

**MINUTES of MEETING of COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE held in the COUNCIL
CHAMBERS, KILMORY, LOCHGILPHEAD
on THURSDAY, 11 DECEMBER 2014**

Present:

Councillor Rory Colville	Councillor John McAlpine
Councillor Robin Currie	Councillor James McQueen
Councillor Mary-Jean Devon	Councillor Aileen Morton
Councillor Anne Horn	Councillor Douglas Philand
Councillor Neil MacIntyre	William Marshall

Attending:

Cleland Sneddon, Executive Director – Community Services
Iain Jackson, Governance and Risk Manager
Anne Paterson, Education Manager – Learning and Achievement
Fiona Campbell, Education Officer – Secondary
Morag Brown, Business Improvement Manager
Helen Macleod, Development Officer
Donald MacVicar, Head of Community and Culture
Jim Robb, Head of Adult Care
Pamela Macleod, Development Worker
Louise Long, Head of Children and Families
Brian Reid, Locality Manager, MAKI

Councillor Aileen Morton, Policy Lead for Education, Lifelong Learning and Strategic IT Services, took the Chair at this point.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were intimated from Councillors George Freeman, Donald Kelly, Alistair MacDougall, Robert E Macintyre, Isobel Strong, William Crossan and Alison Palmer.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Community Services Committee of 11 September 2014 were approved as a correct record.

4. ACCOUNTS COMMISSION - SCOTTISH SCHOOL EDUCATION REPORT

Due to the inclement weather, Audit Scotland was unable to attend the meeting and submitted their apologies.

Decision

It was agreed that the report be brought back to the next meeting of the Committee.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Community Services dated 11 December

2014, submitted)

5. SQA SCHOOL EXAMINATION RESULTS 2014

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the outcome of the 2014 examination diet, outlined the results for pupils entered for formal examinations and shared the successes of Argyll and Bute pupils across wider achievement.

Decision

The Committee:-

1. noted the examination results for pupils in academic year 2013/14;
2. noted and accepted the strategic programme of performance review between schools and education development and improvement of staff as noted at section 7.1 of the report;
3. agreed to continue to support the work of the Education Service in supporting schools to secure continuous improvement in outcomes for Argyll and Bute Learners;
4. requested a further report at the June Community Services Committee considering the national position arising from information released by Insight;
5. noted that a discussion item would be included in the Committee business session arising from the Argyll and Bute information within the Accounts Commission report on Scottish Education; and
6. recognised the work being carried out by teaching staff and thanked them for their efforts in delivering new qualifications and courses, particularly over the past year.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Community Services dated 11 December 2014, submitted)

The Committee adjourned at this point to enable the video conference facility to be re-connected.

The Committee re-convened at 11.20 am.

6. SHARED HEADSHIP

Consideration was given to a report which updated the Committee on the progress of the Shared Headships that are in place in Argyll and Bute Schools as agreed by the Executive in 2011.

Decision

The Committee:-

1. noted the benefits of the joint headship initiative;
2. note the advantages of the existing Shared Headships arrangements; and

3. noted that the Executive Director of Community Services, on the professional advice from the Head of Education and after seeking the views of the respective parent councils, would decide if creating a Shared Headship was more beneficial than advertising for a stand-alone head teacher for any new vacancy that arose in our primary schools.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Community Services dated 11 December 2014, submitted)

7. CHANGES TO THE SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010

Consideration was given to a report which detailed the changes being made to the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 which takes into account the recommendations in the Rural Schools Commission and the subsequent Parliamentary Process.

Decision

The Committee:-

1. noted the changes to the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 which came into effect from 1 August 2014;
2. noted that a presumption against closure of rural schools and the introduction of a five year moratorium would impact on any future review of the school estate; and
3. agreed that a definitive list of rural schools in Argyll and Bute be issued to Members.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Community Services dated 22 October 2014, submitted)

8. LANGUAGE LEARNING IN SCOTLAND: A 1+2 APPROACH

Consideration was given to a report which informed the Committee of the decision by the Scottish Government to create a new model for language acquisition in Scotland based on the European Union 1+2 model. The model would be designed to ensure that conditions would be created to ensure every child will learn two languages in addition to their own mother tongue.

Decision

The Committee noted:-

1. the requirements for Languages in Scotland: A 1+2 Languages Approach to be delivered in Argyll and Bute Schools by 2020; and
2. the planned approach in taking forward the Argyll and Bute Languages 1+2 Strategy, to be implemented over a 3 year timeline from 2014 to 2017.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Customer Services dated 11 December 2014, submitted)

William Marshall left the meeting at this point.

Councillor Robin Currie, Policy Lead for Community & Culture, and Strategic Housing took the Chair at this point.

9. IONA AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

On 8 May 2014, Members agreed a Rural Housing Development Fund grant of £450k to Iona Housing Partnership (IHP) for the development of five affordable houses on the island of Iona. Despite the award from the Council, IHP were faced with a significant funding shortfall and the development had not been able to proceed. In order to assist and to explore all possible options, which might successfully deliver the affordable housing for the island, West Highland Housing Association were invited to review the scheme. The Committee considered a report which detailed the findings of this review.

Decision

The Committee agreed to approve a reduced grant from the Strategic Housing Fund of £361k towards the development of five affordable houses on Iona by West Highland Housing Association in partnership with Iona Housing Partnership on the basis that:-

- the grant offered by the Scottish Government was confirmed
- West Highland Housing Association Approval was confirmed
- the Council has full sight of Legal agreements between West Highland Housing Association and Iona Housing Partnership which were to be concluded prior to tender acceptance.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director- Community Services dated 17 November 2014, submitted)

Councillor Dougie Philand, Policy Lead for Adult Care, took the Chair at this point.

10. INTEGRATION HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

An initial report relating to Integration was presented to full Council on 20 March 2014 and to NHS Highland Board on 1 April 2014. A report providing an update on progress with the Integration of Health and Social Care was considered.

Decision

The Committee noted that:-

1. the first meeting of the Shadow Integration Board took place on 10 September 2014 and that Councillor Douglas Philand was appointed Chair and Robin Creelman was appointed Vice-Chair for an initial period of 2 years;
2. the partnership completed the recruitment and selection of a Chief Officer and that Christina West, Acting Operations Manager for Argyll and Bute

CHP, would take up post in due course;

3. the Integration Scheme had to be signed off by the Scottish Government before 1 April 2015 and that the partnership planned to submit the Integration Scheme to Scottish Government by 5 January 2015 with the draft Integration Scheme being presented to a special Council meeting on 18 December 2014 and NHS Highland Board prior to submission;
4. initial staff information sessions had been completed across Argyll and Bute attended by 470 staff; and
5. sessions were currently being finalised to hold community events during December 2014.

(Report by Executive Director – Community Services dated 11 December 2014, submitted)

11. RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF CARE AT HOME STAFF AND LOCALITY UPDATE

The recruitment and retention of care staff is a nationally recognised problem. Although this is affecting care provision in a number of our urban localities, it is a particularly acute issue for rural and remote locations. Future demographics are suggesting that this issue will become increasingly critical in the years to come. The Committee considered a report that highlighted the work Adult Care had undertaken to date to address the current issues and its plan for future provision.

Decision

The Committee;

1. agreed that urgent action was required to address the issues regarding the recruitment and retention of Care at Home staff; and
2. endorsed the innovative solutions being explored by Adult Care, as detailed in the report.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Community Services dated 4 November 2014, submitted)

12. LEARNING DISABILITY DAY SERVICES

Consideration was given to a report which provided a summary and update on the improvement and development of the Learning Disability Day Services

Decision

The Committee:-

1. noted that it was the intention of the Adult Care service to provide or commission a modern and person centred Day Services based on a framework of providing or developing services that were socially inclusive and provide positive personal outcomes and meaningful activities over the week inclusive of evenings and

weekends;

2. agreed that a report on the nature of Day Care Services would be brought to a future meeting; and
3. noted the progress in relation to Learning Disability Day Service Inspection gradings.

(Report by Executive Director – Community Services dated 24 November 2014, submitted)

Councillor Aileen Morton left the meeting at this point.

The Committee adjourned the meeting at this point and re-convened at 1.20pm.

13. UPDATE REPORT INDEPENDENT LIVING FUND (ILF)

Consideration was given to a report which provided the Committee with an update on the forthcoming proposed transfer in respect of the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) Independent Living Fund (ILF) to the Scottish Independent Living Fund (SILF).

Decision

The Committee noted the content of the report.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Community Services dated 3 November 2014, submitted)

14. COMMISSIONING SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH A DISABILITY AND SELF DIRECTED SUPPORT

A report outlining changes to funding arrangements for block contract and grant funding for services to children with a disability to support improved choice for parents and carers and in response to the implications of The Social Care (Self Directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013 was considered.

Decision

The Committee:-

1. agreed that the children and families block/grant funding continue to existing providers until April 2015;
2. agreed that all children and families block funded contracts or grants be replaced by assessment led commissioning from April 2015; and
3. noted the changes to the way social work services would be provided to children with a disability as a result of The Social Care (Self Directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Community Services dated 4 October 2014, submitted)

15. COMMUNITY SERVICES PERFORMANCE REPORT FQ2 2014-2015

Consideration was given to the Community Services financial quarter two performance scorecard.

Members commented that the informal pre-meeting held to discuss the performance scorecard prior to the meeting had proved beneficial.

Decision

The Committee noted and reviewed performance for the quarter.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Community Services dated 2 December 2014, submitted)

16. COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE WORK PLAN

Consideration was given to a report updating the Committee on key considerations arising from the Community Services Development Day in August. Committee Work Plan and forward agenda was also presented for review.

Members were informed that Area Managers would be able to provide an update on the progress of any of the recommendations outlined in Committee reports if this was required before the next scheduled meeting of the Committee.

Decision

The Committee:-

1. noted the feedback from the Committee Development Day;
2. reviewed the Forward Plan and agreed that this would be a future standing item on the agenda; and
3. agreed that Members submit topics they wished to see presented at future meetings to Committee Services for inclusion on the Community Services Workplan 2014 - 15, and this would be reported at future meetings.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Community Services dated 1 December 2014, submitted)