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## **MINUTES of MEETING of ARGYLL ISLANDS STRATEGIC GROUP held in the COUNCIL CHAMBERS, KILMORY, LOCHGILPHEAD on WEDNESDAY, 27 FEBRUARY 2019**

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

Councillor Mary-Jean Devon (by VC)	Councillor Jean Moffat
Councillor Anne Horn	Councillor Len Scoullar
Councillor Sir Jamie McGrigor	Councillor Alastair Redman

**Attending:** Cleland Sneddon, Chief Executive  
Pippa Milne, Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure Services  
Fergus Murray, Head of Economic Development and Strategic Transformation  
Shirley MacLeod, Area Governance Manager  
Stuart Green, Corporate Support Manager  
Bill Halliday, Team Leader – West  
Dannie Onn, Island Liaison Partner, Scottish Government  
Iain MacAllister, Island Liaison Partner, Scottish Government  
Jon Rathjen, Island Liaison Partner, Scottish Government

### **1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and general introductions were made.

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of:-

Councillor Jim Lynch  
Councillor Aileen Morton  
Councillor Elaine Robertson  
Ralph Throp, Island Liaison Partner, Scottish Government  
Gavin Sellar, Island Liaison Partner, Scottish Government

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

### **3. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE ARGYLL ISLANDS STRATEGIC GROUP HELD ON FRIDAY, 30 NOVEMBER 2018**

The Minute of the previous meeting of the Argyll Islands Strategic Group held on 30 November 2018, was approved as a true record.

### **4. SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT ISLAND LIAISON DIRECTORS UPDATE**

The group heard from the Island Liaison Partners in relation to the progress made in meeting with local communities on their designated islands and ongoing discussions with Erica Clarkson, Islands Implementation Lead at the Scottish Government who had also been visiting islands in an effort to build relationships. Discussion took place in respect of the role of the Partners and the need to establish a relationship with island communities to allow a flow of information from these communities to the Scottish Government. The

Corporate Support Manager agreed to circulate the draft description and objectives of the Islands Liaison Partner's to the group by email.

**Decision:**

The Argyll Islands Strategic Group agreed to note the information provided.

**5. REVIEW OF KEY PRIORITIES OF ARGYLL ISLANDS STRATEGIC GROUP**

The group gave consideration to a report updating on the key actions identified as being critical to island communities and their opportunities for growth and development.

Discussion took place in respect of the roads infrastructure; the advantages and disadvantages of RET; the ports and vessel infrastructure and how the biodegradable municipal waste strategy will impact on island communities.

**Decision:**

The Argyll and the Islands Strategic Group gave consideration to the priorities as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report and requested that the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure update the Priorities and Actions Approved List (Appendix 1) as follows:-

1. Alter priority 2 to read "To obtain Scottish Government capital investment in key island infrastructure such as ports, ferry terminals, vessels and road infrastructure in order to facilitate the needs of RET and secure the future economic prosperity of our islands";
2. Add item 2(e), "Explore RET charging mechanisms and seek amendments where this causes inconsistencies to our island communities;
3. Alter item 8(b) to read "Work with housing associations and community groups"
4. Include under priority 9 as item 9(c) "to build on the renewable energy capacity";
5. Add a further priority entitled Waste Strategy and include as subheadings (a) Landfill Ban and Disposal of Biodegradable Waste and (b) Deposit Replace Strategy; and
6. Remove all references to "isolated rural communities".

(Ref: Report by Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure Services, dated 27 February 2019, submitted.)

**6. ISLANDS (SCOTLAND) ACT**

The group gave consideration to a report providing an update on the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 with specific focus on the National Islands Plan. Discussion took place in respect of the consultation phase of the National Islands Plan with members agreeing that discussions are required to find out what the intention of the Scottish Government is in relation to what it will consist of and what impact assessments will look like to ensure due regard is given to existing policies and procedures. Islands Liaison Partner, Iain MacAllister agreed to look into the matter and confirm what the consultation will look at. Further discussion took place in respect of the provision to review ward boundaries. The Area Governance Manager agreed to circulate a link to an interview with Ronnie Hinds,

Chair of the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland, about the forthcoming review of island ward boundaries in terms of the provisions of the Islands (Scotland) Act.

**Decision:**

The Argyll Islands Strategic Group agreed to note the update on the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure Services, dated 27 February 2019, submitted.)

**7. NATIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY**

The Head of Economic Development and Strategic Transformation advised that there had been no update since the last meeting of the group, and therefore there was no report available for discussion. He further advised that the Scottish Government are maintaining their timeline and that officers are continuing to work with Transport Scotland on transport needs of Argyll and Bute over the next ten years. Mr Murray advised that key priorities will continue to evolve and the need for evidence and strong data as we move through the engagement and consultation phase is essential.

**Decision:**

The Argyll and the Islands Strategic Group agreed to note the information provided.

**8. FUEL POVERTY (TARGET, DEFINITION AND STRATEGY) (SCOTLAND) BILL**

The group gave consideration to a report providing an update on the progress of the Fuel Poverty (Target, Definition and Strategy) (Scotland) Bill through Parliament, with the group noting that the Bill was debated in Parliament on 20 February and was now in Stage 2 of the Parliamentary process. The report highlighted the key issues associated with the Bill and indicated the next steps in the Parliamentary process. Discussion took place in respect of the representation of the poverty issues with members being keen to ensure that the Scottish Government's target of 5% by 2040 is not disproportionately represented across Argyll and Bute. The Council's Team Leader addressed the need to raise the issue of Home Energy Efficiency with the Scottish Government.

**Decision:**

The Argyll Islands Strategic Group agreed to note the response to the consultation submitted by officers.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure Services, dated 27 February 2019, submitted.)

**9. ARGYLL AIR SERVICES PSO TENDER**

The group gave consideration to a report in relation to the contract for the provision of air services between Oban and the Islands of Coll, Colonsay and Tiree.

During discussion of agenda item 9(b) Report by Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure Services, the Committee resolved in terms of Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude the press and public on the grounds that it was likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 8 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Local Governments (Scotland) Act 1973.

In line with the protocol for Video Conferencing, specifically with regard to confidential/exempt items, measures were put in place to ensure that the venue from which Councillor Devon was participating was secure and that no member of the public had access and that no recording of proceedings was being made, by any person.

**Decision:**

The Argyll Islands Strategic Group agreed to:-

1. note that it is proposed to retender the Argyll Air Services PSO contract applying the minimum timescale possible, within the rules under the EC which apply to PSO air services; and
2. note that it is not legally possible to extend the existing air services contract.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure Services, dated 27 February 2019, submitted.)