

**MINUTES of MEETING of ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL held BY SKYPE
on THURSDAY, 26 NOVEMBER 2020**

Present: Councillor Roderick McCuish (Chair) up to item 5
Councillor David Kinniburgh (Chair) from item 6

Councillor Jim Anderson	Councillor Julie McKenzie
Councillor John Armour	Councillor Yvonne McNeilly
Councillor Gordon Blair	Councillor Barbara Morgan
Councillor Rory Colville	Councillor Aileen Morton
Councillor Robin Currie	Councillor Gary Mulvaney
Councillor Mary-Jean Devon	Councillor Iain Paterson
Councillor Lorna Douglas	Councillor Alastair Redman
Councillor Jim Findlay	Councillor Alan Reid
Councillor George Freeman	Councillor Elaine Robertson
Councillor Audrey Forrest	Councillor Richard Trail
Councillor Bobby Good	Councillor Sandy Taylor
Councillor Kieron Green	Councillor Douglas Philand
Councillor Anne Horn	Councillor Andrew Vennard
Councillor Donald Kelly	Councillor Jean Moffat
Councillor Donald MacMillan BEM	Councillor Jim Lynch
Councillor Sir Jamie McGrigor	Councillor Graham Hardie

Attending: Pippa Milne, Chief Executive
Douglas Hendry, Executive Director
Kirsty Flanagan, Executive Director
David Logan, Head of Legal and Regulatory Support
Tricia O'Neill, Governance Manager
Laurence Slavin, Interim Head of Financial Services
Joanna MacDonald, Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Partnership
Fergus Murray, Head of Economic and Development
Fergus Murray, Revenue and Benefits Manager
Jane Fowler, Head of Customer and Support Services
Julie Lusk, Chief Social Work Officer, HSCP
Ross McLaughlin, Head of Commercial Services
Rona Gold, Community Planning Manager
Martin Caldwell, Chair of Audit and Scrutiny Committee
Louisa Yule, Audit Scotland

Following a Eulogy the Depute Provost asked the Council to join him in a minute's silence to mark the passing of a respected colleague and long standing member of this Council, the late Provost Len Scoullar who sadly passed away on Sunday 15 November 2020. He sent the Councils love and sympathy to his family.

The Depute Provost announced that he would be altering the order of business to take Item 15 of the Agenda, Political Management Arrangements after item 4, Minutes of Committees and before The Leader's Report.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence intimated.

NOTICE OF MOTION UNDER STANDING ORDER 14

The following Notice of Motion had been submitted as a matter of urgency under the provisions of Standing Order 14-

A83 Rest and Be Thankful/Old Military Road Diversion – ongoing impact of closures

In the past few weeks, as a result of heavy rainfall, the Old Military Road diversion route has, like the lifeline route it replaces, been closed due to the risk of landslides. This includes closures overnight, from 6pm until first light and, even more concerning, complete closure on a number of occasions and most recently on Monday 23rd November, day and night.

The impact of decades of disruption at the main A83 is already severe enough. For the secondary diversion route to be similarly affected is utterly unacceptable to the remote, rural and islands communities of Argyll and Bute. At a time of unprecedented challenge, Argyll and Bute's recovery, let alone its future, demands urgent action – now.

Last week's meeting of A83 stakeholders heard that putting a permanent solution in place, once agreed, could require five or more years to secure the necessary permissions and wayleaves even before construction could start. Then, construction itself would take a number of years more. This effectively asks Argyll and Bute to sustain another decade of the kind of disruption experienced over the last few weeks. This, again, is unsustainable and unacceptable.

The Council therefore:

- Formally expresses its deep concern, shared by Argyll and Bute's communities and businesses, at the worsening situation where not only is the A83 Rest and Be Thankful currently closed but the vital Old Military Road diversion route is also now increasingly affected by closure due to landslip risk, in writing to the First Minister;
- Agrees that the potential timescale of another decade before a permanent solution is in place is unacceptable, and that a sustainable interim solution must be identified and implemented urgently to support Argyll and Bute's economic recovery and resilience and to prevent serious risks to its future success;
- Calls on the Scottish Government for urgent investigation of any potential interim solutions which can be put in place swiftly, and for use at the very least by emergency services, health transport and haulage traffic as quickly as possible, to allow access to medical services, the movement of goods to continue in and out of Argyll and Bute, maintaining efficient and timely delivery of supplies to local communities and supporting key local economic sectors like aquaculture, timber haulage and agriculture;
- Seeks urgent engagement with the relevant agencies to explore the swift progression of that interim solution as soon as possible;
- Reinforces the need for Argyll and Bute Council to be represented on any steering group or other body involved in the development and oversight of permanent solutions for the A83 as well as any engagement in relation to the interim solution, given its lifeline status and vital importance for the region's future success.

Moved by Councillor Currie, seconded by Councillor Taylor

The Depute Provost ruled that he considered this item to be urgent by reason of the serious issue for Argyll and Bute. The Council agreed to consider the motion and this is dealt with at item 24 of this Minute.

NOTICE OF MOTION UNDER STANDING ORDER 14

The following Notice of Motion had been submitted as a matter of urgency under the provisions of Standing Order 14-

Background

Argyll and Bute Council agrees that should Caledonian MacBrayne move forward with their intention to withdraw the operation of their loose freight carriage service there will be an immediate detrimental impact to both healthcare services and businesses on the Isle of Bute as they will be forced into the business of couriers who may not open small accounts and who may not be able to provide the rapid service of almost door to door transfer of medical samples, urgent medicines and goods to and from the Isle of Bute. The motion is urgent because of Cal Mac only notifying islanders of their intention to end this service on December 28th 2020 by an e mail from their Area Operations Manager (Clyde) on Monday evening 23rd November at 2000 hours. This withdrawal notice was served without any form of consultation with communities nor the Argyll and Bute HSCP who are daily users of this service for medical and health related parcels. There will be no further opportunity for the Council to consider such a motion until the next meeting of the Council in 2021 hence its urgency.

Motion :

Argyll and Bute Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to the Chief Executives of both David MacBrayne and Caledonian MacBrayne expressing the Council's grave concerns over the impacts of the proposed decision to withdraw its loose freight service on the Rothesay to Wemyss Bay return service. There will be impacts on the Bute communities healthcare service , and the communities fragile businesses and economy. The letter should urge David MacBrayne and Caledonian MacBrayne to stop the process of ending this service and cancel this most damaging of decisions. It should further request of David MacBrayne and Caledonian MacBrayne that Island Impact Assessment should be carried out as they should do to fulfil the spirit of the Islands Act so that all are able to understand the potential damage that this withdrawal could cause. The Chief Executive should also write to the First Minister in similar terms and ask her to instruct David MacBrayne and Caledonian MacBrayne to withdraw this very damaging proposal.

Moved by Councillor Findlay, seconded by Councillor Moffat

The Depute Provost ruled that he considered this item to be urgent by reason of the serious issue for Argyll and Bute. The Council agreed to consider the motion and this is dealt with at item 25 of this Minute.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

3. MINUTES

(a) Minute of Argyll and Bute Council 24 September 2020

The Minutes of Argyll and Bute Council held on 24 September 2020 were approved as a correct record.

(b) **Minute of Special Argyll and Bute Council 22 October 2020**

The Minutes of the Special Argyll and Bute Council held on 22 October were approved as a correct record.

4. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

(a) **Policy and Resources Committee held on 15 October 2020**

The Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 15 October were noted.

Arising from Item 4 (**Financial Reports Monitoring Pack – 31 August 2020**) the Council approved the revenue virements over £0.200m during July and August.

Arising from Item 7 (**Implementation of Domestic Abuse Policy**) the Council approved the new Domestic Abuse Policy.

5. POLITICAL MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The Council considered a report which noted the sad passing of Provost Len Scoullar and also to a number of changes in its political management arrangements.

Motion

The Council:

1. Acknowledges with gratitude the 21 years of dedicated service to Argyll and Bute given by Provost Len Scoullar, also Councillor for Ward 8, Isle of Bute, who sadly passed away on 15th November 2020;
2. Notes that Provost Scoullar's passing gives rise to a number of vacancies, including the role of Provost and a place on the Policy and Resources Committee;
3. Appoints Cllr David Kinniburgh to the role of Provost of Argyll and Bute Council;
4. Appoints Cllr David Kinniburgh to the vacancy on the Policy and Resources Committee;
5. Appoints Cllr Andrew Vennard as Vice-Chair of the Argyll and Bute Harbour Board;
6. Agrees the revisions to committee membership as set out at paragraph 3.3 of the officer report on Political Management Arrangements;
7. Notes the Shadow Policy Lead roles and recognises the Spokesperson roles notified by the Leader of the largest Opposition Group, as set out on the officer report on Political Management Arrangements;
8. Notes that future consideration will be given to addressing the remaining vacancies arising from Provost Scoullar's passing. (Employee Joint Consultative Committee; Argyll Islands Sounding Board; Clyde, Kintyre and the Islands Ferry Stakeholder Group; and Fyne Homes Group).

Moved by Councillor Currie, seconded by Councillor Mulvaney.

Amendment

Agree to the Motion but with the following changes:-

Appoint Councillor Audrey Forrest to the role of Provost within Argyll and Bute Council;

Appoint Councillor Audrey Forrest to the vacancy on the Policy and Resources Committee; and

Appoint Councillor Jim Lynch as Vice-Chair of the Argyll and Bute Harbour Board.

Moved by Councillor Taylor, seconded by Councillor Douglas.

The vote was taken by calling the role and Members voted as follows:-

Motion	Amendment	No Vote
Cllr Colville	Cllr Anderson	Cllr Freeman
Cllr Currie	Cllr Armour	Cllr Kelly
Cllr Devon	Cllr Blair	Cllr McKenzie
Cllr Good	Cllr Douglas	Cllr Moffat
Cllr Green	Cllr Findlay	
Cllr Hardie	Cllr Forrest	
Cllr Kinniburgh	Cllr Horn	
Cllr MacMillan BEM	Cllr Lynch	
Cllr McCuish	Cllr Paterson	
Cllr Sir McGrigor	Cllr Philand	
Cllr McNeilly	Cllr Taylor	
Cllr Morgan	Cllr Trail	
Cllr Morton		
Cllr Mulvaney		
Cllr Redman		
Cllr Reid		
Cllr Robertson		
Cllr Vennard		

Decision

18 votes were received for the Motion, 12 for the Amendment and with 4 no votes, the Motion was carried and the Council resolved accordingly.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director for Legal and Regulatory Support dated November 2020, submitted)

The Depute Provost vacated the Chair and Provost David Kinniburgh chaired the meeting for the remainder of the meeting.

6. LEADER'S REPORT

The Council considered a report which outlined the key activities undertaken by the Leader of the Council since his appointment on 24 September 2020 together with an update on the Policy Lead for Economy and Rural Growth.

Decision

The Council:-

1. Considered and noted the report and any further verbal updates from the Leader, and
2. Noted that the full Leader's Report Pack was available in the Leader's Office which included COSLA and other papers and briefings as referenced in the report.

(Ref: Report by Leader of the Council dated 12 November 2020, submitted)

7. POLICY LEADS REPORT

The Council considered a report which provided an update on key areas of activity of Policy Lead Councillors, including updates since the last Council meeting on 22 October 2020.

Decision

The Council considered and noted the report and any further updates from Policy Leads.

(Ref: Report by Policy Leads dated 12 November 2020, submitted)

(a) AUDITED ACCOUNTS 2019-2020

Consideration was given to a recommendation by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee and the report presenting the Audited Annual Accounts of the Council and Charitable Trusts for the year to 31 March 2020. The report highlighted the extension of the administrative deadlines for local government accounts by two months due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Decision

1. The Council noted the changes to the Council's annual accounts and the Charitable Trust accounts and that they do not alter the reader's understanding of the Council or Charitable trusts financial position.
2. The Council approved the Audited Annual Accounts of the Council and Charitable Trusts for the year to 31 March 2020.
3. The Council recognised the commendable efforts of the Finance Team in the quality and timeliness of the preparation of the accounts despite the challenging circumstances they faced.

(Ref: Report by Section 95 Officer dated 17 November and updated report dated 25 November, submitted)

(b) AUDIT SCOTLAND ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT 2019-20

The Council gave consideration to a recommendation by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee and to a report summarising the findings arising from an audit of the annual accounts and the consideration of the four audit dimensions that frame the wider scope of public audit set out in the Code of Audit Practice 2016 - financial sustainability; financial management; governance and transparency and value for money. Consideration was also given to the ISA 260/580 letters.

Decision

The Council approved the ISA 580 letter of representation for signing.

(Ref: Report and ISA 260 Letter by Audit Scotland, and ISA 580 Letter by Section 95 officer dated 17 November 2020, submitted)

9. AUDIT AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20

The Council considered the annual overview of the Audit and Scrutiny's activities during financial year 2019/20 and a summary of key developments since the commencement of 2020/21. The report set out how the Committee has fulfilled its remit and provided assurances to the Council.

Decision

The Council reviewed and endorsed the Chair's Annual Report.

(Ref: Report by Chair of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee dated 26 November 2020, submitted)

10. COUNCIL TAX ON EMPTY PROPERTIES - EXTENSION TO TEMPORARY AMENDMENT DUE TO COVID 19

The Council considered a report which outlined a temporary policy amendment for the rate of Council Tax for long term empty properties.

Decision

The Council:-

1. Approved a temporary policy amendment to allow management the discretion to remove the double charge of Council Tax for a maximum of 6 months between 1 October 2020 and 31 March 2021 where there is conclusive evidence that efforts have been made, or are being made to, bring the empty properties back into use and that the homeowners' ability to bring the home back into use is affected by Covid-19.
2. Approved a temporary policy amendment to allow management the discretion to remove the double charge of Council Tax for a maximum of 6 months between 1 October 2020 and 31 March 2021 in exceptional circumstances where there is conclusive evidence of financial hardship of the taxpayer caused by Covid-19.

(Ref: Report by Section 95 Officer dated 9 November 2020, submitted)

11. CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

The Council considered a report which presented the Argyll and Bute Chief Social Work Officer report for the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 which provided an oversight and accountability within the local authority for all social work and social care services delegated to the Integrated Joint Board.

Decision

The Council:-

1. Noted and approved the contents of the Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report for 2019 to 2020.
2. Acknowledge the efforts of social work and social care staff across all sectors, as well as unpaid carers in continuing to support the people of Argyll and Bute.
3. Approve the publication of this report.
4. Note that once approved, the report will be forwarded to the Scottish Government.

(Ref: Report by Chief Social Work Officer dated 26 November 2020, submitted)

12. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES SERVICE PLAN 2020-23

The Council considered a report which presented the Children and Young People's Service Plan for 2020 – 2023 which outlined the local priorities for achieving Argyll and Bute's vision for all children and young people and made clear what services and partners need to do together to achieve them.

Decision

The Council:

1. Noted that both NHS Highland and Argyll and Bute Council are jointly and equally responsible for children's services planning.
2. Approve Argyll and Bute's Children and Young People's Services Plan which covers the period 2020-23 on behalf of Argyll and Bute Council subject to further scrutiny by the Community Services Committee.
3. Agreed to delegate any amendments that are required to the Executive Director with responsibility for Education in consultation with the Leader, Leader of the largest Opposition Group and the Chair of the Community Services Committee.
4. Once approved by Council and the Integrated Joint Board approve the publishing of the Children and Young People's Services Plan to Scottish Government, and
5. Note that Argyll and Bute's Children's Strategic Group will oversee the delivery of the outcomes and actions identified in the plan with annual performance and progress reports to be presented to future meetings of the Community Services Committee and the Integration Joint Board.

(Ref: Report by Chief Officer, Argyll and Bute HSCP, dated 7 October 2020, submitted)

13. CONSULTATIONS - COUNCILLORS' CODE OF CONDUCT AND MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT FOR BOARD MEMBERS OF DEVOLVED PUBLIC BODIES

The Council considered a report which advised of a consultation which had been launched by the Scottish Government on a review of the Councillors' Code of Conduct during the period from 19 October to 8 February 2021.

Decision

The Council:-

1. Noted the arrangements that are in place for a SG led consultation on a review of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, running from 19 October 2020 until 8 February 2021.
2. Agreed that delegation is given to the Executive Director, as Monitoring Officer, to prepare and submit a response, after consultation with the Leader and Depute Leader of the Council and the Leader of the largest Opposition Group within the designated timescales.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director for Legal and Regulatory Support dated 29 October 2020, submitted)

14. REVIEW OF THE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE INTEGRATION SCHEME

The Council considered a report which presented the revised HSCP Scheme which contained details of the changes proposed by the Scottish Government.

Decision

1. Agreed the revised Integration Scheme (Appendix 1), which has been further updated to take account of feedback received from the SG as part of their review.
2. Noted that a similar report is being tabled at the NHS Highland Board on 24 November for their approval.
3. Agreed that the Chief Executives of the two parent bodies jointly submit the revised Scheme to the Scottish Government for final approval.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director for Legal and Regulatory Support dated 3 November 2020, submitted)

15. DRAFT PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2021-22

The Council considered a report which outlined a draft programme of meetings for the year 2021-22 based on the current committee cycle.

Decision

The Council considered and approve the draft Programme of Meetings for the year 2021-22.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Legal and Regulatory Support dated 26 October 2020, submitted)

16. SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES FUND REVIEW

The Council considered a report which highlighted changes to the Council's Supporting Communities Fund to improve the process for communities which included clearer criteria for applications and an extension to the period to time awarded funds are able to be use by groups.

Decision

1. The Council agreed the four main criteria for applications, as set out in 4.2 of the report, being:
 - Fairer Communities – tackling poverty by sharing opportunities.
 - Resilient Communities – rebuilding and repairing from a pandemic; noting that this is only in the case of the group being unable to access other specific funds for this, e.g. Scottish Government funding.
 - Greener, cleaner communities – climate change mitigation
 - Creative Communities - Creativity for Health and Wellbeing
2. Agreed that all applicants awarded funding have 18 months to complete their project.
3. Agree that all applicants awarded funding are to display the Council logo in communications and promotions of their funded project.
4. Agree that improvements are made to the application and end of monitoring report to support the evaluation of the fund's impact on reducing inequalities.
5. Agree a fast track application process, as outlined in 4.6, be explored for financial year 2022-23.
6. Agree that the fund for 2021/22 opens for applications on 11 January 2021 and closes on 20 March 2021.

(Ref: Report by Chief Executive dated 3 November 2020, submitted)

17. DANGEROUS BUILDING: 5-7 EAST CLYDE STREET, HELENSBURGH

The Council considered a report which advised of the action taken by building standards at a private property on East Clyde Street, Helensburgh.

Decision

The Council:

1. Noted that officers had no option but to instruct emergency works to the property to remove the immediate danger to the public or adjacent buildings, using our statutory powers under the Building (Scotland) Act 2003. These works were to stabilise the building and provide a short-term solution with a potential that further interventions will be necessary.
2. Agreed that the best course of action at this stage was to stabilise the building, rather than demolish the property at considerable costs to the Council. Council further instructed officers to continue to work with owners and other interested parties to

identify a permanent solution. This will be the subject of a future report to the appropriate Committee.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director for Development and Economic Growth dated 9 November 2020, submitted)

18. STRATEGIC HOUSING INVESTMENT PLAN (SHIP) 2021/22 - 2025/26

The Council considered a report which summarised the proposals for the revised Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) in line with statutory requirements and the latest guidance.

Decision

The Council approved the SHIP proposals summarised in this report which will then be submitted to the Scottish Government in December 2020.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director for Development and Economic Growth dated November 2020, submitted)

Councillor Mulvaney left the meeting at this point.

19. HOUSING ANNUAL ASSURANCE STATEMENT 2020

The Council considered a report which presented the Annual Assurance Statement for approval.

Decision

The Council approved the Annual Assurance Statement contained in **Appendix 1** of the report.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director for Development and Economic Growth dated November 2020, submitted)

20. TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF OFF STREET PARKING CHARGES FOR FESTIVE SEASON 2020

The Council considered a report which sought approval for the suspension of off-street parking charges across all areas of Argyll and Bute for the 2 week period 11 December 2020 to 24 December 2020.

Councillors Freeman and Morgan left the meeting at this point.

Motion

The Council:-

1. Agrees to suspend all off-street car parking charges across all areas of Argyll and Bute between 11 December 2020 and 24 December 2020.
2. Note the proposal from Oban BIDS and agrees to the principle that an organisation or community group can pay the Council for additional days suspension of charging and

this will be dealt with by the Executive Director with responsibility for Roads and Infrastructure Services.

Moved by Councillor Currie, seconded by Councillor Colville.

Amendment

Agree to the Motion but with the change to the date in recommendation 1 from 24 December 2020 to 3 January 2021.

Moved by Councillor Armour, seconded by Councillor Blair.

The vote was taken by calling the role and Members voted as follows:-

Motion	Amendment
Cllr Colville	Cllr Anderson
Cllr Currie	Cllr Armour
Cllr Devon	Cllr Blair
Cllr Good	Cllr Douglas
Cllr Green	Cllr Findlay
Cllr Hardie	Cllr Forrest
Cllr Kinniburgh	Cllr Horn
Cllr MacMillan BEM	Cllr Kelly
Cllr Sir McGrigor	Cllr Lynch
Cllr McKenzie	Cllr McCuish
Cllr McNeilly	Cllr Moffat
Cllr Morton	Cllr Paterson
Cllr Redman	Cllr Philand
Cllr Reid	Cllr Taylor
Cllr Robertson	Cllr Trail
Cllr Vennard	

Decision

The Motion received 16 votes and the Amendment 15, the Motion was carried and the Council resolved accordingly.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director for Roads and Infrastructure Services dated 10 November, submitted)

21. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENT ACTION GROUP

(a) RECOMMENDATIONS FROM SHORT LIFE WORKING GROUP OF 9 NOVEMBER 2020

The Council considered the recommendations from the Climate Change and Environmental Action Group which were presented to the Council for approval.

Decision

The Council:

1. Recognised the importance of reducing its carbon emissions and reaching net zero by 2045 as part of the global approach to climate change;
2. Acknowledged that reaching net zero is a partnership approach, involving partners from all sectors as well as all aspects of council business, and that while strategic oversight of the council's climate change activity will be led by the council Leader, Policy Leads will also play a part in reinforcing the importance of climate change within their own service portfolios;
3. Welcomed the inclusion of Argyll and Bute's low carbon status as a driver for seeking investment in green infrastructure as a key theme in the council's Covid-19 Recovery Plan, reinforcing the council's commitment to embedding climate change activity within its overall business;
4. Acknowledged the work of the Climate Change Environmental Action Group to date and agrees the recommendations it sets out in its report; (also noted below for reference).

Recommendations from the Climate Change and Environmental Action Group agreed by Council:

1. Noted the update to the Climate Change and Environmental Action Group activity plan as detailed in Appendix1.
2. to deliver net zero emissions target by 2045, as outlined in the Decarbonisation Plan 2021;
3. to review the ambition and 2045 target date within 12 months based on national direction of performance monitoring and performance of the plan;
4. Agreed that a business case approach to climate change investment is adopted through the Council's Asset Management Board;
5. Agreed that the Climate Change Environmental Action Group is disbanded from November 2020 and replaced with quarterly updates from the Climate Change Board being presented to Policy and Resources Committee;
6. Noted specifically the commitments outlined in the Decarbonisation Plan relating to engagement with our communities and businesses through our communications and Community Planning teams:-
 - 'Comm1' – Develop and Deliver a Communication Plan to support the Decarbonisation Plan
 - 'Comm2' – Engage with community and partners and deliver Climate Change Directory for our region.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director for Commercial Services dated November 2020, submitted)

Councillor Aileen Morton left the meeting at this point.

(b) **DE-CARBONISATION PLAN**

The Council considered a recommendation from the Climate Change Environmental Action Group which presented the Council's Decarbonisation Plan for approval.

Decision

The Council:

1. Welcomed the acceleration of the council's Decarbonisation Plan in recognition of the need for action;
2. Adopted the *Climate Commitments: Argyll and Bute Council's Decarbonisation Plan 2021* as the foundation for the council's work towards achieving net zero by 2045;
3. Noted that the activity and actions around the Plan will be driven by the council's Climate Change Board, and that the Board will bring reports on progress on a quarterly basis to the Policy and Resources Committee.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director for Commercial Services dated November 2020, submitted)

22. DECISIONS FROM COVID LEADERSHIP GROUP

(a) **EXTENSION OF RELAXATION OF PLANNING ENFORCEMENT IN TOWN CENTRES**

A recommendation from the Covid Leadership Group was before the Council for noting.

Decision

The Council noted the extension of the existing measures for relaxation of planning enforcement in relation to recovery of town centre business activity being extended until 31 March 2021, subject to periodic review in the event of updated guidance being provided by the Scottish Government.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director for Development and Economic Growth dated 25 October 2020, submitted)

(b) **EMERGENCY POWERS TO WAIVE FEES FOR USE OF PUBLIC SPACES BY BUSINESSES**

A recommendation from the Covid Leadership Group was before the Council for noting.

Decision

The Council noted the recommendation to extend until 31 March 2021, a waive of fees for use of public spaces for business space in relation to Covid-19.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director for Development and Economic Growth dated 25 October 2020, submitted)

23. YEAR 5 EVALUATION OF THE ARGYLL AND BUTE REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMME

A report providing an update on the refugee resettlement programme was before the Council for noting.

Decision

The Council:-

1. Noted the continued good work of the Refugee Resettlement Group and the local community in resettling Syrian refugees on the Island of Bute.
2. Noted that the Council continues to resettle refugees on the Island of Bute through the Home Office's rebranded refugee resettlement scheme.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director for refugee resettlement programme, dated October 2020, submitted)

24. NOTICE OF MOTION UNDER STANDING ORDER 14

The following Notice of Motion had been submitted under Standing Order 14 as a matter of urgency:-

Motion

A83 Rest and Be Thankful/Old Military Road Diversion – ongoing impact of closures

In the past few weeks, as a result of heavy rainfall, the Old Military Road diversion route has, like the lifeline route it replaces, been closed due to the risk of landslides. This includes closures overnight, from 6pm until first light and, even more concerning, complete closure on a number of occasions and most recently on Monday 23rd November, day and night.

The impact of decades of disruption at the main A83 is already severe enough. For the secondary diversion route to be similarly affected is utterly unacceptable to the remote, rural and islands communities of Argyll and Bute. At a time of unprecedented challenge, Argyll and Bute's recovery, let alone its future, demands urgent action – now.

Last week's meeting of A83 stakeholders heard that putting a permanent solution in place, once agreed, could require five or more years to secure the necessary permissions and wayleaves even before construction could start. Then, construction itself would take a number of years more. This effectively asks Argyll and Bute to sustain another decade of the kind of disruption experienced over the last few weeks. This, again, is unsustainable and unacceptable.

The council therefore:

- Formally expresses its deep concern, shared by Argyll and Bute's communities and businesses, at the worsening situation where not only is the A83 Rest and Be

Thankful currently closed but the vital Old Military Road diversion route is also now increasingly affected by closure due to landslip risk, in writing to the First Minister;

- Agrees that the potential timescale of another decade before a permanent solution is in place is unacceptable, and that a sustainable interim solution must be identified and implemented urgently to support Argyll and Bute's economic recovery and resilience and to prevent serious risks to its future success;
- Calls on the Scottish Government for urgent investigation of any potential interim solutions which can be put in place swiftly, and for use at the very least by emergency services, health transport and haulage traffic as quickly as possible, to allow access to medical services, the movement of goods to continue in and out of Argyll and Bute, maintaining efficient and timely delivery of supplies to local communities and supporting key local economic sectors like aquaculture, timber haulage and agriculture;
- Seeks urgent engagement with the relevant agencies to explore the swift progression of that interim solution as soon as possible;
- Reinforces the need for Argyll and Bute Council to be represented on any steering group or other body involved in the development and oversight of permanent solutions for the A83 as well as any engagement in relation to the interim solution, given its lifeline status and vital importance for the region's future success.

Moved by Councillor Currie, seconded by Councillor Taylor.

Decision

The Council unanimously agreed the terms of the Motion.

25. NOTICE OF MOTION UNDER STANDING ORDER 14

The following Notice of Motion had been submitted under Standing Order 14 as a matter of urgency:-

Motion

Background

Argyll and Bute Council agrees that should Caledonian MacBrayne move forward with their intention to withdraw the operation of their loose freight carriage service there will be an immediate detrimental impact to both healthcare services and businesses on the Isle of Bute as they will be forced into the business of couriers who may not open small accounts and who may not be able to provide the rapid service of almost door to door transfer of medical samples, urgent medicines and goods to and from the Isle of Bute. The motion is urgent because of Cal Mac only notifying islanders of their intention to end this service on December 28th 2020 by an e mail from their Area Operations Manager (Clyde) on Monday evening 23rd November at 2000 hours. This withdrawal notice was served without any form of consultation with communities nor the Argyll and Bute HSCP who are daily users of this service for medical and health related parcels. There will be no further opportunity for the Council to consider such a motion until the next meeting of the Council in 2021 hence its urgency.

Motion :

Argyll and Bute Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to the Chief Executives of both David MacBrayne and Caledonian MacBrayne expressing the Council's grave concerns over the impacts of the proposed decision to withdraw its loose freight service on the Rothesay to Wemyss Bay return service. There will be impacts on the Bute communities healthcare service, and the communities fragile businesses and economy. The letter should urge David MacBrayne and Caledonian MacBrayne to stop the process of ending this service and cancel this most damaging of decisions. It should further request of David MacBrayne and Caledonian MacBrayne that Island Impact Assessment should be carried out as they should do to fulfil the spirit of the Islands Act so that all are able to understand the potential damage that this withdrawal could cause. The Chief Executive should also write to the First Minister in similar terms and ask her to instruct David MacBrayne and Caledonian MacBrayne to withdraw this very damaging proposal.

Moved by Councillor Findlay, seconded by Councillor Moffat.

Decision

The Council unanimously agreed the terms of the Motion.