

**MINUTES of MEETING of MID ARGYLL, KINTYRE & THE ISLANDS AREA COMMITTEE held  
ON A HYBRID BASIS BY MICROSOFT TEAMS AND IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS,  
KILMORY  
on WEDNESDAY, 6 SEPTEMBER 2023**

**Present:** Councillor Robin Currie (Chair)

Councillor John Armour  
Councillor Jan Brown  
Councillor Tommy MacPherson  
Councillor Dougie McFadzean  
Councillor Alastair Redman

**Attending:** Jim Smith, Head of Roads and Infrastructure Services  
Shona Barton, Governance Manager  
Hugh O'Neill, Networks and Standards Manager  
Alan Morrison, Regulatory Services and Building Standards Manager  
Tony Casci, Principal Team Lead – Building Standards  
Antonia Baird, Community Development Officer  
James Lafferty, Lochgilphead CARS Project Officer  
Sonya Thomas, OD Project Officer  
Lorna Gillies, OD Project Assistant  
Susan Macrae, Area Manager, Skills Development Scotland  
David Moncrieff, Member of the Public

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The Vice Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillors Garret Corner and Dougie Philand.

Councillor Currie spoke of the vacancy in the Ward 1 area since the resignation of Councillor Donald Kelly. He took the opportunity to recognise the hard work and commitment of former Councillor Kelly who had been an integral part of the Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Committee as well as the Council for over 20 years and wished him well for the future.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

**3. MINUTE OF THE MID ARGYLL, KINTYRE AND THE ISLANDS AREA COMMITTEE HELD ON 7 JUNE 2023**

The Minute of the meeting of the Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Committee, held on 7 June 2023 was approved as a correct record.

**4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

The Governance Manager advised that the following public questions had been submitted in advance of the meeting:-

Valerie Nimmo

When, and how will the consultations regarding the satisfactory completion of Burnside Square be carried out, as so far, the levels of satisfaction within the town are approaching rock bottom?

The Governance Manager undertook to feed this question back to the Head of Roads and Infrastructure Services and provide the response to Ms Nimmo and the Members by email.

Fiona Macpherson

What lessons will the council be taking on board over Donald Kelly's resignation as these reflect the feelings of much the local community about how A&B Council fulfil their duties of care, including - but by no means limited to -

- (1) meaningful consultations over decisions being made,
- (2) a loss of focus on the responsibility of Council leadership as Public Servants and
- (3) what criteria does the Council use in assessing its performance in these areas.

The Governance Manager undertook to feed this question back to relevant officers and provide the response to Ms MacPherson and Members by email.

Ian Mitchell

What arrangements are in place within Argyll & Bute for members of the public to review consultation responses? I am thinking of the Burnside Square consultation which Jim Smith, Head of Roads, told me yesterday would not be made public as the responses were sent by email, not ordinary mail, and that raised data protection issues.

I would not accept that without further information on the precise legal situation. From whom in the Council can I obtain a definitive statement of the legal position in this regard?

In the past, in the course of my research on other matters, I have used the Scottish Executive library at Broomhouse Drive in Saughton, Edinburgh, where responses to consultations are kept and made available to the public on request. I cannot believe that Argyll & Bute Council does not strive to match the standards of openness and transparency practiced by the Scottish government. Therefore I also ask: with whom in the Argyll & Bute Council structure should I make arrangements to research the responses received by the Council to its consultation on the Burnside Square development?

The Governance Manager agreed to feed these questions back to the appropriate officers and provide the responses received to Mr Mitchell and Members by email.

David Moncrieff (Present)

Why has Argyll and Bute Council Executives lied, thwarted an investigation of a whistle blower of failings of health and safety regulations upheld by the HSE by retaliation and victimisation of the whistle blower and dismissing me to stop the Council's own complaints procedure against Executive Director Douglas Hendry and the Head of Legal and Regulatory Support, David Logan. The advice that they asked for and received from Brodies LLP Solicitors was to sack the whistle blower

and the complaint falls as the complainant is no longer an employee. I have the very documents and emails that show Douglas Hendry advising to dismiss me to save his own skin. Why is that acceptable?

The Governance Manager undertook to feed back the question to the relevant officers.

Mr Moncrieff indicated that he had a second question in relation to Councillor expenses, however having established that the answer to this question had already been provided, the Chair declined to accept this question.

## **5. SKILLS DEVELOPMENT SCOTLAND**

The Committee gave consideration to a report which provided an update on the ongoing works of the Skills Development Scotland (SDS) team. The report included information on the provision of career guidance to young people from S1-S6 at Campbeltown Grammar, Islay High School, Lochgilphead Joint Campus and Tarbert Academy; the school leaver destination follow up; the post school service offer; Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE); the Annual Participation Measure (APM) which reports on the education and employment activity of 16 to 19 year olds in Scotland and local partnership support provided by the SDS teams.

### **Decision**

The Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Committee thanked Ms Macrae for the informative presentation and noted the contents of the report and information provided.

(Reference: Report by Skills Development Scotland, submitted)

## **6. AREA PERFORMANCE REPORT - FQ1 2023/24**

Consideration was given to the Area Performance Report for financial quarter 1 of 2023/24 (April to June 2023) which illustrated the agreed performance measures for the period.

### **Decision**

The Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Committee:-

1. noted and considered the performance and supporting commentary as presented;
2. agreed that upon receipt of the Quarterly Performance Report, the Area Committee contact either the Responsible Named Officer or Sonya Thomas with any queries; and
3. noted that work was ongoing and to respond to Sonya Thomas with requests or comments regarding the layout and format of the Performance Report.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Customer Support Services, dated 6 September 2023, submitted)

## **7. RECYCLING AND RECOVERY PERFORMANCE**

The Committee gave consideration to a report which provided details on the Council's recycling and landfill diversion performance along with national policy, targets and regulations which are likely to impact on future performance.

### **Decision**

The Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Committee noted and considered the details outlined within the report and the national policy drivers that are likely to impact over the coming years.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Roads and Infrastructure Services, dated 6 September 2023, submitted)

## **8. ROADS AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES UPDATE**

The Committee gave consideration to a report which provided links to the recent activities of Roads and Infrastructure Services.

### **Decision**

The Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Committee considered and noted the contents of the report.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Roads and Infrastructure Services, dated 6 September 2023, submitted)

## **9. PLAY PARK ENGAGEMENT - UPDATE REPORT**

Consideration was given to a report which provided an update on the Play Park engagement responses following the conclusion of the full engagement process in light of the Scottish Government Play Park funding allocation.

### **Decision**

The Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Committee:-

1. noted the breakdown of engagement and consultation responses in each area with the majority of responses focussing on new/replacement equipment;
2. agreed that officers make arrangements for a Business Day to discuss how the funding will be spent in Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands; and
3. agreed to progress Tarbert Play Park and supplement the current funding available with £20k from the Scottish Government Play Park Funding allocation.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Road and Infrastructure Services, submitted)

## **10. SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES FUND - MONITORING OF PROJECTS FUNDED**

The Committee noted that due to the disruption of Covid 19 on the planned funded projects of community groups, the Council had agreed to lengthen the time projects had to be delivered. They gave consideration to a report which provided monitoring information on the funding given to community projects from the Council's Supporting Communities Fund and summarised projects completed within 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22.

### **Decision**

The Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Committee:-

1. noted and considered the positive contribution of the Supporting Communities Fund detailed in section 4 and the attached table contained within the report; and
2. noted that a total of £3,425 had been returned, and that £3,425 had been included in the distribution of the Supporting Communities Fund for 2023/24.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Community Development, dated 6 September 2023, submitted)

## **11. WHITE HART HOTEL: DANGEROUS BUILDING**

Consideration was given to both the report previously presented to the Committee at their meeting on 7 June 2023 and a progress report on the condition of the property, which provided an update on the works being carried out at the former White Hart Hotel in Campbeltown in response to the Dangerous Buildings Notice served by the Council's Building Standards on the property owner on 9 May 2023.

### **Decision**

The Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Committee noted and considered the progress being made to improve the condition of the White Hart Hotel.

(Reference: Reports by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth, dated 7 June 2023 and 6 September 2023 respectively, submitted)

## **12. LOCHGILPHEAD CARS - RECOMMENDATION OF GRANT AWARD**

The Committee gave consideration to a report which sought agreement on a grant award to the owner of 10 Poltalloch Street, Lochgilphead using Lochgilphead Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) funding. The report also included an update on the progress of Lochgilphead CARS.

### **Decision**

The Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Committee approved the grant offer up to £49,949.00 to the owner of 10 Poltalloch Street, Lochgilphead.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director of Development and Economic Growth, dated 6 September 2023, submitted)

### **13. MID ARGYLL, KINTYRE AND THE ISLANDS AREA COMMITTEE WORKPLAN**

The Committee gave consideration to the Area Committee workplan for future meetings.

#### **Decision**

The Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Committee considered and noted the contents of the workplan.

(Reference: Area Committee Workplan, dated 6 September 2023, submitted)