

**MINUTES of MEETING of COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE held in the COUNCIL
CHAMBERS, KILMORY, LOCHGILPHEAD
on THURSDAY, 10 MARCH 2016**

Present: Councillor Robin Currie (Chair)

Councillor Gordon Blair	Councillor John McAlpine
Councillor Rory Colville	Councillor Roderick McCuish
Councillor Maurice Corry	Councillor Aileen Morton
Councillor Neil MacIntyre	Councillor Elaine Robertson
Councillor Robert E Macintyre	Councillor Isobel Strong
Alison Palmer	William Marshall

Attending: Cleland Sneddon, Executive Director – Community Services
Ann Marie Knowles, Head of Education
Anne Paterson, Education Manager – Learning and Achievement
Tricia O'Neill, Central Governance Manager
Louise Long, Head of Children and Families
Brian Reid, Locality Manager, Community Services
Allen Stevenson, Head of Adult Services
Moira MacVicar, Housing Services Manager
Douglas Whyte, Team Leader – East, Community Services
Donald MacVicar, Head of Community and Culture
Stuart Craig, Educational Psychologist
Alex MacDonald, Skills Scotland

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Mary Jean Devon, George Freeman, Anne Horn Iain Angus MacDonald, James McQueen and Church Representative William Crossan.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest intimated.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Community Services Committee held on 10 December 2015 were approved as a correct record.

4. PERFORMANCE REPORT FQ3 - 2015/2016

Consideration was given to a report on the Community Services FQ3 performance scorecard.

Decision

The Committee noted the performance for the quarter.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Community Services dated 10 March 2016, submitted)

Councillors Maurice Corry, Isobel Strong and Robert E MacIntyre joined the meeting during discussions of the following item.

5. OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL AND YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

The Committee considered a report which provided an update to elected members on the information contained within the Skills Development Scotland annual report produced for the Community Planning Partnership and published in December 2015.

Decision

The Committee;

- a) noted the actions of Education Services and their partners in progressing Opportunities For All and Youth Employment;
- b) agreed to continue to support the local authority focus on Opportunities for All in order to increase young people's participation in post-16 learning, training or employment through appropriate intervention and support;
- c) agreed to continue to offer assistance and support to our young people, particularly those young people who are Looked After and Accommodated (LAAC) and the furthest removed from employment cohort, through the provision of appropriate summer internship placements and training opportunities;
- d) agreed to support and endorse the work of the Argyll and Bute Employability Partnership as appropriate; and
- e) agreed to continue support for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce recommendations in relation to Argyll and Bute young people.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Community Services dated 10 March 2016, submitted)

Councillor Elaine Robertson left the meeting prior to conclusion of this item.

6. SKILLS DEVELOPMENT SCOTLAND

A presentation on Skills Development Scotland was given by Alex MacDonald, Team Leader for Argyll and Bute, Skills Development Scotland.

Decision

The Committee thanked Alex MacDonald for his informative presentation and noted the presentation.

7. ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL YOUTH EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FUND

Consideration was given to a report which provided an update on the current impact of the Youth Employment Framework's impact and to provide an update on the budget spend that was allocated through the Youth Employment Opportunities Fund.

Decision

The Committee agreed;

- a) to endorse and support the continued planned use of the Youth Employment Opportunities Fund to support succession planning and support our vulnerable young people to access and sustain positive destinations through:
 - The ABC Modern Apprenticeship Training Scheme
 - The ABC Summer Internship programme for Looked After and Accommodated young people in their final year of secondary education
- b) to actively encourage:
 - ABC departments to identify potential opportunities for work placements and Modern Apprenticeships: and
 - Support young people as they progress through the various placements on offer
- c) to continue to support the work of the Opportunities for All team to provide the Activity Agreement programme and Trusted Professional support to vulnerable school leavers and unemployed young people; and to widen this support to now include young people in the final 6 months of their secondary education.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Community Services dated 29 January 2016, submitted)

Councillor Robert E MacIntyre left the meeting during discussion of this item, and re-entered prior to discussion of the following item.

8. EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2016

Consideration was given to provisions introduced by the Education (Scotland) Act 2016 which was passed by the Scottish Parliament on 2 February 2016.

Decision

The Committee;

- a) noted the provisions contained within the Education (Scotland) Act; and
- b) requested that a further report be presented to a future meeting of the Committee once the Council has received additional statutory guidance which considers the implications for Argyll and Bute Council and the actions necessary to comply with the new statutory duties.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Community Services dated 10 February 2016, submitted)

Councillor Robert E MacIntyre left the meeting during discussion of this item.

9. NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR SCOTTISH EDUCATION

Consideration was given to a report which provided the Committee with information on the statutory intention of the Scottish Government to introduce the new National Framework, and outlined some of its provisions.

Decision

The Committee;

- a) noted the publication of the revised National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education by the Scottish Government;
- b) noted the consultation feedback received by the Scottish Government during the consultation programme for the draft improvement framework;
- c) noted the timeline indicated by the Scottish Government for the phased implementation of the National Improvement Framework; and
- d) agreed to instruct officers to approach the Scottish Government to review the criteria to be used for allocation of Attainment Fund monies to reflect rural funding.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Community Services dated 14 January 2016, submitted)

10. VALIDATED SELF EVALUATION FOR EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICES

Consideration was given to a report which provided Elected Members with details of the outcome of the process of Validated Self Evaluation (VSE) for the Educational Psychology Service (EPS), undertaken in conjunction with Education Scotland in November 2015.

Decision

The Committee;

- a) noted the outcomes of the formal report produced by the Education Scotland team;
- b) agreed the EPS report and key areas for action arising from the VSE process. This report and the associated self-evaluation documents were included in the appendices; and
- c) noted the report and associated self-evaluation documents as referred to in the appendices.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Community Services dated 21 January 2016, submitted)

At 1.25pm, the Chair ruled, and the Committee agreed, to adjourn for lunch and to reconvene at 1.50pm.

Councillors Maurice Corry, Robert E MacIntyre, John McAlpine and Aileen Morton left the meeting at this point.

11. EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Consideration was given a report which updated Members on the current work within Argyll and Bute on Educational Leadership in partnership with the new Scottish College of Educational Leadership (SCEL) and University of the Highlands and Islands Education Faculty (UHI).

Decision

The Committee:

- a) noted the current work being taken forward by Education Services focusing on educational leadership development;
- b) agreed to support the future developments with partners and the commitment to continuing professional development; and
- c) noted the impact of educational leadership within the improvement agenda of raising attainment.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Community Services dated 10 March 2016, submitted)

Councillors Maurice Corry and Aileen Morton entered the meeting during discussion of this item. Councillor Gordon Blair left the meeting during discussion of this item.

12. ASHFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Consideration was given to a report which proposed that Ashfield Primary School is “mothballed” and that the building be retained on a care and maintenance basis until June 2017.

Decision

The Committee agreed that:

- a) Ashfield Primary School discontinue as a school on a temporary basis and that the building be retained on a care and maintenance basis;
- b) if there are no registered pupils by the commencement of session 2017/18, the school be considered for formal closure through the statutory process, and
- c) the community will have prearranged access to the building to promote community functions.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Community Services dated 10 March 2016, submitted)

Councillor Rory Colville, Alison Palmer and William Marshall left the meeting at this point.

13. THE HOUSING OPTIONS PROCESS IN ARGYLL AND BUTE

Consideration was given to a report which updated Members on the operation of housing options in Argyll and Bute and highlighted the work which had been carried out to develop the housing options approach and the impact that this has had on the number of people presenting as homeless to the local authority. It detailed the housing options process and how it linked in with the Statutory reporting of homeless cases (HL1) and prevention cases (Prevent1) to the Scottish Government.

Decision

The Committee noted the content of the report.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Community Services dated 2 February 2016, submitted)

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14. STRATEGIC HOUSING FUND GRANTS - INTERIM ARRANGEMENT

The Committee considered a report highlighting an increase in the Government benchmark grant subsidy for affordable housing development and proposals for an interim amendment to Strategic Housing Fund Grants.

The report noted that the development of affordable housing was subsidised by Scottish Government grants and in Argyll and Bute, this was supplemented by the Council's Strategic Housing Fund grants. The Committee was advised that no other Scottish Council provided this supplementary support to the extent that Argyll and Bute Council did. Given the increase in Scottish Government subsidy announced in January 2016, the report proposed an interim amendment to Strategic Housing Fund grants to be applied with immediate effect on approval by Council and to remain in place until a review of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) was concluded this summer and a further report was submitted for consideration by the Community Services Committee.

Decision

The Committee agreed to recommend to Council to approve a reduction in the Strategic Housing Fund grant to £12k per unit thereby maintaining the status quo in terms of total grant subsidy to Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) developing affordable housing in Argyll and Bute. This is an interim arrangement to take immediate effect on approval and to be the subject of a future report in September 2016 following the evaluation and review of the SHIP.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Community Services dated 25 February 2016, submitted)

Councillor Rory Colville rejoined the meeting during discussion of this item.

15. SUPPORTING SERVICES FOR YOUNG CARERS 2016-19

Consideration was given to a report which noted the support needs of young carers in Argyll and Bute and responsibilities placed on the Local Authority to meet those needs outlined in statutory guidance and in the imminent Carers (Scotland) Bill.

Decision

The Committee:

- a) noted the increased responsibility that the Carers (Scotland) Bill will place on Argyll and Bute Council to provide Young Carers' Statements detailing the support available locally for any young carer;
- b) agreed to acknowledge the lack of resilience in funding for support provided to young carers across Argyll by the range of third sector groups identified;
- c) agreed to approve £0.020m for Helensburgh and £0.020m for Oban to allow infrastructure within current carer services to remain in place while services access funding from the Health and Social Care Partnership or external charitable trusts;
- d) noted that Argyll & Bute Health and Social Care Partnership will work with Mid Argyll Kintyre and Islay, to access appropriate funding to re-establish services for young carers locally; and
- e) noted that Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership will work with Dunoon's young carer service to establish a plan to sustain the service once the 3 year funding from the Big Lottery ends.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Community Services dated 15 December 2015, submitted)

Councillor Robert E MacIntyre rejoined the meeting and Councillor Aileen Morton left the meeting during discussion of this item.

16. COMMUNITY JUSTICE REDESIGN: TRANSITION PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Consideration was given to a report which provided Members with an update regarding the submission and progress of the transition plan regarding the establishment of local Community Justice Partnerships.

Decision

The Committee noted the progress made under the terms of the Transition Plan 2016 – 17 with regard to community justice redesign.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Community Services dated 23 February 2016, submitted)

17. JOINT INSPECTION OF OLDER PEOPLES SERVICES 2015

Consideration was given to a report which confirmed and set out the grades and improvement actions from the Inspection of Older People's Services by the Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland between April and June 2015.

Decision

The Committee;

- a) noted the grades achieved by the partnership as a result of the inspection of Older People's Services in Argyll and Bute;
- b) agreed to endorse the Improvement Actions set out by the Care Inspectorate as at Appendix 1; and
- c) noted the next steps to be undertaken by the Partnership to address the improvement actions contained within the inspection report.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Community Services dated 10 March 2016, submitted)

Councillor Strong left the meeting at the conclusion of discussion of this item.

18. COMMUNITY SERVICES WORK PLAN 2015-2016

Consideration was given to the outline work plan to facilitate forward planning of reports to the Community Services Committee.

Decision

The Committee noted the outline work plan and agreed that the following reports be added to the meeting of the Committee being held on 2 June 2016;

- (i) Updated Education Strategy; and
- (ii) Remit of Community Services Committee and the Integrated Joint Board.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Community Services dated 10 March 2016, submitted)