MINUTES of MEETING of POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE held ON A HYBRID BASIS IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, KILMORY, LOCHGILPHEAD AND BY MICROSOFT TEAMS on THURSDAY, 20 AUGUST 2026

Present: Councillor Jim Lynch (Chair)

Councillor John Armour
Councillor Gordon Blair
Councillor Kieron Green
Councillor Amanda Hampsey
Councillor Reeni Kennedy-Boyle
Councillor Luna Martin
Councillor Dougie McFadzean
Councillor Ross Moreland
Councillor Gary Mulvaney
Councillor William Sinclair
Councillor Peter Wallace

Also Present: Councillor Tommy MacPherson

Attending: Pippa Milne, Chief Executive
Douglas Hendry, Executive Director
Kirsty Flanagan, Executive Director
Anne Blue, Head of Financial Services
Jane Fowler, Head of Customer Support Services
Fergus Murray, Head of Development and Economic Growth
Ross McLaughlin, Head of Commercial Services
Shona Barton, Governance Manager
David Allan, Estates and Property Development Manager
Jonathan Speed, Project Manager
Paul Macaskill, Chief Internal Auditor

Prior to the commencement of Business, the Chair paid the following tribute to Provost Dougie Philand, who had sadly passed away earlier in the week.

You have all heard by now the sad news that our colleague, our friend, Provost Dougie Philand, very sadly passed away earlier this week following a period of illness.

Dougie was an incredibly talented, supportive and dedicated councillor who always put his constituents first. He had a kind word and quite often a joke or two for everyone he encountered. His positive nature and cheery smile were always present even in the most challenging of circumstances. His family and friends will miss him terribly, as will we – he is a sad loss to this chamber, to the community and to Argyll and Bute as a whole.

We will pay tribute to Dougie at the next council meeting but, as he would have been with us today, I wanted to acknowledge him at this committee also. Thank you.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Math Campbell-Sturgess and Yvonne McNeilly.

The Chair ruled and the Committee agreed to vary the order of business and to take Agenda item 14 as the last item of the meeting. This was to allow the Committee to deal with all of the business which could be taken in public before moving into private session.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

3. MINUTES

(a) **Policy and Resources Committee held on 21 May 2026**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 21 May 2026 were approved as a correct record.

(b) **Special Policy and Resources Committee held on 24 June 2026**

The Minutes of the Special meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 24 June 2026 were approved as a correct record.

* 4. FINANCIAL MONITORING OVERVIEW – 30 JUNE 2026

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing a summary of the overall financial position of the council for 2026-27 as at 30 June 2026. The report outlined the key highlights from the detailed financial monitoring reports in respect of the Revenue Budget, Capital Plan, Financial Risks, and Reserves and Balances.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee –

1. agreed to recommend that Council approve the budget changes in Section 4 of the Capital Plan Monitoring report;

2. noted the contents of the 2026-27 Revenue Budget Monitoring, Financial Risks, and Reserves and Balances reports as at 30 June 2026; and Capital Plan Monitoring report as at Quarter 1, 30 June 2026; and

3. noted there were no Virements requiring approval for this reporting period.

(Reference: Report by Section 95 Officer dated 21 July 2026, submitted)

5. BUDGET OUTLOOK 2027-28 TO 2031-32

The Committee gave consideration to a report summarising the Budget Outlook for the five year period 2027-28 to 2031-32 and providing an update to the position previously reported to the Policy and Resources Committee in May 2026.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee noted the current Budget Outlook position for the period 2027-28 to 2031-32.

(Reference: Report by Section 95 Officer dated 16 July 2026, submitted)

6. POTENTIAL IMPACT OF IRAN CONFLICT - UPDATE

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing an update on the estimated financial impact of the Iran conflict and giving consideration to the Council's revenue and capital budgets during 2026-27.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee noted the content of the submitted report.

(Reference: Report by Section 95 Officer dated 17 July 2026, submitted)

7. FUNDING REQUEST FROM LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing information on three funding requests that had been received from local organisations for consideration.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee –

1. agreed to award a one-off grant of £36,000, to be paid from the Priorities Investment Fund, to Auchindrain Museum to allow the site to remain open and to support essential maintenance and conservation work over the winter;

2. noted that the withdrawal of Historic Environment Scotland revenue funding had significantly impacted the museum's finances and contributed to the need for this short-term support and therefore agreed that the Leader and the Policy Lead for Finance and Commercial Services write to Historic Environment Scotland asking for reinstatement of ongoing revenue support for this nationally significant museum;

3. noted the position with Cowal Highland Gathering, and the offer of a future meeting with the Policy Lead for Finance and Commercial Services;

4. noted that officers were currently reviewing the Service Level Agreement with Kilmartin Museum and delegated authority to the Executive Director with responsibility for Financial Services and Economic Growth, in consultation with the Leader and the Policy Lead for Finance and Commercial Services, to approve an increase to the SLA of up to £20,000 in 2026-27, funded from the Crown Estate allocation, subject to the review confirming that the increase is reasonable and proportionate. Any approved increase is to be reflected in the Council's budget outlook for future years.

Councillor Amanda Hamsey, having moved an Amendment which failed to find a seconder, requested that her dissent be recorded from the foregoing decision.

(Reference: Report by Section 95 Officer dated 5 August 2026, submitted; and Motion by Councillor Jim Lynch, seconded by Councillor Ross Moreland, tabled)

8. SCOTTISH LANGUAGES ACT 2025 - AREAS OF LINGUISTIC SIGNIFICANCE

The Committee gave consideration to a report advising on the new statutory duty for local authorities in the Scottish Languages Act 2025 (the Act) to consider designating Areas of

Linguistic Significance (ALS). The report presented information for members on the provisions in the Act, the statutory duties that the Act placed on the Council and proposals for actions to meet those duties with specific regard to the process of designating Areas of Linguistic Significance.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee –

1. noted the progress being made to ensure that the Council meets its statutory obligations under the Scottish Languages Act 2025 to consult on designating Areas of Linguistic Significance;

2. noted that statutory guidance issued to date was limited in terms of what councils would be expected to deliver in ALS designated areas;

3. noted that Argyll and Bute Council's 12-month commencement date would begin on 1st of September 2026;

4. noted that the islands listed at paragraph 3.12.4 of the submitted report met the threshold of 20% or more Gaelic speakers in the population and must be considered for designation under the Act;

5. agreed to progress with the proposed approach in paragraph 3.12 of the submitted report to meet the statutory duties now placed on the Council; and

6. agreed that a further update would be brought to Policy and Resources Committee in October setting out the approach to consultation and engagement in more detail.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Customer Support Services dated July 2026, submitted)

9. COMMUNITY REGENERATION PARTNERSHIP FUND - PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing an update on the progress of the UK Government's Community Regeneration Partnership (CRP) Programme and associated projects.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee –

1. noted progress with delivery of the Community Regeneration Partnership Programme (CRP), the current status of projects as set out in Table 1 of the submitted report, and the associated governance, monitoring and risk arrangements for the CRP programme;

2. delegated authority to the Executive Director for Development and Infrastructure Services in consultation with the Council Leader and Depute Leaders to approve change requests relating to the programme in line with the agreed Memorandum of Understanding; and

3. note that a further report would be brought to the next Policy and Resources Committee meeting.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth dated 2 July 2026, submitted)

10. LORN ARC TIF PROGRAMME DUNBEG CORRIDOR UPDATE

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing an update on progress at Dunbeg since the last report to the Committee in October 2025, and an indication of likely short and medium term activity. The report did not cover the Oban Airport Business Park TIF project which had been reported on separately.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee noted the content of the submitted report.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth dated July 2026, submitted)

11. COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 2015 - UPDATE - EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST / ASSET TRANSFER REQUESTS / PARTICIPATION REQUESTS / REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The Committee gave consideration to a report advising on the operation of the processes in regard to formal Asset Transfer Requests (ATR) and Participation Requests in terms of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015; current live informal Expressions of Interest (EOI's) which may become subject to a formal asset transfer request or be dealt with outwith the formal asset transfer request process; current live ongoing or agreed Participation Requests received by the Council; and the annual reporting requirements in respect of Asset Transfer Requests and Participation Requests set out in Section 95 and 32 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 respectively.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee noted the content of the submitted report.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Commercial Services dated 7 July 2026, submitted)

12. CLIMATE CHANGE BOARD - CLIMATE CHANGE ACTIVITY UPDATE

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing an update on climate change activity since the last report to Committee in August 2025.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee –

1. commended the Council's 2024/25 emissions performance and the continued long-term reduction in carbon emissions since baseline;

2. noted the significant national policy developments during the reporting period, including the publication of Scotland's Climate Change Plan 2026-2040 and the finalised Public Bodies Climate Change Duties statutory guidance, and

3. noted the Council's governance, operational delivery and partnership activity in response, together with the development of the Carbon Management Plan 2026, which would be brought to Committee in due course.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Commercial Services dated 20 August 2026, submitted)

13. RIVERSIDE SWIM AND HEALTH CENTRE AND FUTURE LEISURE PROVISION IN DUNOON AND COWAL - OPTIONS AND CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

The Committee gave consideration to a report seeking approval of the options being considered for future leisure provision in Dunoon and the manner in which a recommended option would be identified.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee –

1. endorsed the approach used to develop the long list of options for the type of facilities and how these may be provided described at paragraphs 4.3 to 4.9 of the submitted report;

2. agreed the long list of options in Table 2 of the submitted report to be considered in the Strategic Outline Case;

3. agreed the approach to assessing options using qualitative criteria, alongside an assessment of the economic and financial impacts described at paragraphs 4.11 to 4.20 of the submitted report;

4. agreed the qualitative criteria against in Table 3 of the submitted report in which the long list of options would be assessed and the long list of sites at paragraph 4.22 of the submitted report to be considered for any development option and the criteria in Table 4 of the submitted report against which these will be considered in identifying a recommended site;

5. noted that the officers would present initial proposals for any interim provision of facilities to Council in November.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Commercial Services dated 20 August 2026, submitted)

As had been previously agreed, the Committee re-ordered the Business and took item 15 of the Agenda before the exclusion of the press and public for item 14 of the Agenda.

14. POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

The Policy and Resources Committee Workplan was before the Committee for noting.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee noted the content of the workplan.

(Reference: Policy and Resources Committee Workplan as at 20 August 2026, submitted)

The Committee resolved in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the press and public for the following item of business on the grounds that it was likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 14 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

15. I-TRENT SYSTEM INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT – PAYROLL FUNCTIONALITY

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing information on an Internal Audit report in relation to the payroll and pensions functionality within the iTrent HR and Payroll System.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee noted the content of the submitted report.

(Reference: Report by Section 95 Officer dated 17 July 2026, submitted)