminded Members of his earlier ruling that the term “Tories” was not respectful and should be avoided.

On a further point of order, Councillor Burns sought clarification on which provision within Standing Orders which prohibited the use of the term “Tories”. The Head of Democratic Services referred to the Provost’s earlier ruling on this matter, reminding Members that, in terms of Standing Order 12.11, the decision of the Provost on a question of order, was final.

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

“That the Council notes that the uplift to universal credit was always temporary and was designed to help claimants through the economic shock and financial disruption of the toughest stages of the pandemic, has cost the taxpayer more than £9 billion and if continued would cost £6 billion each year.

We move, noting that the Scottish Parliament was given significant powers in the Scotland Act 2016 and thus has extra welfare powers which they have not used, that the Council write to the First Minister suggesting that her Government should use these powers to top-up existing benefits, pay discretionary payments, or create entirely new benefits (noting that they have the opportunity to increase the Scottish Child Payment from its existing £10 per week) and that they should target these payments or benefits to mitigate any potential poverty issues.”

On a further point of order, Councillor Gurney sought clarification on an apparent contradiction between the requirement within Standing Orders for Members to avoid remarks which were untrue and the Provost’s ruling that the term “Tories” should not be used. Councillor Gurney considered that this presented a difficulty for him in accurately referencing the “Scots Tories” Twitter account. The Head of Democratic Services provided advice that the Provost’s ruling sought to ensure that Members were respectful in the meeting and did not preclude a factual reference to the “Scots Tories” Twitter account.

Members asked questions of the mover and seconder of the motion and amendment.

There followed debate and summing up.

On a division and roll call vote, there voted for the amendment by Councillor Marshall, seconded by Councillor Ferguson, Councillors Ferguson, George, Glover, Marshall, Stalker and Stephen (6), and for the motion (as amended) by Councillor Foster, seconded by Councillor McPhater, Councillors Bell, Burns, Clarkson, Cullinane, Dickson, Easdale, Foster, Gallagher, Gurney, Larsen, Macaulay, McClung, McMaster, McPhater, McTiernan, Montgomerie, Donald Reid, Donald L. Reid and Sweeney (19), Councillors Barr, Billings, McNicol and Murdoch abstaining, and the motion (as amended) was declared carried.

Accordingly, the Council agreed as follows:

- (a) that the Chief Executive write to the Chancellor calling for the planned cuts to Universal Credit to be abandoned; and
- (b) that the Council uses Challenge Poverty Week to promote the importance of the benefits system in alleviating poverty and the benefits of the Council's Community Wealth Building approach to improving the standard of living of every citizen in our area."

Councillor Foster left the meeting during consideration of the following item of business.

- (4) a motion by Councillor Billings, seconded by Councillor Marshall, in the following terms:

"The Scottish government is currently consulting on its proposals to make permanent many of the temporary Covid restriction powers that were granted at the start of the Covid pandemic. The consultation is titled "Covid recovery: public health, services and justice system reforms" and can be viewed on the Scottish Government's website.

The Covid pandemic forced us all to review how we work, meet and interact with each other, and there may be benefits in keeping and developing some of these new ways of working. However, other Covid powers severely restrict the rights of individuals and businesses, and it would be inappropriate to make these powers permanent just in case they might be needed. Once powers are enshrined in law history has shown that they will be used and often with little public scrutiny and for purposes that they were not intended for. The Scottish government's proposals are far reaching and if implemented would affect many aspects of the lives of all of us living in North Ayrshire.

Therefore, this motion proposes that:

- arrangements are made to enable Members of North Ayrshire Council to discuss and comment on the Scottish government's proposals regarding making Covid powers permanent;

- a report on the Scottish Government's Covid powers consultation is brought to the Council meeting on 27th October 2021. The report should include a review of the implications for North Ayrshire Council and include the views expressed by Members of Council on any part of the proposals; and
- following the Council meeting on 27th October 2021, North Ayrshire Council submits the agreed report as the Council's submission to the Scottish government's consultation."

As an amendment, Councillor Cullinane, seconded by Councillor Bell, moved approval of the terms of the motion, subject to replacing from "a report on the Scottish Government's" with "a report, reflecting the views of Elected Members expressed at the Members briefing session, be brought to Cabinet to form the Council's submission to the Scottish Government's consultation."

Members asked questions of clarification on the terms of the amendment.

On a point of order, Councillor Gurney requested clarification on the competence of the motion given that it called for a matter to be considered by the Council, rather than by the Cabinet as was appropriate. The Head of Democratic Services confirmed that the motion was competent.

There followed debate and summing up.

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

Accordingly, the Council agreed as follows:

- (a) that arrangements be made to enable Members of North Ayrshire Council to discuss and comment on the Scottish government's proposals regarding making Covid powers permanent; and
- (b) that a report, reflecting the views of Elected Members expressed at the Members' briefing session, be brought to Cabinet to form the Council's submission to the Scottish Government's consultation.

The meeting ended at 6.15 p.m.



PROVOST'S REPORT

For the period covering: 30 August – 17 October
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: 30 August – 17 October 2021

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

The Ayrshire Community Trust, Adult Volunteer Recognition Award Saltcoats, 10 September

Along with the Leader of the Council I attended the launch of the Adult Volunteer Recognition Award at the Ayrshire Community Trust in Saltcoats on 10 September. It is always great to see the invaluable work carried out by volunteers being highlighted, recognised, and rewarded.

72 Anniversary of the Founding of the People's Republic of China, Online Reception, 21 September

An online Reception took place on 21 September, hosted by the Consul General of China, to celebrate the 72 Anniversary of the Founding of the People's Republic of China. I along with other civic leaders in Scotland attended the event. Events like these provide good networking opportunities, allowing me to promote North Ayrshire to a wider audience and give our support to our Chinese community living in Scotland.

Signing of the Armed Forces Community Covenant, Online, 23 September

On 23 September, the Provost's of Ayrshire finally got the opportunity to ceremonially sign the Armed Forces Community Covenant. The Community Covenant details the support we have in place for the Armed Forces community here in North Ayrshire.

Moorpark Primary School Ground-breaking Ceremony, Kilbirnie, 27 September

I was delighted to attend the ground-breaking ceremony for the new Moorpark Primary School in Kilbirnie on 27 September. The new £10.85m facility will replace the existing school and is expected to be complete and ready for use in Autumn 2022.



Kirking of the Deacon Convener of Irvine Incorporated Trades, Irvine, 3 October

On 3 October, I attended the Kirking of the Deacon Convener of Irvine Incorporated Trades, Donald Wilson, in Irvine's Old Parish Church. Events like these bring communities together and highlight the excellent work that is carried out by volunteers. Irvine Incorporated Trades uphold many of Irvine's ancient and cultural traditions and work tirelessly throughout the year for the benefit of the local community.

Brass in the Valley, Gateside, Beith, 3 October

On 3 October, I attended the first of two Brass in the Valley concerts to acknowledge and celebrate all those frontline workers and volunteers who provide vital services to those living in the Garnock Valley during the current Covid-19 pandemic. The event was arranged by the Barmill Jolly Beggars Burns Club and took place in Geilsland Estate, Beith. I thoroughly enjoyed this excellent event which had a true community spirit and highlighted all the hard work and efforts by many in the local community. I look forward to attending the second concert at the end of the month.

Introduction of the new Sheriffs, Kilmarnock Sheriff Court, Kilmarnock, 11 October

On 11 October, I attended a ceremony where the Sheriff Principal introduced Sheriffs Watson and Jamieson as resident sheriffs at Kilmarnock Sheriff Court. The Lord Lieutenant for Ayrshire and Arran and the Provost of East Ayrshire Council were also in attendance.

Veterans Housing Scotland Reception, Edinburgh City Chambers, Edinburgh, 14 October

I attended the Veterans Housing Scotland Reception on 14 October. The reception was hosted by the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, Councillor Frank Ross and Veterans Housing Scotland Chair, Group Captain Bob Kemp. 2021 marks the 106 Anniversary of the Charity and we heard about their achievements and how they plan to continue to support veterans in Scotland.

The charity was established during the First World War to provide homes for heroes returning from the War with disabling and life-changing injuries. Since that time, they have helped thousands of veterans and have grown to boast a portfolio of over 650 homes across Scotland.

PROVOST'S REPORT



Ian Clarkson

Councillor Ian Clarkson
Provost North Ayrshire Council



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

LEADER'S REPORT

For the period covering: 30 August – 17 October
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: 30 August – 17 October 2021

VISIT TO MILLPORT TOWN HALL, 1 September

On 1 September I had the pleasure of visiting the charity group, Friends of Millport Town Hall, where we discussed exciting future plans for the renovation of Millport Town Hall.

Following £200,000 investment from the Council's Community Investment Fund (CIF) together with funding from the Scottish Government and the North Ayrshire Ventures Trust (NAVVT), the restoration works will include a new accessible entrance and the creation of multi-use flexible spaces incorporating a Community Hub, Arts and Culture Centre, starter Men's Shed, main staged hall and three holiday-let flats. A second phase will see a Heritage and Conservation Centre in the basement.

The work being done in partnership with our communities is a fine example of Community Wealth Building at its best making the best of our local resources to benefit the local economy

Work should be completed by the summer of 2022, and I am excited to make a return visit next year to see the completed works.

1st TIER JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE, 2 September

On 2 September I chaired a meeting of the 1st Tier Joint Consultative Committee and the Corporate Health and Safety Group. Health and Safety reports were provided by each Directorate. Attendees were also updated on some of the recent activities being organised by the Livewell Group in each of these 4 areas: PlayWell, BeWell, WorkWell and EatWell. I am particularly pleased to see that "The Cycle to Work Scheme (CTW)" is still proving to be popular with Council employees. Since the scheme opened in 2020, we have seen a total of 119 employees purchase a bike through the scheme and take advantage of savings of up to 32%.

VISIT TO LOCAL BUSINESSES, 10 September

On 10 September I visited local social enterprise TCS eco who offer a sustainable alternative to disposable sanitary products. North Ayrshire Council was the first Local Authority in the UK



to provide free period products in all our secondary schools in 2017 and then a year later extending that provision to all council buildings.

TCS recently moved into new, bigger premises in Kilwinning having outgrown their last place within a year of moving in. As part of their ambition to grow the business, they recently received financial support from the Business Transition Fund, a fund established by my Cabinet earlier this year, to buy a printing machine enabling them to bring their printing needs inhouse. Not only has that brought down their costs but it is making their products even more sustainable by cutting their freight miles and they are now able to offer reactive dye fabric services to other companies in the UK as there were no existing supplier in the country. Exciting times.

I also took the opportunity to pop in next door and visit Abbey Screen and Digital Print. The company has been going for years but they are trying to keep up with the ever-changing world. Investing in digital services is vital for the future of the company and just days before visiting them, they received their new digital printer which again was supported through a grant from our Business Transition fund. It was good to talk to the team at Abbey about their future ambitions for the company and the importance of the digital printer to that.

VISIT TO THE AYRSHIRE COMMUNITY TRUST, 10 September

I also visited The Ayrshire Community Trust (TACT) with Provost Ian Clarkson, to help launch their adult volunteer awards. We know how valuable local volunteers have been throughout the pandemic, giving up their own time to make sure others were safe and supported. It is great that TACT is recognising the work of volunteers with their awards.

VISIT TO WINTON CIRCUS PLAY PARK, 10 September

Later on 10 September I visited the playpark at Winton Circus, Saltcoats to announce to volunteers at local community group Saltcoats Active Lifestyle Team (SALT), who have been raising funds for the upgrade of the playpark, that we would be investing a share of my Cabinet's £500,000 coastal playpark fund upgrading this playpark. Working with SALT, we will co-produce plans for the playpark with any funds SALT raise complimenting the Council's investment to enhance the facilities further.

AYRSHIRE ECONOMIC JOINT COMMITTEE, 13 September

I chaired a meeting of the Ayrshire Economic Joint Committee (AEJC) on 13 September. Attendees were provided with updates on

LEADER'S REPORT



- Review of Working Arrangements and Development of Regional Economic Strategy
- Ayrshire Growth Deal Programme Update
- Food Procurement Contracts: Supply and Delivery of Fresh/Organic Food Stuffs
- Clean Growth Workstream: Ayrshire Energy Masterplan Submit report by Theresa Corrie, Scottish Enterprise on the development of an Ayrshire Energy Masterplan
- Ayrshire Growth Deal: Internal Audit Annual Report 2020/21
- Ayrshire Growth Deal: Internal Audit Plan 2021/22

Under the Terms of Reference for the AEJC, the Chair for forthcoming AEJC meetings will rotate to South Ayrshire Council until September 2022.

INCLUSIVE GROWTH NETWORK EVENT, 15 September

I attended a Political Leaders' Inclusive Growth Network event on 15 September. At this political summit, members reaffirmed their commitment to tackling the climate crisis locally. The aim will be for political leaders to ensure that the transition for environmental change will not have detrimental impacts on our poorest households and therefore a political message will be published in the run up to the COP26 summit, setting out the level of shared ambition, innovation, and scale of local delivery already in progress amongst members of the IGN across the UK.

VISIT TO ARRAN, 16-17 September

On 16 and 17 September I visited Arran together with the Cabinet Member for Islands, Alex Gallagher and our Chief Executive, Craig Hatton. I was pleased to take part in two Ministerial meetings, one with the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands, Mairi Gougeon and a separate one with the Transport Minister, Graeme Dey. Both meetings were also attended by members of the Arran Recovery Group and Arran Ferry Committee.

After having held meetings online for the past 18 months it was fantastic to be able to visit The Arran Outdoor Centre and catch up with the team there. The Centre has been at the heart of the island's response to Covid-19 and was interesting to discuss their experience of supporting the island's communities throughout the pandemic. The Centre and staff hope to be able to welcome schools back for their residential week soon.

We had an excellent meeting with Arran Eco Savvy, a group that is a great asset to the island. As a Council we have set ambitious climate targets to be a net-zero region by 2030 and Arran Eco Savvy share that ambition. It was exciting to be discussing ambitions ranging from community-owned renewable energy, low-carbon transport solutions, to making the island's housing stock more energy efficient. The Council are here to facilitate and enable groups like



Eco Savvy to drive change from the ground up and we have taken away a long list of actions to explore opportunities to work with Eco Savvy going forward.

Straight after meeting Arran Eco Savvy, Councillor Alex Gallagher and I travelled over to visit Arran Youth Foundation. They are the first group on the island to benefit from my Administration's Community Investment Fund, a fund that we created to support community-led initiatives. Their mental health project, run in association with the High School, is up and running and it was great to hear it's already making a positive impact.

Whilst on the island, I was keen to visit Woodside Farm in Kildonan. Woodside Farm is a social enterprise that use organic farming methods to produce seasonal food. During the first lockdown, Woodside Farm helped support the island's community to access fresh food and now they are supplying local produce for the Council's school meals on the island. This is exactly what Community Wealth Building is all about – using the Council's procurement spend to support local businesses, and, where possible, to support social enterprises and other forms of progressive business ownership models.

We couldn't go to Arran and not visit Brathwic Terrace, the first Council houses to be built on the island for decades. The Council's development at Brathwic Terrace, which is nearly complete, will provide 34 new Council houses on the island and my Administration's local letting initiative means that most of the houses have been allocated to island residents, helping us tackle the problems outlined above.

The rents are the same as those the Council charge on the mainland, resulting in the lowest rents you will find anywhere on the island, whilst the energy efficiency measures that the Council includes in our new-build houses, such as solar panels, mean that the homes will be some of the most energy efficient and low carbon on the island.

We hadn't arranged it in advance, but whilst on the island we had the opportunity to speak to someone who has been allocated one of the houses. Listening to what the new house meant to him, and his wife, was an excellent moment for us all as it demonstrated the difference building Council houses on the island will make.

HUNTERSTON MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING SIGNING, 21 September

It was a landmark day on 21 September when I had the pleasure to sign a Memorandum of Understanding together with representatives from Peel Ports and Scottish Enterprise. The MOU will see ambitious plans for Hunterston come to fruition as part of the Ayrshire Growth Deal.



The agreement sets out the roles of each of the organisations and how the partnership will secure further investment that will help stimulate development at the site. An initial focus for the partners will be developing a business incubator space within the existing buildings on the site, providing facilities for local firms to grow and collaborate. The ambition is to create a centre for innovation to support both the blue and circular economy, including research and development facilities.

The development of Hunterston PARC, which is one of Scotland's largest brownfield sites (320 acres) and its largest deep-water port, is a key site in the Ayrshire Growth Deal (AGD) to which the UK Government has committed £18 million over a 10-year period.

MINISTERIAL MEETING, 22 September

On 22 September I attended a meeting with the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government, Shona Robison MSP, and the Minister for Public Finance, Planning & Community Wealth, Tom Arthur MSP. Also in attendance were senior officers from North Ayrshire Council Chief Executive, Craig Hatton, Head of Democratic Services, Aileen Campbell and Head of Finance, Mark Boyd. Discussion points included the following:

- Covid Recovery
- Spending Review
- PfG commitments
- Priorities for local government

COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING COMMISSION, 22 September

I chaired a further meeting of Ayrshire's Community Wealth Building Commission on 22 September to discuss a packed agenda covering the following items:

- Scottish Land Commission – Presentation and discussion on CWB and Land & Assets
- Update from Lead Officers Working Group
- Update on Fair Employment workstream
- Update on Community Wealth Building Act.
- Ayrshire Growth Deal, Community Wealth Building Fund update

Following agreement by Commission members, I have written to the Minister for Public Finance, Planning and Community Wealth about the development of the recently announced Community Wealth Building Act. The Commission felt that Ayrshire was in a good position to share reflections from its experience of implementing Community Wealth Building in the region and consideration of what is required at a national level to enable long term economic transformation. In the year of COP26, Community Wealth Building could be a key tool in



supporting the achievement of net zero and that Ayrshire partners are already advancing activity in this area. The Commission has already undertaken early consideration of the potential of a Community Wealth Building Act and plan further work with officers across the region, including with the input of the Community Wealth Building Expert Advisory Panel chaired by Wellbeing Economy Alliance Scotland.

CLIMATE CHANGE FRINGE EVENT (FAIRTRADE), 22 September

Later on 22 September I took part in an online Climate Change Fringe Event, organised by the North Ayrshire Fair Trade Zone Group, a community-based organisation which works to raise awareness of how purchasing and supporting Fair Trade goods can help improve living standards in the developing world and at the same time help in responding to major issues such as climate change.

The event was one of many organised by “Stop Climate Chaos Coalition Scotland” as part of Climate Fringe Week of Action which aims to raise awareness about the United Nations Climate Change Conference taking place in Glasgow in November .

COSLA LEADERS, 24 September

On 24 September I attended COSLA Leaders to discuss a packed agenda including some of the following items:

- Social Renewal Advisory Board
- Tackling Poverty – COSLA Role and Contributions
- EU Exit Local Impacts

The Social Renewal Advisory Board was established in June 2020 by the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government and the Cabinet Secretary for Social Security and Older People. North Ayrshire Council held a programme of six community listening events with its localities, young people and Fair For All Commission in August 2020 via Zoom. Nine Policy Circles, convened by Scottish Government and COSLA, ran a programme of in-depth discussions with a panel of experts and interest groups. Two senior officers of North Ayrshire Council were invited to join Policy Circles looking at Place Based Renewal and Volunteering.

North Ayrshire Council is well positioned in its strategic approach to the first theme of Money and Work, with the launch of the Community Wealth Building Strategy. The Minimum Income Guarantee commitment within the 2021/22 Programme for Government will be closely followed given North Ayrshire's early work on Citizen's Basic Income. Policies supporting Fair Work, the



Living Wage and the well-established network of Employability Hubs have been enhanced by the Financial Advice Demonstrator Hub. The North Ayrshire Fair Work Programme Manager has been recruited to take forward locally, aligned with CWB Strategy.

MOORPARK PRIMARY SCHOOL GROUNDBREAKING, 27 September

I attended the Moorpark Primary School Groundbreaking ceremony in Kilbirnie on 27 September. This is one of many schools that will be benefitting from over £100 million investment in our school estate, some of the others include Lockhart Campus, Kilwinning Academy, Irvine Royal Academy and Auchendarvie Academy. We also have plans for Ardrossan Academy and Montgomerie Park in Irvine. I am immensely proud of the investment we are making in our schools which will ensure that our pupils in North Ayrshire receive education in the best facilities possible.

COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP BOARD, 30 September

I was pleased to chair a meeting of the Community Planning Partnership Board on 30 September. Partners received updates on the following:

- The Role of the Third Sector Interface – presentation from The Ayrshire Community Trust (TACT)
- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's UFAS Consultation
- Local Employability Partnership
- Partner Discussion and Sharing on Key Developments and Opportunities

Following these updates two workshops were delivered, the first on how partners can deliver on locality priorities and the second on how partners can develop the Locality Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) from 2022.

My thanks to the Community Planning Team and of course to the Partners for delivering updates on behalf of their organisations.

HOUSING SITE VISITS, 30 September

Together with the Head of Housing at North Ayrshire Council, Yvonne Baulk, I visited some of the sites where we have exciting plans to deliver more housing for our communities in North Ayrshire. These included Flatt Road and St Colms in Largs, Caley Court in Stevenston and St Michael's Wynd.



I have said many times before that our Strategic Housing Investment Plan is one of the most ambitious plans seen in years and I am proud that this Administration is delivering much needed, energy efficient homes for the people of North Ayrshire.

CHALLENGE POVERTY WEEK, 4-10 October

Food Larder Visits

In the run up to Challenge Poverty Week, the national campaign organised by the Poverty Alliance which aims to highlight what is being done to tackle poverty, together with Councillor Robert Foster, Cabinet Member for Poverty, I visited ten of our food larders throughout North Ayrshire. These included:

- The “Wee Shoap” at the Woodwynd in Kilwinning
- Cranberry’s Community Larder at Cranberry Moss in Kilwinning
- Whitlees Quaint Larder in Ardrossan
- Tap End Larder in Stevenston
- Choices Community Shop in Fullarton, Irvine
- The Farm Basket at Towerlands Community Centre in Irvine
- Dalry Community Larder
- The Village Larder in West Kilbride
- Ardeer Food Larder in Stevenston
- South Ardrossan Food Larder

I am proud of the work our Council has done in working with community groups to establish these larders during the Covid pandemic. With another four larders to open in the coming months in Beith, Saltcoats, Springside and Kilbirnie and with food support for our islands being coordinated locally, including food contingency stores at Arran Outdoor Education Centre, our food network continues to go from strength to strength.

Publication of our Community Wealth Building Strategy Annual Report

I am also immensely proud of the work our Council has done in the past 24 months on our Community Wealth Building (CWB) journey. It is truly incredible when you read about all the great achievements we have made in the past year since we became the first CWB Local Authority in Scotland in May last year. I am grateful to all those involved but would like to say a special word of thanks to Julie McLachlan, our Senior Manager in the Economic team who has



been instrumental in our CWB journey from the start. Sadly, Julie will be leaving us in a few weeks, but I would like to wish her all the best for the future.

Ayrshire Integration Boards – Signing of CWB Anchor Charter

Also, as part of Challenge Poverty Week, it was announced that the three Ayrshire Integration Joint Boards (IJB) will be signing up to our Community Wealth Building Anchor Charter. The IJB which is the strategic commissioning body of the Health and Social Care Partnership, are responsible for developing and managing the delivery of community health and social care services across Ayrshire, therefore in a significant position to influence a considerable amount in our region. This in turn will help support and strengthen our local economy.

SCOTTISH LAND COMMISSION CONFERENCE, 5 October

On 5 October I was delighted to speak at the Scottish Land Commission Conference on Community Wealth Building and talk about our journey here in Ayrshire as a whole. The focus was of course on the importance land and property can play in achieving the aims of Community Wealth Building and how it can enable diversity of land ownership. I also spoke about the community ownership of buildings and how community wealth funding can be used to build back better and greener.

REGENERATION VISITS, 6 October

On 6 October, together with officers from our Estates team, I was able to visit some of the areas throughout North Ayrshire that have benefitted from our 10-year Estate Based Regeneration Programme, a programme approved by my Cabinet in January 2019. The Estate Based Regeneration Plan looks to address pockets of low demand stock; antisocial behaviour; external appearance, parking provision; road and footpath condition; fencing; landscaping as well as general ground and maintenance issues,

This approach complements the Council's ambitious housing development programme via the Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2021-2026 and was developed through a comprehensive map-based review of our estates, which identified a variety of potential improvements within our estates, including the need for demolition and redevelopment of low demand stock, external improvements to existing stock, additional parking provision, new fencing, new lighting and bin stores.

I was extremely impressed by the work that has already been carried out at Bourtreehill and Castlepark in Irvine and I am looking forward to seeing the completed works at Dirrans in Kilwinning which will also look to enhance local parking as well as provide new fencing and other work to improve the visual amenity of the area.



Great work by our teams and a huge benefit to our communities.

POLICY ADVISORY PANEL, 7 October

On 7 October I attended a meeting of the Policy Advisory Panel where the main item for discussion was the Streetscene Volunteering Strategy and “Adopt a Spot” initiative. North Ayrshire currently benefits from an impressive network of volunteers across our localities who give willingly of their time to provide valuable services for their communities. One of the most significant areas of volunteer activity is in support of the Council’s Streetscene service where many active volunteers are working to improve and enhance their local natural environment through activities such as litter picking, floral displays and environmental/sand dune management.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Joe Cullinane".

Councillor Joe Cullinane
Leader North Ayrshire Council

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

27 October 2021

North Ayrshire Council

Title: North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership (CPP)
Board: Minutes of Meetings held on 10 June 2021 and 29 September 2021

Purpose: To submit the Minutes of the meeting of the North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership Board held on 10 June 2021 and 29 September 2021.

Recommendation: That the Council notes the Minutes contained in Appendices 1 and 2.

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 10 June 2021 and 29 September 2021 are appended. Particular matters for the Council's attention include the following:

Meeting of 10 June 2021

Agenda Item 3

CPP partners received an update on the Children's Services Strategic Partnership which included updates on the work of the Children's Services Executive Group

Agenda Item 4

The new Youth Participation and Citizenship Strategy was presented. Partners discussed how this links with their duties under the UNCRC and there was agreement that partners will work with the Youth Services team to strengthen the youth voice.

Agenda Item 6

Partners considered the Quarter 4 Local Outcomes Improvement Plan and Fair for All Strategy Performance Report and agreed the approach to the annual performance report for the CPP.

Agenda Item 7

CPP partners participated in two workshops. One focused on strengthening links with the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership. The other considered the Careers Review and was led by Skills Development Scotland.

Minutes of 29 September 2021

Agenda Item 3

Partners received a presentation on the role of The Third Sector Interface. This included the remit provided by the Scottish Government and the local arrangements for implementing this. Partners considered the contribution of the Third Sector to the economy.

Agenda Item 4

Board members considered Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's consultation on unwanted fire alarm signals and discussed the potential local impact of any changes.

Agenda Item 5

The CPP were updated on the work of the Local Employability Partnership and agreed to receive 6 monthly reports from the group.

Agenda Item 6

Board members participated in two workshops. Police Scotland led discussion on Locality Partnership priorities in Workshop 1. Partners suggested ways in which they could support delivery of the priorities. At Workshop 2 partners considered and approved the proposed model for the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan from 2022.

Agenda Item 8

Partners had a wide-ranging discussion on key developments and joint working opportunities including the Ayrshire Regional Skills Investment Plan, the development of a pan-Ayrshire drugs strategy, Scottish Enterprise's business plan and the work of KA Leisure.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 That the Council notes the Minutes contained in Appendices 1 and 2.

4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty

Financial

- 4.1 None

Human Resources

- 4.2 None

Legal

- 4.3 None

Equality/Socio-economic

4.4 None

Environmental and Sustainability

4.5 None

Key Priorities

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

Community Wealth Building

4.7 None

5. Consultation

5.1 No consultation was required.

Caroline Amos
Executive Director (Interim), Communities and Education

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

Background Papers

0

Community Planning Partnership Board

Thursday 10 June 2021 at 11.00 am

Via Microsoft Teams



North Ayrshire
Community Planning Partnership

Present

North Ayrshire Council

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

John Bell, Elected Member

Marie Burns, Elected Member

Alex Gallagher, Elected Member

Tony Gurney, Elected Member

Ellen McMaster, Elected Member

Craig Hatton, Chief Executive

Appendix 1

North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership

Caroline Cameron, Director NA HSCP

Ayrshire College

Carol Turnbull, Principal

DWP

Billy Walker, Customer Service Lead

NHS Ayrshire and Arran

Lesley Bowie, Chair of NHS Board **(Vice Chair)**

Police Scotland

Chief Superintendent Faroque Hussain

Scottish Enterprise

Theresa Correia, Senior Manager

Scottish Government

Sam Anson, Location Director

Scottish Fire and Rescue

Ian McMeekin, Area Manager

Skill Development Scotland

Claire Tooze, Area Manager (Sub for Katie Hutton)

Scottish Partnership for Transport

Allan Comrie, Senior Transport Planner

In Attendance

Audrey Sutton (NAC), Rhona Arthur (NAC), Morna Rae (NAC), Lauren McMath (NAC), Rosemary White (NA HSCP), Billy Brotherston (ADP Chair), Donna Anderson (NAC), Kirsty Calderwood (NA HSCP). Sarah Watts (NA HSCP), Jennifer McGee (NAC).

Apologies

Cllr Scott Davidson, NAC John Burns (NHS Ayrshire and Arran), L McNiven (NHS Ayrshire & Arran), H Borland (NHS Ayrshire & Arran), Sheila Lynn (DWP), Katie Hutton (SDS), Karen Yeomans (NAC), Ashley Pringle (KA Leisure), Kaileigh Brown (TACT), Bob Martin (Chair IJB)

1. Welcome and Apologies

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

2. Minute of the Previous Meeting and Action Note

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

The following action note updates were provided:

- Ayrshire Growth Deal update will be brought to the September 2021 Board Meeting.
- An update in relation to the Locality Priority refresh will be provided at today's meeting
- Draft Local Police Plan was uploaded on to the CPP Consultation Hub, presented to three of the six Locality Partnerships, circulated to the other three Locality Partnerships and underwent a Health Inequalities Impact Assessment and approved by the Police and Fire and Rescue Committee.
- A Sutton confirmed that she had met with D Frew around the Children's Services Plan
- Cost of the School Day Conference will be held on 11 June with the launch of the strategy.
- Multi-agency locality working update will be brought to the September Board meeting.

3. Children's Services Strategic Partnership

Audrey Sutton provided the Board with an update on the Children's Services Strategic Partnership. She conveyed her thanks to L McMath for the co-ordination of this this work.

A Sutton advised the Board that the process of Children's Services Planning has been reviewed and streamlined during 2019/20 and 2020/21. A diagram within the papers shared the Board demonstrated the representation of the key elements of Children's Services Planning. This also links the Children's Services Plan, Children's Rights Report, Youth Participation and Citizenship Strategy and the Child Poverty Action Plan and Report into one suite of planning documents and ensures a co-ordinated and strategic approach.

A Sutton highlighted that the Children's Services Executive Group, which brings together Heads of Service from Communities and the Health and Social Care Partnership has been meeting regularly and have agreed to five workstreams being set up. Each workstream will be chaired by a Senior Manager from Education, Communities or the Health and Social Care Partnership. The workstream groups will take forward specific pieces of work and report progress to the Children's Services Executive Group. The five workstreams are:

1. **Children and Young People Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Supports and Services Framework** - children, young people and their families will be able to more readily access appropriate and timely mental health and wellbeing supports through establishing a North Ayrshire Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Collaborative.
2. **Review and evaluation of Named Person Service** - The Named Person Service processes and procedures are being reviewed and improvements will be identified where applicable, to ensure Named Persons and Lead Professionals are provided with effective and efficient early intervention and preventative support in meeting the needs of children, young people and their families
3. **Multi-agency and Locality Working** - ensure children, young people and their families will be able to access the right supports and interventions at the right time and place provided by the right people.

4. **The Promise (informing our response to the National Independent Care Review)** - focusses on children, young people, families, professionals and partners becoming actively engaged in co-creating an improved care system in North Ayrshire to better meet needs and engender the best possible outcomes for all supported through the system.
5. **Planning for transition to adult services** - ensure young people with additional support needs in North Ayrshire, and their families, will be provided with a more effective transition into adulthood, which delivers greater access to a range of provisions and supports in the local community.

A Sutton highlighted that the Children's Services Plan 2020-23 would be updated annually to reflect the current context and to ensure that our strategic direction is clear. The updated Plan will be presented to Cabinet and IJB in June 2021 and a copy will also be circulated to The Board.

The Chair thanked A Sutton for her update.

4. Youth Participation and Citizenship Strategy

Donna Anderson delivered a presentation on the new Youth Participation and Citizenship Strategy. D Anderson highlighted that the new 2021 – 2025 strategy has been approved by the Council's Cabinet was officially launched on 25 May 2021 at the Joint Cabinet meeting.

D Anderson also provided Senior Officers with some highlights from the last strategy and the impacts made:

- **13 Ways Campaign** - A series of blogs and animations all about positive mental health, supporting your friends and seeking help if you are struggling. The blogs also housed a number of useful resources for young people to get the right help and support.
- **ADP Alcohol and Drugs Project** - this was codesigned by young people looking at tackling the stigma around drugs and alcohol.
- **Child Centred Council** – young people consulted on decision making which affects them.
- **Period Poverty** – Free access to sanitary products in all North Ayrshire schools and public buildings.

The new strategy is focused on four main themes:

- **Health and Wellbeing** - is at the forefront with mental health a concern for young people. In 2020 the team were successful in securing £60k from the Youth Work Recovery Fund to support this work.
- **Poverty and Inequality** – young people have been heavily involved in the Cost of the School Day work and are part of the working group.
- **Young Peoples Voice and Rights** – ensuring that they are embedded in the work.
- **Digital Connections** - was highlighted as a priority during the pandemic.

D Anderson advised that in North Ayrshire young people's views have always been taken seriously and the new strategy doesn't just focus on youth work as all decision makers have a duty to meaningfully engage with young people. She also advised that services have adapted well during the pandemic and continue to ensure young people are listened. In terms of youth engagement, the team would like to expand on this more to ensure all young people are heard.

D Anderson highlighted that another topic a lot of young people are very passionate about is climate change and these themes will be focused on in relation to climate change:

- Young People's Voice and Engagement
- Training for Campaigners
- Awareness Raising and Positive Action
- Working Locally, Nationally and Internationally
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Legacy

In terms of the next steps, there is a need to strengthen the structures already in place, such as refreshing Pupil Council, Joint Cabinet and youth forums to ensure they are up to date. Accountability and Transparency are also very important.

D Anderson encouraged the Board to sign the Pledge.

Carol Turnbull asked D Anderson the age range of young people is covered by the Strategy. D Anderson confirmed that young people age 12 – 25 are covered within this strategy.

Lesley Bowie asked D Anderson how the team measure engagement. D Anderson advised that they do have their core groups and youth cabinet (the membership changes frequently). However, the Team are looking new ways to engage with those hard-to-reach groups. D Anderson highlighted that she would like to see pupil council more involved to ensure there is that golden thread of communication.

Cllr Burns highlighted that a young person from Irvine Youth Forum attends the Irvine Locality Partnership and they have just successfully secured a CIF bid for a project. Cllr Burns asked D Anderson about the next steps on this and is there more Locality Partnerships can do and how to develop joint working with young people in each Locality. D Anderson confirmed that she agrees that would be great to have more youth voice on the Locality Partnerships.

A Sutton highlighted that the work the CPPI do is underpinned by children's rights. New legislation UNCRC A Sutton advised that she is taking a paper to the Council's Executive Leadership Team on how to ensure the Council are responding adequately and beyond. A Sutton commented that the legislation is demanding and advised that this is something that should be brought back for discussion at the CPP Senior Officers Group and Board.

The Chair highlighted that he agrees that this should be brought to a future meeting.

F Hussain advised that Police Scotland will be signing the pledge and that he would be keen to meet with D Anderson around young people's voice and rights. D Anderson confirmed that she would be happy to meet and also suggested having this as a topic for the next joint cabinet live.

The Chair thanked D Anderson for her presentation.

5. Locality Priorities

Morna Rae provided the Board with an update on the work of the Locality Partnership priority refresh.

M Rae highlighted that the existing local priorities have been tested with Locality Partnerships and communities in a 14- week consultation process. Feedback from other engagements such as people panel survey, needs assessment etc has been re-analysed and these will be presented to the locality partnership as potential priorities. At the Locality Partnership meetings M Rae highlighted that at the Locality Partnership meetings, she has been focussing on what are the local inequalities that the Locality Partnership want to address and where can the Locality Partnerships best add value. Both the Kilwinning and North Coast Locality Partnership meetings have taken place with the four remaining Locality Partnerships meeting next week. M Rae advised that once this work is complete, an update will be shared with the Board.

The Chair thanked M Rae for her update.

6. LOIP and Fair For All Performance Report

M Rae provided the Board with a presentation on the LOIP and Fair For All Q4 Performance.

M Rae provided a brief update on each of the LOIP Themes. M Rae highlighted that a much more detailed performance report will be shared with the Board in due course:

A Working North Ayrshire

- Cabinet approval was received in Oct 2020 for the delivery of a £250,000 Islands Recovery and Renewal pilot project developed in partnership with Scottish Government and Highlands and Islands Enterprise, focused on recovery and renewal of our islands.
- Vocational and training programmes have been developed and delivered on-line alongside physical class-based learning in partnership with Ayrshire College. Work experience and sector-based work academies have been delivered and an on-line jobs fair was developed in partnership with DWP.
- 69% working age population in employment
- 285 unemployed people progressed to employment through NAC employability

A Thriving North Ayrshire

- The North Ayrshire Youth Participation and Citizenship Strategy 2021-2025 was launched. It complements the Children's Services Plan 2020-23, the Children's Rights Report and our Child Poverty Action Plan Report.
- Educational psychologists have worked with Health and Social Care Partnership to deliver nurture training to managers of Children's Houses. Plans are in place for the nurture team to deliver training to all staff within the Houses.
- 97% of parents/ carers reported they gained more knowledge on how their child learns in school and how to support their learning at home
- 2,752 families have taken part in Family Learning interventions this session

A Safer North Ayrshire

- The Kilwinning Locality Policing Team are also instigating a partnership action plan focussing on the town centre and Eglinton Park. This will include diversionary activities, youth engagement and licensed premises inspection.
- SFRS community engagement has been largely conducted virtually, including Fire Safety Experiential Training (FSET). Outdoor diversionary youth engagement is in planning for when restrictions allow.
- 0 fire related fatalities in Q4
- No recorded fatal road accidents in North Ayrshire during Q4

A Healthier North Ayrshire

- Since the outset of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the North Ayrshire Enhanced Intermediate Care Team has continued to provide a seven-day service, facilitating early discharge from hospital, and providing rapid alternative to acute hospital admission. Face to face input, within individuals own homes continued to take place, with appropriate PPE, where clinically indicated and remote methods deemed not appropriate.

- The North HSCP Community Mental Health Team have moved into the newly refurbished office at the Three Towns Resource Centre. This allowed the partnership to bring all of the key professions together under the one roof. The integrated team includes administrators, psychologists, social workers, nurses and allied health professionals.
- 98% of CAMHS patients seen within 18 weeks
- 9,766 Bed Days Saved by ICT providing alternative to acute hospital admission

In terms of next steps, M Rae highlighted that:

- The 20/21 Annual Performance Report would be produced
- Ongoing developments on performance information hosted on CP website
- Locality Partnership impact reports would also be hosted on the CP website.

The Chair thanked M Rae for her presentation.

7. Workshop Session

The Board split in to two groups and each attended two workshop sessions.

Workshop 1 – North Ayrshire Drug and Alcohol Partnership. This was led by Billy Brotherston, Chair of North Ayrshire ADP and Rosemary White, Lead Officer.

Workshop 2 – Skills Development Scotland. This workshop was led by Clair Tooze.

8. Young People’s Suicide Taskforce

K Calderwood and S Watts delivered a presentation on the North Ayrshire Young People Suicide Prevention Taskforce.

Over an 18-month period between 2017/2019 a number of young teenagers died in North Ayrshire. After the initial deaths, the Child Protection Committee Chair co-ordinated a response and a Young People’s Strategic Suicide Prevention Group (YPSSPG) was formed.

To support the Strategic Group an Operational Group was created to implement any actions. K Calderwood/S Watts highlighted that going forward, a new action plan will be created. This will continue to explore and collate and use data to better inform outcomes and highlight issues. A significant area of work will be how they support everyone who has been affected.

The group will also continue to review the crisis response document ensuring it keep it relevant and up-to-date and to bring to the group any death by suicide which may have an impact on young people e.g. a teacher or sports coach or a celebrity etc.

The Chair thanked K Calderwood and S Watts for their presentation.

9. Any Other Business

No other business was discussed.

10. Date of next Meeting

The next meeting of the North Ayrshire CPP Board will be held on **Thursday 30 September 2021 at 11.00 am via Microsoft Teams.**

Present

Appendix 2

North Ayrshire Council

Joe Cullinane, Elected Member (**Chair**)
John Bell, Elected Member
Marie Burns, Elected Member
Alex Gallagher, Elected Member
Ellen McMaster, Elected Member

North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership

Bob Martin, Chair North Ayrshire IJB

Ayrshire College

Carol Turnbull, Principal and Chief Executive

DWP

Tom Gilligan, Work Services Manager

KA Leisure

Ashley Pringle Vice Chair, KA Leisure

NHS Ayrshire and Arran

L McNiven, Director of Public Health

Police Scotland

Superintendent Derek Frew

Scottish Enterprise

Theresa Correia, Senior Manager

Scottish Government

Sam Anson, Location Director

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Ian McMeekin, Area Manager

Skill Development Scotland

Paul Zealey, Skills Planning Lead
Claire Tooze, Area Manager

Scottish Partnership for Transport

Allan Comrie, Senior Transport Planner

Third Sector Interface

Kaileigh Brown, Executive Director, The Ayrshire Community Trust

In Attendance

Caroline Amos (NAC), Rhona Arthur (NAC), Morna Rae (NAC), Jacqueline Greenlees (NAC), Greig Robson (NAC), Kevin Rennie (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service), Ruth Malloy (NHS Lanarkshire), Jennifer McGee (NAC).

Apologies

Cllr Scott Davidson (NAC), Cllr Anthony Gurney (NAC), Craig Hatton (NAC), Lesley Bowie, (NHS Ayrshire and Arran), Hazel Borland (NHS Ayrshire and Arran), Sheila Lynn (DWP), Karen Yeomans (NAC), Caroline Cameron (NA HSCP), Vicki Yuill (Arran CVS), Chief Supt Faroque Hussain (Police Scotland), Audrey Sutton (NAC)

1. Welcome and Apologies

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

The Chair also welcomed Bob Martin and Paul Zealey to their first North Ayrshire CPP Board meeting and highlighted that Paul Zealey would be the Skills Development Scotland representative going forward.

The Chair advised the Board that Ruth Malloy from NHS Lanarkshire was in attendance at the meeting shadowing Lynne McNiven.

2. Minute of the Previous Meeting and Action Note

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

The following action note updates were provided by Morna Rae:

- **Ayrshire Growth Deal** – An update will be brought to the December Board meeting.
- **Multi-agency locality working** – An update will be brought to the December Board meeting.
- **Children's Services Strategic Plan** – The document was circulated to the Board, the action is now complete.
- **Youth Participation and Citizenship Strategy** - Derek Frew advised that positive discussions have taken place between North Ayrshire Council and Police Scotland on youth engagement with over 50 officers in attendance.

3. The Role of the Third Sector Interface

Kaileigh Brown provided the Board with a presentation on the role of the Third Sector Interface.

K Brown advised the Board that the Third Sector Interface (TSI) in North Ayrshire is a partnership made up of The Ayrshire Community Trust (TACT) on the mainland and Arran Community and Voluntary Service (ACVS) on Arran. Both organisations have a long history of engaging with the local community, volunteers, community organisations and service providers. The vision is of improved quality of life for the people and communities of North Ayrshire by building a strong, effective and sustainable Third Sector.

Their remit as stated by the Scottish Government is to provide:

- Knowledge Hub for the Third Sector locally, including local and national policy and how it might affect the local Third Sector, communities and citizens and also where and how the Third Sector can and does contribute to those agendas,
- Voice - ensuring a strong Third Sector voice at a strategic level within local Community Planning structures and nationally as a network,
- Capacity Building within volunteering, community groups, voluntary organisations and social enterprise to achieve lasting positive change,

- Connect by providing leadership, vision and coordination to the local Third Sector to better respond to local priorities through partnership and collaboration, and
- During Covid-19 supporting local and national government in the recovery and renewal of our local communities.

K Brown also shared how the strategic responsibilities in North Ayrshire are split between the two organisations. Areas of shared responsibility are Locality Partnerships and the CPP Senior Officers Group. There is also an agreement that the TSI representative at the CPP Board will rotate on an annual basis.

K Brown shared how TSIs deliver to our communities across North Ayrshire:

- Gathering data,
- Creation of local,
- Pop up events,
- Training,
- Information sharing,
- Supporting partner events,
- Funding support,
- Strategic priorities,
- Supporting volunteers and sourcing volunteering opportunities,
- Covid-19 Response, and
- Capacity building.

K Brown shared the value of the Third Sector locally:

- In North Ayrshire, formal volunteering contributed £63.8 million to the local economy
- Last year 4 out of 5 Scots used a voluntary sector organisation
- Income in 2018 for the sector was £6.02bn with a North Ayrshire contribution of £73.42m
- In 2018 North Ayrshire's annual expenditure was £73.18m
- The voluntary sector across Ayrshire employs 4,929 staff
- The sector owns £4bn+ worth of fixed assets

Partners discussed the funding challenges faced by the Third Sector. R Mellor asked K Brown what proportion of funding is stable, and not made up of short-term grants. K Brown advised that she would forward a detailed breakdown to the Board, and commented on the negative impact of reliance on short-term funding. Cllr Gallagher asked about the Scottish Government funding arrangements and an explanation was provided.

The Chair thanked K Brown for her presentation and commented that the presentation highlights and demonstrates the value the Third Sector brings to the local area and economy.

4. Scottish Fire and Rescue Service UFAS Consultation

Ian McMeekin provided the Board with an overview on Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) Consultation.

I McMeekin advised responding to UFAS in commercial settings accounts of one third of Scottish Fire and Rescue's activity.

In terms of all UFAS this equates to:

- 57,000 unnecessary blue light visit each year
- 575 Carbon tonnes emission produced from using mobile appliances
- 6400 hrs lost every year and accounts to approx. £3.4m of pay.

Kevin Rennie provided the Board with a short presentation which covered the three options of the consultation which closes on 11 October 2021.

These are:

- a) Call challenges to all Automatic Fire Alarms (AFA) from non-domestic premises. No response is mobilised, if questioning confirms there is no fire, or signs of fire. Sleeping risk premises are exempt from call challenging and will receive the following immediate response:
 - Residential Care Homes receive a pre-determined attendance (PDA) of two fire appliances regardless of time of day
 - All other sleeping risks receive a PDA of one fire appliance between 0700-1800hrs and two fire appliances out-with these hours
- b) Call challenge all AFAs from non-domestic premises. No response is mobilised, if questioning confirms there is no fire, or signs of fire. No exemptions to call challenging apply (i.e. all AFA calls received are call challenged, regardless of premises type and caller).
- c) Non-attendance to all AFAs from non-domestic premises, unless back-up 999 call confirming fire, or signs of fire is received. Sleeping risk premises are exempt from non-attendance and will receive the following immediate response:
 - Residential Care Homes receive a PDA of two fire appliances regardless of time of day
 - All other sleeping risks receive a PDA of one fire appliance between 0700-1800hrs and two fire appliances out-with these hours

I McMeekin also highlighted that as well as this consultation, there has also been a change in legislation relating to smoke alarm laws which will commence in February 2022.

C Amos highlighted that she would be keen to meet with I McMeekin to discuss the potential implications for educational establishments.

M Rae advised that a copy of the consultation document will be shared with the Board and partners were encouraged to respond.

The Chair thanked I McMeekin and K Rennie for their presentation.

5. Local Employability Partnership

Greig Robson provided the Board with an update on the Local Employability Partnership (LEP). This included an overview of the funding arrangements and how partners work together to devise and deliver the most effective programmes in a North Ayrshire context. Information on their response to the employability challenges during the pandemic was shared.

G Robson advised the Board that he will be leaving the organisation in a few weeks and proposed that going forward his successor will provide bi-annual updates to the Board. This was agreed.

The Chair thanked G Robson for the update and conveyed his best wishes on his new venture.

6. Workshop Session

The Board split into two groups, and each attended two workshop sessions.

Workshop 1 – Locality Partnership (LP) Priorities

Derek Frew led this workshop which covered:

- The background to the development of refreshed LP priorities,
- The supporting research and the public consultation, and
- An overview of the priorities agreed at the June LP meetings.

CPP partners discussed how they can help support achievement of these priorities:

- A focus on children and young people – Police Scotland noted their community wellbeing and youth engagement work. Scottish Fire and Rescue Service spoke about engaging with the community and young people through joint work with TACT on the Positive Steps programme. They are also working in partnership with the Council and Police around corporate parenting.
- Community Wealth Building – opportunities to use partners land and assets for food systems was discussed.
- Irvine representatives spoke about a focus on mental health and green health for the LP. It was noted that KA Leisure will be key in supporting this work for example through outdoor activity programmes, community engagement and training, and developing new memberships for young people. This will be key in reducing inequality.
- Food is a key focus on Arran- the work of the Arran Pioneers was noted. Partners discussed the Garden Project in Glasgow.
- TACT spoke about projects relating to skills and work- another key theme for some LPs. Volunteering opportunities, and how effectively these are promoted will be key in getting the community work ready. The Third Sector will also be key in supporting community groups in community regeneration.
- Each of the LP priorities has links to the wider determinants of health, and as such Public Health partners are keen to work with the CPP going forward to progress them. Campus Police Officers and GP Link Workers will also be a key resource in progressing locality work.
- The Stalled Spaces work taking place in Glasgow was mentioned- Community groups can look after green or empty spaces that are sitting unused until they are sold or redeveloped.
- The value of the CPP Community Book model and the Fairer Food map was noted.

It was agreed that the output of the discussions would feed into the LP action planning.

Workshop 2 – Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) 2022

Morna Rae led this workshop and explained the requirements of the Community Empowerment Act in relation to our new LOIP, which needs to be in place from 2022. An overview was given of the project plan, and the intention to use a Stakeholder Reference Group to shape the public consultation. A proposal for a more focused LOIP across around five key themes, with key outcomes related to inequalities was also shared. Partners supported this approach, commenting on the value of being more targeted in the LOIP. It was noted that workplans under each theme could be developed, and governance arrangements and group memberships reviewed to align with the new LOIP. A Strategic Needs Assessment will provide an evidence base for the LOIP priorities along with the public feedback. Partners discussed different options for the lifespan of the LOIP. There was general consensus that running to 2030 would align with other key local strategic approaches and allow sufficient time to progress the LOIP outcomes.

7. Governance

Locality Partnership Standing Orders

Morna Rae advised the Board that the six Locality Partnership have Standing Orders which outline the remit of the groups and how they should operate. The current Standing Orders date from 2016 when the Locality Partnerships were first established. M Rae also advised an updated draft of the Standing Orders have been created.

M Rae highlighted the amendments:

- Parts which were out of date,
- Areas which needed additional explanation or clarity – based on experience through the Locality Planning work and
- Changes – where the previous practice wasn't as effective as it could be.

M Rae commented that there is still scope for the Board's feedback and she will share a copy of the draft Standing Orders by email for review.

Annual Report

M Rae highlighted that the team are finalising the Fair for All and Local Outcomes Improvement Plan annual report. The team are aiming to balance having a reasonably short and engaging document with something that shows the breadth of partnership achievements.

M Rae advised that instead of using Board agenda time to review, this would be shared with the Board via email to provide comments.

The Board agreed with this approach.

Annual Appraisal

M Rae advised the Board that the team will be sending out some appraisal templates that we would ask members to complete and return. This is to help us assess the effectiveness of our current approaches and identify any changes required. Responses will be pulled together, anonymised and shared with the Chairs and then members for discussion and agreement of action.

The Board agreed with this approach.

The Chair thanked M Rae for her update.

8. Partner Discussion and Sharing on Key Developments and Opportunities

The Chair advised that this would become a standing item on the agenda to allow wider sharing amongst partners.

Skills Development Scotland – Paul Zealey advised the Board that work on the Ayrshire Regional Skills Investment Plan is now underway. This will align with work of the new economic strategy and will build on the current Ayrshire Regional Skills Group. They have a strong partnership steering group. P Zealey highlighted that if there are any partners who feel they should be involved in this consultation and haven't been contacted already, he is happy to have a meeting with them to ensure their views are captured.

Police Scotland – Derek Frew highlighted that the team are developing a different and public health approach to addictions. The Divisional Commander has spoken to the three Ayrshire

Councils and it has been agreed that a pan-Ayrshire high level drugs strategy would be created. Engagement will take place in the coming months.

Scottish Enterprise – Theresa Correia advised the Board that since last meeting Adrian Gillespie has been appointed as Scottish Enterprise Chief Executive. He will be taking forward the development of the new three-year business plan which will be discussed with partners.

KA Leisure – Ashley Pringle advised the Board of the work that the Interim Chief Executive Malcolm McPhail has been leading and the innovation and ambition of the organisation. A recovery and renewal plan was developed following the pandemic, this was presented to the Council's Cabinet recently.

The Chair thanked everyone for their updates.

9. Any Other Business

No other business was discussed.

10. Date of next Meeting

The next meeting of the North Ayrshire CPP Board will be held on **Thursday 2 December 2021 at 11.00 am via Microsoft Teams.**

North Ayrshire Council

Title: Hybrid Committee Meetings Pilot

Purpose:

To update the Council on the hybrid committee meetings pilot in October 2021.

Recommendation:

That the Council agrees to:

- (a) note the outcome of the hybrid meetings pilot;
- (b) extend the pilot of Licensing Committee and Integration Joint Board hybrid meetings until the next Council meeting, subject to:
 - (i) consultation with the Health and Social Care Partnership with regard to the IJB arrangements;
 - (ii) hybrid meetings during the next stage of the pilot proceeding as “remote meetings (with physical participation)”, with no more than 50% of committee Members attending in person and on the basis that any failure of the hybrid equipment would result in the meeting reverting to a remote platform;
 - (iii) amendment of the hybrid meetings protocol set out at Appendix 1, to accommodate physical attendance by external parties in exceptional circumstances, as determined by officers;
 - (iv) the pilot being suspended in the event of a reintroduction of social distancing requirements; and
 - (v) the extent of the pilot being dependent on the availability of sufficient staff resources
- (c) receive a report on the outcome of the extended pilot thereafter.

1 Executive Summary

- 12 As a result of COVID-19 and associated restrictions, meetings of the Council and its committees have been continuing to meet on a wholly remote basis via MS Teams, with any meetings which would ordinarily been open to the public being live-streamed to the Council’s webcasting microsite.

- 1.3 At its meeting on 8 September 2021, the Council agreed to undertake a hybrid committee meetings pilot in September/October 2021, which would allow up to 50% of committee members to attend in person, with the remainder joining the meeting remotely via MS Teams. The Licensing Committee and Integration Joint Board were selected for inclusion in the pilot. A protocol was developed by officers to guide the implementation of the hybrid meetings pilot.
- 1.4 Licensing Committee and the Integration Joint Board meeting took place on a hybrid basis on 20 October and 21 October, respectively, the September 2021 Licensing Committee having been cancelled due to lack of business. Learning from the pilot is set out in this report, together with recommendations for an extension to the pilot.

2. Background

- 2.1 At its meeting on 8 September 2021, the Council received an update report on progress in terms of the introduction of hybrid meetings.
- 2.2 The Council agreed as follows:
- (a) that a hybrid meetings pilot take place prior to the next ordinary meeting of the Council in October 2021, involving a meeting(s) of the Licensing Committee and Integration Joint Board, subject to:
 - (i) consultation with the Health and Social Care Partnership with regard to the IJB arrangements,
 - (ii) any applicants/licence-holders attending the Licensing Committee do so on a remote basis only;
 - (iii) any hybrid meetings during the pilot proceeding as remote meetings (with physical participation) with no more than 50% of committee Members attending in person and on the basis that any failure of the hybrid equipment would result in the meeting reverting to a remote platform;
 - (iv) the pilot being suspended in the event of a reintroduction of social distancing requirements; and
 - (v) the extent of the pilot being dependent on the availability of sufficient staff resources
 - (b) to note that no further amendment to Standing Orders is required at this time in relation to hybrid meeting arrangements, but that officers use learning from the pilot to inform a Hybrid Meetings protocol for use by Members, Officers and other meeting participants;
 - (c) that a further report be submitted to the Council meeting in October 2021 on:
 - (i) the outcome of the pilot;
 - (ii) options for the expansion of hybrid/physical meetings and
 - (iii) future public gallery provisions; and
 - (d) to note that any pilot hybrid meetings held in September 2021 would not require to include a physical public gallery but that, from October 2021, some public gallery provision would be needed for any meetings with a physical attendance component.

Hybrid Meetings Protocol

- 23 The protocol set out at Appendix 1 to the report was developed by officers to provide background information on the principles and features of hybrid meetings; guide their operation during the pilot; and clarify the position in the event of a hybrid system or other failure. It is proposed that, subject to revision to accommodate learning from learning from the pilot, this document should continue to guide the operation of hybrid meetings.

Hybrid Equipment Testing

- 24 Extensive testing of the hybrid equipment in the Council Chambers took place in September and October to confirm the reliability of the system; rehearse the implementation of contingency arrangements in the event of equipment failure; gauge the staff resource required to run a hybrid meeting; and consider arrangements around issues such as presentations and the operation of hearings.
- 25 Testing demonstrated that the system appeared reliable but that significant additional staffing resource is required to manage a hybrid meeting when compared with a wholly physical or even a wholly remote meeting.

Council Chambers Arrangements

- 26 For both meetings in the hybrid pilot, arrangements were made to ensure that the seating plans for the Chambers provided adequate social distancing. Physical attendees were required to wear a face covering when not seated and hand sanitiser was available on entry to the building. The Chambers itself was also the subject of thorough cleaning before and after the meeting and open windows and doors provided suitable ventilation.
- 27 In accordance with the protocol, physical attendees were also asked to bring a device with them for use should the meeting have to revert to a wholly remote format via MS Teams.

Hybrid Pilot: Licensing Committee (20 October 2021)

- 28 Members of the Licensing Committee were invited to advise the clerk a week prior to the meeting whether they wished to attend in person. There were three requests (from Councillors McNicol (Chair), Barr and Donald L. Reid) in addition to the Solicitor (Licensing). The remaining Elected Members, together with invited applicants/licence-holders and officers, attended remotely via MS Teams.
- 29 Due to the nature of the business under consideration, the Committee resolved to exclude the press and public and, therefore, no physical public gallery was required in the Council Chambers, nor was the meeting live-streamed.
- 210 Three Committee Services Officers were required to manage the meeting: one undertook a traditional clerking role in the Chambers, a second operated the hybrid equipment, and a third joined via MS Teams (to assist with admitting parties to hearings at the appropriate time and ensure they had left prior to the committee's deliberation, as well as noting remote attendance and monitoring the 'hands up' function and 'chat box' as a precaution).

- 211 The hybrid meeting operated successfully, with remote and physical attendees able to see and hear each other.

Hybrid Pilot: Integration Joint Board (21 October 2021)

- 212 Similarly, Members of the Integration Joint Board were requested to advise in advance if they wished to attend in person. One member attended the meeting in person. The remaining members of the Integration Joint Board and supporting officers attended remotely via MS Teams.
- 213 Again, three members of the Committee Services team were required to support the meeting, as described at 2.10 above.
- 214 In the case of the IJB, as the meeting would ordinarily be open to the public, a small public gallery was provided and any members of the press or public interested in attending the Chambers were invited to do so by prior arrangement. No public gallery requests were received. Arrangements were also made to live-stream the meeting to the Council's webcasting microsite.
- 215 A technical fault prevented the hybrid system from running Microsoft Teams immediately prior to the start of the IJB meeting. This may have been related to an unexpected Teams update by Microsoft. The matter now appears to have been resolved, but it was not possible to proceed with the hybrid IJB meeting at the time. The established contingency arrangement - whereby the physical attendee joined remotely - was implemented very quickly and the meeting proceeded successfully on a wholly remote basis via MS Teams.

Learning Points

- 216 While there was insufficient time to fully survey remote and physical attendees, contact was made immediately following the meetings and this is summarised at Section 5.1. The main learning points observed by officers, taking into account Elected Member feedback, are highlighted below:

Reliability

- 217 Extensive testing of the hybrid system in advance of the pilot provided reassurance as to its reliability. However, as was demonstrated by the IJB pilot meeting, there is an inherent vulnerability in any system which relies upon technology. This is particularly the case where the solution involves integrating software and equipment from multiple providers.
- 218 A continuation of the hybrid meetings pilot will allow a better gauge of reliability. There are suitable contingency arrangements in place (i.e. reverting to wholly remote) in the event of a failure and it was possible to test these during the IJB meeting.
- 219 If hybrid meetings are to become established practice in future, there is an argument for seeking a more integrated corporate system covering live-streaming/webcasting software, screens and microphones.

Room Temperature

- 220 The pilot demonstrated that room temperature may be an issue for hybrid meetings during COVID-19, if air conditioning cannot be used and additional ventilation is necessary. Clearly, this is likely to have a particular impact for longer meetings during winter months.
- 221 Although COVID-19 health and safety compliance must take precedence over usual minimum temperatures for a working environment, the comfort of attendees is relevant and there is concern about the impact on clerks attempting to take manual or electronic notes if room temperature is lower than normally considered reasonable.
- 222 Section 4 includes more information on the regulatory background to the question of room temperature, including a reference to recently updated guidance from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). Depending on the outcome of the risk assessment process in light of this, it may be possible to reinstate the Chambers air conditioning. Failing that, alternative arrangements, informed by the risk assessment process, will be considered.

Confidentiality

- 223 Where a committee, such as Licensing, resolves to exclude the press and public to allow consideration of exempt information as defined by Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, there is a potential confidentiality issue associated with the current requirement to have windows open in the Council Chambers. This is, therefore, noted as a risk.

Staffing Resource

- 224 Hybrid meetings require a significant staff resource when compared with wholly physical or even wholly remote committee meetings. As described in 2.10 above, three officers are currently needed to service each a hybrid committee meeting. The Committee Services team comprises four officers, all of whom have other duties in addition to administering committees and one of whom also supports election preparations.

Participation by External Parties

- 225 For the purpose of the pilot and in recognition of COVID-19 restrictions, physical attendance at hybrid meetings was open only to a limited number of Elected Members and officers. The protocol provided that external parties, including applicants/licence-holders attending Licensing Committee hearings, should be asked to join the meeting remotely. This is in part for practical reasons, since any failure of the hybrid equipment would see the meeting reconvene on a wholly remote basis and, therefore, external parties may need access to MS Teams.
- 226 Although there have been no significant issues around external parties joining wholly remote meetings over the past year or more, it is recognised that there may be some exceptions where applicants/licence-holders, appellants or others do not have access to a device.

227 It may be possible to accommodate such exceptional cases by liaising with the relevant Service to establish if an officer might be available to support the individual with a device. This would allow them to attend in person, with a contingency in place in the event of the meeting reconvening remotely. However, this would not be intended to allow wholesale physical attendance by external parties. During COVID-19, physical attendance by external parties would be by exception only.

Added Value

228 The potential of the hybrid equipment to add value to meetings of the Council and its committees is clear, in terms of accommodating the desire of some Elected Members to return to physical attendance at meetings while offering flexibility for others to attend remotely. Indeed, as Section 5.1 reflects, the hybrid meeting format was generally positively received by both the Elected Members who participated in the pilot as physical attendees and those who joined remotely.

229 The requirement for public gallery provision for physical and/or hybrid meetings also addresses potential accessibility issues for members of the public and other external parties who are unable to access a live-stream and who might wish to view proceedings in person.

230 However, it should be noted that the two hybrid meetings which have taken place to date during the pilot attracted only limited Elected Member interest for physical attendance and no requests from members of the public to attend. An extension of the pilot may allow a better opportunity to gauge the added value for Elected Members and the public. However, if COVID-19 case numbers rise over the winter, this may further reduce interest in physical attendance.

231 In the longer term, post-COVID, it might be argued that hybrid meetings are likely to demonstrate their real value when it is possible for meetings to return to a predominately physical format. In such circumstances, hybrid meetings would offer an opportunity to address real issues, such as travel disruption, poor weather and physical impairment.

3. Proposals

3.1 The Council is invited to:

- (a) note the outcome of the hybrid meetings pilot;
- (b) agree to extend the pilot of Licensing Committee and Integration Joint Board hybrid meetings until the next Council meeting, subject to:
 - (i) consultation with the Health and Social Care Partnership with regard to the IJB arrangements;
 - (ii) consultation with Chairs on the meetings to be included in the next stage of the pilot;

- (iii) hybrid meetings during the next stage of the pilot proceeding as “remote meetings (with physical participation)”, with no more than 50% of committee Members attending in person and on the basis that any failure of the hybrid equipment would result in the meeting reverting to a remote platform;
 - (iv) amendment of the draft hybrid meetings protocol set out at Appendix 1, to accommodate physical attendance by external parties in exceptional circumstances, as determined by officers;
 - (v) the pilot being suspended in the event of a reintroduction of social distancing requirements; and
 - (vi) the extent of the pilot being dependent on the availability of sufficient staff resources
- (c) receive a report on the outcome of the extended pilot thereafter.

4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty

Financial

- 4.1 Prior to COVID-19, the Council webcast only meetings of the Council, Integration Joint Board, but it is assumed that even following the relaxation of restrictions and the reintroduction of a physical public gallery, live-streaming of all remote and hybrid meeting which are not subject to the exclusion of the press and public will be expected as a matter of course. Additional webcasting hours have been purchased to accommodate this in the interim and this can be built into the retendering exercise for webcasting with effect from June 2022.
- 4.2 Remote meetings have significantly reduced expenditure on Elected Member travel. The resumption of physical attendance will increase such costs.

Human Resources

- 4.3 Remote/hybrid meetings are more resource-intensive than physical meetings, particularly where physical meetings are not webcast. The Committee Services team comprises four Committee Services Officers. Each hybrid meeting requires the support of three CSOs.

Legal

Room Temperature/Working Conditions

- 4.4 The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 lay down particular requirements for most aspects of the working environment and Regulation 7 deals specifically with the temperature in indoor workplaces, stating that “During working hours, the temperature in all workplaces inside buildings shall be reasonable.” Although the law does not state a minimum or maximum temperature for working environments, the temperature would normally be expected to be at least 16°C (or 13°C if much of the work involves rigorous physical effort).

- 4.5 However, COVID-19 brings exceptional circumstances and, as there is the possibility of more harm occurring from COVID-19 than cooler air, closing the windows during meetings in the Council Chambers to bring the room to what might be considered a more reasonable temperature, has not been permitted.
- 4.6 Recently updated guidance from the HSE indicates that air-conditioning systems may be suitable for use where other mitigating measures to ensure adequate fresh air are in place. Each location will require to be risk assessed and solutions will be specific to individual circumstances. Corporate Health and Safety and Property Management and Investment are currently reviewing what measures will be applicable and in what circumstances.
- 4.7 Once the Council Chambers risk assessment has been reviewed in light of the updated guidance, it may be possible to reinstate the air conditioning, subject to suitable mitigation.

Remote and Hybrid Meetings

- 4.6 The Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003 permits the holding of and participation in remote meetings. The Council's Standing Orders were varied using the Chief Executive's urgency powers to mirror the terms of the Act and facilitate the holding of remote and/or hybrid meetings. [The Standing Orders relating to the Integration Joint Board already include a general provision which encompasses remote or hybrid meetings]. In terms of Section 43(2) of the 2003 Act, the decision on whether a meeting is remote or hybrid is for the Provost or relevant committee Chair and the report, therefore, recommends that officers liaise with Chairs regarding the meetings to be included in the pilot.

Public Gallery Provision

- 4.7 Part 4 of schedule 6 of the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020 contains temporary modifications to Section 50A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 by adding an additional ground for the exclusion of the public from meetings of Local Authorities where there would be a "real or substantial risk" to public health due to infection or contamination with coronavirus. There is no distinction between virtual and physical Local Authority meetings within the temporary grounds (although it is difficult, of course, to make the case that there would be a 'real or substantial risk' associated with the public attending a remote meeting).
- 4.8 The temporary power to exclude the public from Local Authority meetings on coronavirus grounds was enforceable under Part 1 of the 2020 Act. Parts of the Act, including this power, expired on 30 September. It is understood that the Scottish Government is preparing further primary legislation although the terms of this are currently unknown. It is the view of the Council's Legal service that, by streaming its Teams meetings to the Council's website, the Council is effectively admitting the public to its remote meetings.
- 4.9 Whilst live streaming of remote meetings is likely to constitute public access to a meeting of the Council or its committees held on a wholly remote basis, it is logical to assume that the resumption of physical meetings or the introduction of hybrid meetings should include some public gallery provision even if live streaming continues.

Equality/Socio-economic

- 4.10 In the absence of a physical public gallery provision, some members of the public without IT equipment are disadvantaged by not being able to observe the proceedings, albeit that hard-copy Agendas and Minutes continue to be available on request. The reintroduction of a physical public gallery as part of the hybrid pilot addresses this.
- 4.11 At the same time, there may be some equalities advantages associated with live-streaming meetings of the Council and committees in terms of offering easier/more extensive access to meetings than would be afforded by a small public gallery.

Environmental and Sustainability

- 4.12 Reintroducing a physical attendance element to meetings of the Council and its committees would have a small negative impact associated with travel to and from meetings.
- 4.13 Similarly, there will be some negative impact in the event that additional heating is required within the Chambers while windows are open.

Key Priorities

- 4.14 None arising from the recommendations set out in this report.

Community Wealth Building

- 4.15 None arising from the recommendations set out in this report.

5 Consultation

- 5.1 In normal circumstances, a survey of hybrid meeting participants would have been carried out following the pilot. However, the timing of the meetings in close proximity to the Council has meant that there has been less of an opportunity to undertake formal consultation.
- 5.2 Informal feedback from the Licensing Committee meeting, however, suggests that the hybrid arrangements were generally positively received by both remote and physical attendees. Physical attendees welcomed the opportunity to attend the meeting in person and expressed a desire for meetings to return to the Chambers. In particular, the Chair valued the access to legal and IT advice which was afforded by physical attendance. (This support could potentially be offered outwith the hybrid format by arranging for the Chair and relevant officer(s) to join the remote meeting from Cunninghame House, per the arrangements for full Council).
- 5.3 A remote attendee acknowledged the success of the hybrid meeting in allowing some Members to attend in person, but personally expressed a wish to continue to participate remotely for the time being. There was also an observation about an instance of apparent discussion in the Chambers which was inaudible to remote attendees; however, this did not relate to any failure of the system and this matter can be resolved in future by prompting physical attendees to use their microphones when addressing the meeting.

- 5.4 Although the IJB meeting did not proceed using the hybrid platform, it was observed by a physical attendee that the low temperature in the room may be an issue.
- 5.5 Consultation has also taken place with colleagues within Legal Services and Corporate Health and Safety with regard to Section 4 of the report.

Aileen Craig
Head of Democratic Services

For further information please contact Melanie Anderson, Senior Manager (Committee and Member Services), on melanieanderson@north-ayrshire.gov.uk

Background Papers

Informal consultation responses from pilot meeting participants

Information from Property Management and Investment with regard to HSE guidance



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

Protocol for Hybrid Committee Meetings Pilot:
(Combined Physical &
Microsoft Teams Attendance)

Committee & Member Services
North Ayrshire Council, Cunninghame House, Irvine KA12 8EE

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In March 2020, in light of the COVID-19 and Government advice in relation to the pandemic, scheduled meetings of the Council and its committees were initially cancelled.
- 1.2 In June 2020, the Chief Executive, following consultation, under the Council's Emergency Governance arrangements agreed the resumption from September 2020 of committee meetings on a wholly remote basis via Microsoft Teams, with recordings of any meetings normally open to the public initially to be uploaded onto the Council's website following each meeting. Officers then introduced an IT solution to address the issue of live-streaming MS Teams meetings. From October 2020, all meetings which would ordinarily be open to the public have been live-streamed.
- 1.3 The introduction of remote MS Teams committee meetings was supported by the development of meeting protocols to assist Elected Members (and, specifically Chairs), Officers and members of the public attending remote hearings, etc.
- 1.4 Hybrid meeting equipment has now been installed in the Council Chambers. This works with the Council's existing webcasting equipment to combine physical attendees in the Chambers and remote attendees joining the meeting via a remote meeting platform (such as MS Teams) to create a blended/hybrid meeting.
- 1.5 This guidance has been prepared to support a pilot of hybrid meetings which will take place in September/October.

2. The Principles of Hybrid Meetings

- 2.1 There are three potential components to a hybrid meeting:

Physical Attendees participate in the usual way using their Council Chambers microphones. They are able to view/hear remote attendees via the television screens and audio system in the Chambers.

Remote Attendees join the meeting via an MS Teams link. They see a wide shot of the Council Chambers and can see/hear individual speakers when they operate their microphones.

Live Streaming the new hybrid equipment offers the option of live streaming a blended/hybrid meeting to the Council's webcasting microsite, where it can be viewed live or after the event. Depending on the legislative context, this can be in lieu of a public gallery or as an enhancement to it, to allow a wider audience to view the proceedings

3. Physical Attendees

- 3.1 During the hybrid meetings pilot, physical attendance will be restricted to 50% of the membership of the committee and those attending in person will be determined in advance of the meeting. Preference will be given to the Chair (in whose absence, the Vice-Chair).
- 3.2 Where requests to attend in person out-number the available places for physical attendees, Committee Services will liaise with the Chair to determine which Members, officers and others may join from the Council Chambers. **No meeting participant should present themselves at the Council Chambers except by prior arrangement.**
- 3.3 Physical attendees should use their microphone when addressing the meeting (at the invitation of the Chair). It is also important to switch the microphone off after speaking. Operation of the hybrid meeting equipment depends upon the system correctly identifying speakers in the Chambers using a pre-selected seating plan. **Therefore, it is important that physical attendees use the seats which have been assigned.** These will be indicated by nameplates. A minimum of **1m social distancing** will apply.
- 3.4 Physical attendees must follow any COVID-19 guidance in place at the time. This may include the wearing of **face coverings** unless addressing the meeting. Physical attendees should also be aware that **additional ventilation** may be required and dress appropriately, particularly in colder weather.
- 3.5 In the event of a hybrid equipment failure during the pilot phase, the Chair will reconvene the meeting as a remote meeting on Microsoft Teams. Physical attendees must ensure, therefore, that they bring their **laptop or other device** to allow them to access the meeting remotely if necessary. If requested to do so, physical attendees should follow the original MS Teams meeting link (unless a decision is taken to reconvene the meeting at a different time). Please note that it may be necessary for those in the Council Chambers to move elsewhere in the building prior to joining the MS Teams meeting in order to avoid sound feedback/interference caused by multiple devices on the system in close proximity.
- 3.6 During the pilot phase, some external parties (including applicants and licence-holders) may be advised by Committee Services not to attend in person but to join the meeting at the appropriate time as remote participants (via Microsoft Teams).

4. Remote Attendees

- 4.1 Remote attendees will join the meeting using the Microsoft Teams link contained in the meeting invitation. Arrangements for joining the meeting remotely will be as detailed in the Remote Committee Meetings Protocol: Microsoft Teams.

- 4.2** As with a wholly remote meeting, loss of broadband connection or a technical issue affecting an individual remote attendee will not prevent the hybrid meeting from proceeding providing it is otherwise quorate. (Further information is available later in this document to cover system failure affecting the hybrid equipment itself).
- 4.3** Remote attendees should avoid use of the **chat box** during the meeting as this will not be visible to physical attendees in the Council Chambers. (Subject to the availability of staff resources, a member of the Committee Services team will join the meeting remotely to monitor the **chat box** but this may not always be possible). Any remote attendee wishing to attract the Chair’s attention should do so using the **hand up** function.
- 4.4** Please refer to the Remote Committee Meetings Protocol: Microsoft Teams for other general information on participating in formal meetings via MS Teams.

5. Sederunt

- 5.1** At the start of the meeting, the Clerk will take the **sederunt** and, in confirming they are present, physical attendees should indicate whether they are attending in the Chambers or remotely. This will allow the Minute of the meeting to reflect accurately which Members and officers attended “in the Chambers” and which joined the meeting “remotely”.

6. Public Gallery

- 6.1** Where **public gallery** provision is legally required for a hybrid meeting during the pilot, the size of the public gallery will be limited to **two or three** places.
- 6.2** Face coverings must be worn and a minimum of **1m social distancing** will apply. Any other COVID-19 guidance in force at the time (including contact tracing arrangements) will apply.
- 6.3** Public gallery attendance will be by prior arrangement by contacting committeeservices@north-ayrshire.gov.uk. Demand may exceed available public gallery places; however, access to meetings which would otherwise be open to the public to attend will continue to be achieved via live-streaming of the proceedings.

7. Powerpoint Presentations

- 7.1** Please note that it is not possible for Powerpoint presentations to be made to hybrid meetings in the same way that they would to a traditional, purely physical meeting. This is because the screens in the Chambers will also be used to display remote attendees.

7.2 Presentations to hybrid meetings can only be made by a remote attendee sharing their screen. This means that, even if the officer/external party making a presentation is attending in person, they must make arrangements for another person to join the meeting remotely and share the presentation from their screen. The presenter within the Chambers will then need to indicate to the remote attendee when the presentation can be moved on to the next slide.

7.3 Because presentations will require additional set-up on the hybrid meeting system, it is important that officers/external parties provide Committee Services with **advance notice** of any presentations one week prior to the meeting. A copy of the presentation slides should also be provided to committeeservices@north-ayrshire.gov.uk in advance of the meeting.

8. Motions and Amendments

8.1 Please note that it is not possible for motions or amendments to be displayed on screen in the same way as they would for a traditional, purely physical meeting. This is because the screens in the Chambers will also be used to display remote attendees.

8.2 Any motion or amendment which requires to be displayed should be emailed to committeeservices@north-ayrshire.gov.uk in advance of the meeting, where possible, or otherwise as it arises during the meeting. A member of the Committee Services team attending on a remote basis will then share their screen at the appropriate time.

8.3 In necessary, the Chair may call for a short recess to allow the motion/amendment to be displayed to remote and physical attendees.

9. Hybrid System Failure

9.1 The Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003 permits the holding of and participation in remote meetings/meetings with a remote component and the Council's Standing Orders have already been amended to mirror the terms of the Act. Members who attend a remote meeting of Council/its committees are regarded as 'present'. The MS Teams Committee Meetings Protocol clarifies that any loss of connection during a meeting is not sufficient to prevent an otherwise quorate meeting from proceeding. So, if an individual Member drops out of a remote meeting due to a failure of their device or a broadband issue, this is treated in the same way as if they had left the room during a physical meeting.

- 9.2** Hybrid meetings are potentially more problematic. Here, the issue might be one of a complete hybrid system failure rather than a connection issue affecting an individual participant. In this scenario, there may be some Members within the Chambers ready to participate in the meeting and other Members who have successfully joined via MS Teams, but a technical issue with the hybrid system results in a failure to combine the two elements into a single meeting. Effectively there are now two meetings, each of which could be quorate. Although we do expect the hybrid equipment to operate reliably, provision needs to be made to dealing with such a situation, however unlikely.
- 9.3** In terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003, the Chair of a meeting can determine whether a meeting takes place on a remote (or hybrid basis). In addition, Standing Order 5.7 includes a provision for the Provost/Chair to “determine any questions of procedure for which no express provision has been made in these Standing Orders”. This means that, following consultation with the Chair, the Committee Services team can respond to any failure of the hybrid meeting equipment in the most appropriate manner.
- 9.4** For instance, the hybrid meeting may be rescheduled as a wholly remote meeting via MS Teams while most meeting participants (including the officers presenting reports) are still remote but, in future, the decision may be to proceed with a physical meeting if the vast majority of attendees are within the Chambers and only one or two attendees are remote. In order to ensure that attendees are aware of the position in advance, a hybrid meeting will be designated in advance as either:
- **a Remote Meeting (with physical participation) or**
 - **a Physical Meeting (with remote participation)**
- 9.5** During the pilot phase, all hybrid meetings will be designated as Remote Meetings (with physical participation). This means that, in the event of any failure of the hybrid meeting equipment, the remote format will take precedence. The Chair will adjourn the meeting and the meeting will then reconvene as a remote meeting, with all attendees (including those physical attendees in the Council Chambers) re-joining the meeting via the MS Teams Protocol.
- 9.6** **Please note that, because of the system changes which require to be made to convert from a hybrid meeting to remote, an adjournment of around 20 minutes is required if a hybrid meeting is to take place on a wholly remote basis instead.**
- 9.7** In the future, where most meeting participants are able to attend in person, a hybrid meeting may be designated as a Physical Meeting (with remote participation). In these circumstances, any failure of the hybrid equipment would see the meeting proceed on a wholly physical basis. Remote attendees would be aware of this position in advance when deciding on how to access the meeting.

| Document Control Summary:- | | |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| Location: | I:\CEPUBLIC\01 Committee Services\01 Committees&WorkingGroups\00 General\Covid-19 Contingency Planning\Remote Meetings\Protocols | |
| Last Revised: | Revised By | Nature of Revision |
| August 2021 | MJA | Document created |
| Sept 2021 | MJA | Revised re presentations, sederunt, motion/amendments and public gallery |
| Oct 2021 | MJA | Inclusion of information on adjournment period required to convert a hybrid meeting to wholly remote in the event of system failure |

