

**MINUTES of MEETING of ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL held BY SKYPE
on THURSDAY, 24 JUNE 2021**

Present:

Councillor David Kinniburgh (Chair)

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Councillor Liz McCabe | Councillor Julie McKenzie |
| Councillor Gemma Penfold | Councillor Roderick McCuish |
| Councillor Jim Anderson | Councillor Yvonne McNeilly |
| Councillor John Armour | Councillor Barbara Morgan |
| Councillor Gordon Blair | Councillor Aileen Morton |
| Councillor Rory Colville | Councillor Gary Mulvaney |
| Councillor Robin Currie | Councillor Iain Paterson |
| Councillor Mary-Jean Devon | Councillor Alastair Redman |
| Councillor Lorna Douglas | Councillor Alan Reid |
| Councillor Jim Findlay | Councillor Elaine Robertson |
| Councillor George Freeman | Councillor Richard Trail |
| Councillor Audrey Forrest | Councillor Sandy Taylor |
| Councillor Bobby Good | Councillor Douglas Philand |
| Councillor Kieron Green | Councillor Andrew Vennard |
| Councillor Anne Horn | Councillor Jean Moffat |
| Councillor Donald Kelly | Councillor Jim Lynch |
| Councillor Donald MacMillan BEM | Councillor Graham Hardie |
| Councillor Sir Jamie McGrigor | |

Attending:

Pippa Milne, Chief Executive
Douglas Hendry, Executive Director
Kirsty Flanagan, Executive Director
David Logan, Head of Legal and Regulatory Support
Laurence Slavin, Interim Head of Financial Services
Ross McLaughlin, Head of Community Services
Fergus Murray, Head of Development and Economic Growth
Patricia O'Neill, Governance Manager
Fergus Walker, Revenues and Benefits Manager
Rona Gold, Community Planning Manager

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence intimated.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Jean Moffat declared a non-financial interest in Item 9 of the Agenda (Flexible Funds Projects) due to her being a trustee of Women's Aid. She advised that she would leave the meeting and take no part in the consideration of this item.

Councillor Jim Findlay declared a non-financial interest in Item 10 of the Agenda (Isle of Bute Business Improvement District) due to his position on the Steering Group. He advised that he would leave the meeting and take no part in the consideration of this item.

Councillors Douglas and Morgan each declared a non-financial interest in Item 12 of the Agenda (Supporting Communities Fund) due to their positions on local groups receiving

funding. They both advised that they would leave the meeting and take no part in the discussion of this item.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of Argyll and Bute Council held on 15 April 2021 were approved as a correct record.

4. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

(a) Policy and Resources Committee held on 13 May 2021

The Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 13 May 2021 were noted.

Arising under Item 8 (Supporting Attendance at Work Policy), the Council approved the new Supporting Attendance at Work Policy.

Arising under Item 10 (Strategic Events and Festivals Fund – Round 3 Grant Awards), the Council agreed that any underspend from SEF Round 3 (2021-22) is earmarked and used to augment future SEF round for 2023-24).

(b) Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee held on 3 June 2021

The Minute of the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee held on 3 June 2021 were noted.

(c) Community Services Committee held on 10 June 2021

The Minutes of the Community Services Committee held on 10 June 2021 were noted.

(d) Audit and Scrutiny Committee held on 15 June 2021

The Minutes of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee held on 15 June 2021 were noted.

5. LEADER'S REPORT

The Council gave consideration to a report outlining the Council Leader's activity during the period from 15 April to 11 June 2021. The report also included updated in relation to his Policy Lead portfolio.

Decision

The Council noted –

1. The content of the report.
2. That any reports, briefings or copy correspondence referred to in the report could be requested as appropriate through Leadership Support staff, noting that some confidential reports provided by external organisations, such as COSLA, may be restricted.

(Ref: Report by Leader of the Council dated 11 June 2021, submitted)

6. POLICY LEADS REPORT

The Council gave consideration to a report providing an update on the key areas of activity for each Policy Lead Councillor since the last update provided to the Council at the meeting held on 15 April 2021.

Decision

The Council noted the content of the report.

(Ref: Report by Policy Lead Councillors dated 14 June 2021, submitted)

7. YEAR END REPORTS PACK 2020-21

(a) COVERING REPORT AND UNAUDITED ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

The Council considered a report which gave an overview of the Unaudited Annual Accounts for 2020-21 and a summary of the significant movements from 2019-20 and sought approval for the unaudited annual accounts for 2020-21 for issue.

Decision

The Council –

1. Approved the unaudited annual accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 for issue.
2. Approved write-off of the outstanding rent deposit debt totalling £122,844 and note that this will have no impact on the Council's General Fund as there is a full bad debt provision that matches the outstanding debt.

(Ref: Report by Section 95 Officer dated 16 June 2021, submitted)

(b) REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING

The Council considered a report which summarised the revenue budget position of the Council at the end of the financial year for 2020-21 which also summarised the movement in the General Reserve balance.

Decision

The Council –

1. Noted the revenue budget monitoring position as at the end of financial year 2020-21.
2. Noted that the unallocated balance within the General Fund as at 31 March 2021, after taking into account the contingency, amounts to £1.325m.
3. Approved the revenue virements over £0.200m between January and March 2021.

(Ref: Report by Section 95 Officer dated 11 June 2021, submitted)

(c) EARMARKED RESERVES - 2020-21 YEAR-END

The Council considered a report which provided information on the progress with balances already earmarked within the General Fund, new balances earmarked at the end of 2020-21 that qualify for automatic carry forward. The report also presented proposals to earmark 11 new areas of unspent budget which required approval.

Decision

The Council –

1. Approved the revised Policy on Year End Flexibility including approval of two new categories - for automatic carry forward of unspent income from One Council Property Team to invest in the Council's property portfolio to ensure it remains fit for purpose and for Fleet orders committed from revenue budget but not delivered within the financial year due to supplier issues.
2. Approved the 11 new unspent budget earmarked reserve proposals totalling £4.472m as supported by submitted business cases and note that there are a further five unspent budget earmarkings amounting to £1.300m that have been previously approved, as outlined in Appendices 2.1 and 2.2.
3. Noted the new balances of £25.153m at the end of 2020-21 that qualify for automatic carry-forward as outlined in Appendix 3.1. This includes unallocated COVID funding of £1.230m.
4. Noted the new balances of £2.389m at the end of 2020-21 from Social Work that qualify for automatic carry-forward as outlined in Appendix 3.2.
5. Noted the previously approved unspent budget earmarked reserves of £6.290m and the justification for continuing to earmark these as outlined in Appendix 4.
6. Noted a total of £34.673m of automatically carried forward balances which are previously earmarked balances in addition to the new amounts earmarked as a result of budget decisions in February 2020 and February 2021 as outlined in Appendix 5.
7. Noted that £0.537m of no longer required earmarked balances will be released back into the General Fund.

(Ref: Report by Section 95 Officer dated 10 June 2021, submitted)

(d) **CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - 31 MARCH 2021**

The Council considered a report which highlighted the contents of the financial summary in relation to the Capital Budget as at 31 March 2021. The report provided information on the financial position in respect of the Capital Plan and also the performance in terms of delivery of capital plan projects.

Decision

The Council noted the contents of the report, the financial summaries as detailed in Appendix 7, approved the roll forward of any over or underspends in relation to expenditure and income as part of the year and process and approved the proposed virement requests in Appendix 3.

(Ref: Report by Section 95 Officer dated 1 June 2021, submitted)

(e) **ANNUAL TREASURY REPORT 2020-21**

The Council considered the Annual Treasury Management report for 2020-21.

Decision

The Council noted and approved the Annual Treasury Management Report for 2020-21.

(Ref: Report by Section 95 Officer dated 1 June 2021, submitted)

(f) **STRATEGIC HOUSING FUND ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21**

The Council considered a report which provided an annual update on the Strategic Housing Fund (SHF) income and expenditure position for 2020-21.

Decision

The Council –

Noted the report on income and expenditure for 2020-21 and the balance on the SHF as at 31 March 2021 and noted the estimate future income for SHF for 2021-22.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director dated 25 May 2021, submitted)

8. 2022/23 BUDGET APPROACH

The Council considered a report which provided information on the proposed 2022-23 revenue budget approach including the identification of savings to balance the 2022-23 budget.

Decision

The Council –

1. Agreed to the overall 2022-23 budget approach including the continuation of themed reviews and establishing a new theme in relation to a shared service approach to catering and cleaning.
2. Agreed to the establishment of a cross party budget working group with a composition of six administration Members, three opposition Members comprising Councillors Mulvaney (Chair), Currie (Vice Chair), Colville, Good, Green and McNeilly and Councillors Findlay, Forrest and Lynch, and two Trade Union representatives.
3. Approved the draft budget timetable as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director / Section 95 Officer dated 24 June 2021, submitted)

9. FLEXIBLE FUND PROJECTS

The Council considered a report which provided an update on the proposals for the use of the £537,000 the Council had received from the Scottish Government (SG) under the Flexible Fund banner.

Decision

The Council –

1. Approved the plans to progress matters and the list of projects as set out in Appendices 1-3.
2. Agreed that future amendments to the project programme and spend is delegated to the Executive Directors in consultation with the Leader, Depute Leader and the Leader of the largest opposition group.

(Ref: Report by Interim Head of Financial Services dated 24 June 2021, submitted)

10. ISLE OF BUTE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT - APPROVAL OF BALLOT SUBMISSION AND BUSINESS PLAN

The Council considered a report which asked Members to endorse the Isle of Bute BID (Business Improvement District) Steering Group Ballot submission and to approve the Business Plan in support of the Ballot.

Decision

The Council –

1. Approved the ballot request, approved the Isle of Bute BID Business Plan and agree to instruct the Returning Officer to conduct a ballot over 42 days in 2021 from Thursday 29th July to Thursday 9th September ('the ballot day').
2. Authorised the Executive Director with the responsibility for Development & Economic Growth to cast the votes on behalf of the council in favour of the BID.
3. Agreed that the Council will charge £6,500 (excluding VAT) per annum, to the BID company for administering the levy charge to businesses in Bute, with charges thereafter

increased annually. The first increase will apply on 01 March 2022, and annually thereafter for the subsequent term of the BID.

4. Agreed that, if the BID group are successful in the ballot, the Council will pay an estimated £9850 per annum in levy contributions for Council properties on the Isle of Bute.

5. Noted that if the BID group are successful in the ballot 2 representatives from the Council would be requested to sit on the Isle of Bute BID Board; one Elected Member and one Officer.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth dated 12 May 2021, submitted)

Councillors Taylor and Moffat left the meeting at this point.

11. MICROSOFT TEAMS/HYBRID MEETINGS/LIVE STREAMING UPDATE

The Council considered a report which provided an update on the progress of the project which will see Microsoft Teams becoming the preferred platforms for meetings and gives detail on the work which is ongoing to facilitate hybrid meetings and live streaming.

Decision

The Council –

1. Noted the progress made to date in relation to the rollout of Microsoft Teams as the preferred meeting platform, including the options relating to hybrid meetings and live streaming.
2. Agreed that all Council meetings will now move over to Teams which will become the default platform from August 2021; and
3. Agreed that a further update report will be submitted to the September 2021 meeting of the Council.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Legal and Regulatory Support dated 17 May 2021, submitted)

12. SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES FUND - EXTENSION OF TIME TO SPEND FUNDS

The Council considered a report which asked Members for a further extension for groups awarded funds from the Supporting Communities Fund 2020/21 due to the impacts of Covid guidance and uncertainty.

Decision

The Council –

1. Agreed to an extension until 31 December 2022 for groups to complete their projects and spend their allocated funds originally awarded in 2020.

2. Agreed that any Community Group awarded the funding in 2020 and who is unable to spend the funds by December 2022 returns the funds to the Council for redistribution in the Supporting Communities Fund decisions in Spring 2023.

(Ref: Report by Chief Executive dated 24 May 2021, submitted)

13. PROPOSED ARGYLL AND BUTE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2: NEXT STEPS

The Council considered a report which outlined the representations made to the Proposed Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 2 (LDP) and outlined the next stages of the process, including the examination stage, in accordance with the Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006.

Decision

The Council –

1. Noted the process and next stages in progressing the PLDP2 to the Examination Stage.
2. Noted the issues raised in Appendix 1 to the report.
3. Approved the detailed responses in the Schedule 4 forms in Appendix 2 with the exception of Schedule 4 No 139 dealing with Ganavan and that this be approved subject to amendment recommending to the reporter that Housing be removed from the proposed list of uses for Potential Development Area P4023 in reflection of the validly made public representations under consideration by the reporter.
4. Authorised Officers to establish the Examination process and the submit all required documentation including the Schedule 4 forms to include No 139 dealing with Ganavan and amended as set out above and to report back on the outcome of the Examination prior to the adoption of the Plan.
5. Delegated authority to the Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth to make final checks and edits of the Schedule 4 forms and respond to any information requests received from the DPEA, and
6. Approved the Statement of Conformity at Appendix 3 for submission to Scottish Ministers prior to the Examination of the Plan.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth dated 12 May 2021, submitted)

14. SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT PLACE BASED INVESTMENT PROGRAMME FUNDING 2021/22

The Council considered a report which advised that the Council had been allocated £821,000 of funding from Scottish Government for the financial year 2021-22 in connection with the Placed Based Investment Programme. The reports asked Members for the initial approval to allocate funding to three projects and to delegate authority on the allocation of the remaining funding to the Policy and Resources Committee in August.

Decision

The Council –

1. Noted the allocation of £821,000 of Place Based Investment Programme funding from the Scottish Government for the financial year 2021-22.
2. Noted the main objectives of the Place Based Investment Programme funding and associated criteria and conditions of the grant including the tight timeline for delivery.
3. Agreed to the allocation of the Place Based Investment Programme funding to the three projects as detailed in paragraph 4.9 of the report.
4. Agreed to delegate authority on the allocation of the remaining unallocated Place Based Investment Programme funding for 2021-22 to the Policy and Resources Committee with a report going to the August meeting recommending subsequent individual projects and associated funding allocations for 2021-22.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth dated 24 May 2021, submitted)

15. REVIEW OF THE CHARGE FOR MILK IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

The Council considered a report which asked Members to remove the current 10p fee per 189ml portion of milk to be removed from August 2021 due to the change in service delivery model being adopted.

Decision

The Council –

1. Agreed that the current 10p fee per 189ml portion of milk be removed from August 2021.
2. Noted that this will incur a cost pressure in the region of £21,700 per annum.
3. Noted the wider benefits to children and young people of consuming milk.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Commercial Services, dated 5 May 2021)

16. BOUNDARIES SCOTLAND REVIEW OF ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

A report providing an update on the Boundaries Scotland, Review of Electoral Arrangements was before the Council for noting.

Decision

1. Noted the final proposals from Boundaries Scotland in regard to the 2019 Review of Electoral Arrangements for Argyll and Bute Council area at Appendix 1 to the report.
2. Noted that if Scottish Ministers are content with the report, any proposals approved by them will be in force prior to the Local Government Elections in May 2022.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Legal and Regulatory Support dated 11 June 2021, submitted)

17. REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE

A report providing an update on the refugee resettlement programme was before the Council for noting.

Decision

The Council –

1. Noted the Council's continued involvement in the resettlement of refugees on the Island of Bute through the Home Office UK Resettlement Scheme; and
2. Noted the continued good work of the Refugee Resettlement Group and the local community in resettling refugees on the Island of Bute.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director for Refugee Resettlement dated 1 June 2021, submitted)