

**MINUTES of MEETING of ENVIRONMENT, DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE
COMMITTEE held ON A HYBRID BASIS IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, KILMORY,
LOCHGILPHEAD AND BY MICROSOFT TEAMS
on THURSDAY, 21 MARCH 2024**

Present: Councillor Robin Currie (Chair)

Councillor John Armour	Councillor Tommy MacPherson
Councillor Jan Brown	Councillor Ian MacQuire
Councillor Garret Corner	Councillor Ross Moreland
Councillor Graham Hardie	Councillor William Sinclair
Councillor Andrew Kain	Councillor Andrew Vennard
Councillor Jim Lynch	Councillor Peter Wallace

Also Present: Councillor Yvonne McNeilly

Attending: Kirsty Flanagan, Executive Director
Jim Smith, Head of Roads and Infrastructure Services
Fergus Murray, Head of Development and Economic Growth
Stuart McLean, Committee Manager

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mark Irvine and Gary Mulvaney.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee held on 30 November 2023 were approved as a correct record.

4. CEMETERY ASSET - UPDATE REPORT OUTLINING PROCEDURES IN PLACE TO PROTECT REMAINING LAIR SPACE IN CEMETERIES

The Committee gave consideration to a report outlining the approach to protect the sale of lairs on some islands, in more rural areas and locations where officers were finding it difficult to extend the cemetery site or purchase new land.

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee agreed that the measures listed in Appendix 1 to the submitted report be endorsed to further protect the sale of lairs in cemeteries which have a rural/island location, as well as having limited scope for extension and/or a new site locally to build on.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Roads and Infrastructure Services dated March 2024, submitted)

5. WASTE UPDATE

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing an update on the Council's request to the Scottish Government for a derogation for the Council's PPP contract and that the existing third party off taker for the Helensburgh and Lomond area would cease to trade from 31 March 2024, meaning that new arrangements would have to be put in place.

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee –

1. noted the update regarding meetings held with Scottish Government on the Waste PPP contract; and further noted the update relating to the derogation and the drop date set with Scottish Government of 5 April 2024;
2. noted that the third party off taker for Helensburgh and Lomond had given notice that they would cease trading on 31 March 2024; and
3. noted that a further update report would be made available to the Committee in June.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Roads and Infrastructure Services dated February 2024, submitted)

6. ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STRATEGY UPDATE

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing an update on the increased Electric Vehicle Charger (EVC) network in the area and plans for future expansion.

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee –

1. noted the ongoing work to develop and manage the EVC network;
2. agreed that officers should continue to engage with Transport Scotland on future funding options through the new Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund and that a specific Member Seminar would be arranged on EVC when there was clarity on how that fund would operate and be allocated; and
3. agreed that a report be brought to a future meeting of the Committee regarding Argyll and Bute EVC tariffs.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Roads and Infrastructure Services dated February 2024, submitted)

7. ANNUAL STATUS AND OPTIONS REPORT 2024

The Committee gave consideration to a report introducing the Annual Status and Options Report which made an analytical assessment of the condition of the Council's road network and associated infrastructure as well as setting out projected conditions based on varying levels of investment.

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee -

1. endorsed the Annual Status and Options Report and the positive analytical feedback it provided; and
2. agreed to use the information for future budget setting.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Roads and Infrastructure Services dated February 2024, submitted)

8. TRANSPORT (SCOTLAND) ACT 2019 - PAVEMENT, DOUBLE & DROPPED KERB PARKING STANDARDS

The Committee gave consideration to a report highlighting changes in legislation in relation to inconsiderate and obstructive parking and detailing additional parking enforcement which the Council would be able to carry out as part of its Decriminalised Parking Enforcement activity.

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee –

1. noted the changes in legislation; and
2. noted that the implementation date for Argyll and Bute was yet to be finalised; and
3. noted that a report would be provided to a future Committee once more information became available, including details of the legislative framework, enforcement options and any additional resource which may be required to discharge these additional powers.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Roads and Infrastructure Services dated February 2024, submitted)

9. SECOND DOMESTIC BIN REVIEW 2024

The Committee gave consideration to a report proposing that a review of the existing policy for second domestic bins (green bins which take general waste) be undertaken.

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee agreed to a review being progressed; with further information regarding publicity and a timeframe being reported back to the June Committee.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Roads and Infrastructure Services dated 5 February 2024, submitted)

The Chair ruled and the Committee agreed to adjourn the meeting for a 10 minute comfort break for at this point.

The Committee reconvened at 12.55pm.

10. LOCAL BRIDGE MAINTENANCE FUND

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing an update on the £5.450M of funding secured through a highly competitive bid process from the Scottish Government's £32M Local Bridge Maintenance Fund.

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee –

1. noted the content of the submitted report;
2. noted that officers would be engaging with Scottish Government regarding the increased costs; and
3. agreed to a Members Seminar being arranged for all Members outline the bridge inspection process.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Roads and Infrastructure Services dated February 2024, submitted)

11. ROUTE OPTIMISATION UPDATE

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing an update on the Route Optimisation project which was scheduled to be rolled out in August 2024 following system building and testing. The Route Optimisation system would enable existing cyclical activities such as bin collection, grass cutting and gritting, to be tested for efficiency and, where possible, routes remodelled to be more efficient and effective.

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee –

1. noted the progress with the Route Optimisation project;
2. agreed to a seminar being arranged for all Members following the summer recess to demonstrate the functionality and opportunities available through the system; and
3. noted that a further update report would be brought back to the December 2024 Committee meeting.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Roads and Infrastructure Services dated March 2024, submitted)

12. ROADS CAPITAL RECONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME 2024/25

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing details of the proposed roads reconstruction programme for 2024/25. The Programme was based on the 2024/25 allocation of a total of £8.0M.

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee –

1. endorsed the proposed programme of capital works for 2024/25; and
2. agreed that details of each Area Committee's programme would be forwarded on to individual Elected Members.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Roads and Infrastructure Services dated February 2024, submitted)

Councillor Tommy MacPherson left the meeting at this point.

13. FILM IN ARGYLL - SCREEN INDUSTRIES UPDATE REPORT

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing an update of the work of the Council's Film in Argyll service in attracting inward investment into Argyll and Bute from the screen industries, and the economic benefits that it had brought to the local economy, including opportunities to promote and market the area. The report covered the period January 2023 to January 2024.

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee –

1. noted the content of the submitted report; and
2. noted the continued positive economic impact the screen industry had on Argyll and Bute.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth dated 5 February 2024, submitted)

14. TRANSFORMATIONAL PROJECTS AND REGENERATION TEAM - LARGE SCALE PROJECT UPDATE REPORT

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing an update on the progress of the large-scale, externally funded project work of the Transformational Projects and Regeneration Team; and highlighting key issues that could have an impact on the successful delivery of projects.

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee noted the progress contained within the submitted report.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth dated February 2024, submitted)

In respect of the previous item of Business, the Head of Development and Economic Growth advised that Audrey Martin, Transformation Projects and Regeneration Manager would be retiring from the Council after 37 years' service. The Committee recorded their thanks to Audrey for her work during this time and wished her well for the future.

15. ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL'S ECONOMIC STRATEGY REFRESH: 2024-2034

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing a refreshed Argyll and Bute Council Economic Strategy covering the period 2024 – 2034.

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee –

1. noted the refreshed Argyll and Bute Council Economic Strategy as outlined in Appendix 1 to the submitted report; and
2. endorsed the refreshed Economic Strategy, with an associated Action Plan to be considered at the next meeting of the Committee in June 2024.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth dated 14 February 2024, submitted)

16. ARGYLL AND BUTE HOUSING EMERGENCY - PROGRESS REPORT

In June 2023, the Committee declared a Housing Emergency due to a consistent reduction in supply of housing, a steady increase in demand for housing across all tenures and increasing levels of unaffordability. The Committee had approved a range of actions and considered a report providing an update on progress towards these intentions to tackle the Housing Emergency.

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee noted the activity and progress that was ongoing in pursuing the Committee approved intentions and generally seeking to address the Housing Emergency.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth dated February 2024, submitted)

17. ENVIRONMENT, DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee work plan was before the Committee for noting.

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee noted the content of the workplan.

(Reference: Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee work plan as at March 2024, submitted)