

**MINUTES of MEETING of ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL held ON A HYBRID BASIS IN THE
COUNCIL CHAMBER, KILMORY, LOCHGILPHEAD AND BY MICROSOFT TEAMS
on THURSDAY, 24 NOVEMBER 2022**

Present: Depute Provost Councillor Liz McCabe (Chair)

Councillor John Armour	Councillor Jim Lynch
Councillor Gordon Blair	Councillor Luna Martin
Councillor Jan Brown	Councillor Tommy MacPherson
Councillor Math Campbell-Sturgess	Councillor Ian MacQuire
Councillor Garret Corner	Councillor Liz McCabe
Councillor Robin Currie	Councillor Dougie McFadzean
Councillor Amanda Hampsey	Councillor Yvonne McNeilly
Councillor Daniel Hampsey	Councillor Ross Moreland
Councillor Graham Hardie	Councillor Gary Mulvaney
Councillor Fiona Howard	Councillor Gemma Penfold
Councillor Willie Hume	Councillor Alastair Redman
Councillor Mark Irvine	Councillor William Sinclair
Councillor Andrew Kain	Councillor Peter Wallace
Councillor Paul Donald Kennedy	Councillor Andrew Vennard
Councillor Reeni Kennedy-Boyle	

Attending: Pippa Milne, Chief Executive
Douglas Hendry, Executive Director
David Logan, Head of Legal and Regulatory Support
Anne Blue, Head of Financial Services
David Gibson, Chief Social Work Officer
Martin Caldwell, Chair of Audit and Scrutiny Committee
Arlene Cullum, Senior Development Officer
Matt Mulderrig, Development Policy and Housing Strategy Manager

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Maurice Corry, Audrey Forrest, Kieron Green, Julie McKenzie, Iain Shonny Paterson and Dougie Philand.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Ross Moreland advised in relation to item 16 of the agenda (Dunoon Presents - Approval Of Business Improvement District Ballot Submission, Business Proposal And Business Plan - Third Ballot) that he had been appointed to the Dunoon BID Board by the Council. Having taken note of the updated Standards Commission Guidance in relation to declarations (issued on 7 December 2021) with specific reference to section 5.4(c) he did not consider that he had a relevant connection and as such would remain in the meeting.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of Argyll and Bute Council held on 29 September 2022 were approved as a correct record.

4. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

(a) Policy and Resources Committee of 13 October 2022

The Minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 13 October 2022 were noted.

Arising from item 4 of this Minute, the Council approved the revenue virements over £0.200m during July and August 2022.

5. BY-ELECTION RESULT: WARD 2 - KINTYRE AND THE ISLANDS

The Council gave consideration to a report advising of the results of the Ward 2 – Kintyre and the Islands By-election held on 29 September 2022.

Decision

The Council noted the election of Alastair John Redman as Councillor in Ward 2 – Kintyre and the Islands at the by-election held on 29 September 2022.

(Reference: Report by Returning Officer dated 30 September 2022, submitted)

6. LEADER'S REPORT

The Council gave consideration to a report providing an update on the activities of the Council Leader, Councillor Robin Currie, for the period 15 September to 11 November 2022. The report also included an update in respect of the Leader's Policy Lead portfolio of Economy and Rural Growth.

Decision

The Council noted –

1. the content of the submitted report; and
2. that any reports, briefings or copy correspondence referred to in the report could be requested as appropriate through the Leadership Support Manager, noting that some confidential reports provided by external organisations such as COSLA could be restricted.

(Reference: Report by Leader of the Council dated 11 November 2022, submitted)

7. POLICY LEADS REPORT

The Council gave consideration to a report providing an update on key areas of activity for each Policy Lead Councillor for the period 29 September to 10 November 2022. The report sought to ensure that all members were informed, up-to-date and able to engage with current issues.

Decision

The Council noted the content of the submitted report.

(Reference: Report by Policy Lead Councillors dated 10 November 2022, submitted)

8. COUNCIL PRIORITIES

The Council gave consideration to a report inviting Members to put in place arrangements to identify the Council priorities for the new 5 year terms, which were articulated in a manner that would allow officers to deliver them on an operational basis.

Decision

The Council –

1. agreed the Priorities for Argyll and Bute Council 2022 to 2027 as set out below;
2. noted that these Priorities would be developed and framed within the context of the Argyll and Bute Outcome Improvement Plan, the Council's Corporate Plan, and in line with the requirements of Best Value; and
3. requested that the Chief Executive develop a Delivery Plan which sets out how the Council would deliver the Priorities on an operational basis.

Priorities for Argyll and Bute Council 2022 to 2027

OUR VISION

We have a vision for a successful, vibrant Argyll and Bute with a growing population and a thriving economy. A place where people want to come to live, to work and to do business as a result of action to combat and reverse decline. We see the potential for thriving local economies that support our rich mix of remote, rural and island communities. Communities which also benefit from services that work - where we make the best use of all of our resources so that our core business as a council is as effective as possible.

We want Argyll and Bute's communities to be on a level playing field with others around the country - that is why we will campaign for equity for our communities on issues like fair funding, coping with challenges like the cost of living, and securing digital access and physical access to other opportunities. We will do our utmost to ensure that local voices and needs are taken into account in national decision-making.

We recognise that the cost of living crisis will affect countless households in Argyll and Bute. We want to play a part in responding to that and mitigating the impact on our communities' overall wellbeing and future success.

We see our council and our communities working together in playing our part and making our contributions to wider priorities like climate change, economic growth, strong local governance and more - using our strong track record in partnership working, at all levels, to secure the best possible outcomes.

Our Priorities for the Council Term 2022 to 2027 are shaped around delivering this vision for Argyll and Bute, our people, our success and our future.

PRIORITIES TO SUPPORT DELIVERY OF OUR VISION

People and Places - our core business as a council

EDUCATION:

Attaining and achieving at all stages:

We will improve outcomes for our children and young people by:

- Improving educational attainment, achievement and outcomes for young people within Argyll and Bute to Scotland's upper-quartile.
- Educational Attainment and Wider Achievement – Developing the use of all the available data and intelligence on each of our educational establishments to focus on and drive improvement, achieving our stretch aims (goals to improve opportunities and outcomes for young people) as agreed with the Scottish Government.
- Developing a broader curriculum offer to augment current opportunities with a range of wider achievement awards and accreditations. This will have a positive impact on leaver destinations through inclusive, skills - based programmes in each secondary school.
- Continuing to promote the teaching and use of Gaelic as set out in the council's emerging Gaelic Plan for 2023.

Learning Estate - now and in the future:

We will ensure our schools are effective, sustainable learning environments by:

- Progressing a bid to the Scottish Government to establish a new campus on Mull.
- Develop the next generation of capital investment plan and priorities for our school estate.

Supporting children and young people with additional needs

Continuing to support all of our children and young people with additional support needs across Argyll and Bute, within our schools and other service areas by:-

- Reducing the number of children and young people who have to travel outwith the area to access services by enhancing provision where gaps currently exist.
- Working to improve and secure equity of specialist provision across Argyll and Bute by addressing gaps where they exist across the education estate.
- Maintaining the current staffing complement who support this work, in line with our nurture stretch aim agreed with Scottish Government.

ROADS, AMENITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Roads and pathways

Connections to, from and within Argyll and Bute will be supported by:

- Reviewing our approach to road repair prioritisation to make the most effective use of resources in the context of budget pressures and to achieve the best possible balance in terms of strategic, operational and member input.
- Creating a plan, by 2025, for further active travel routes across Argyll and Bute and completing the Helensburgh-Dumbarton cycle path by 2027.
- Initiating plans for a 20mph speed limit by working in partnership, and in line with national legislation, on the rollout and delivery of a 20mph limit where that will work best for our communities.
- Completing a review of parking and traffic management/enforcement to reshape arrangements that reflect community needs and ambitions.

Piers and Harbours:

In recognition of the importance of marine connections to and from our island and mainland communities, our role in maintaining these links will include:

- Upgrading the council's harbour infrastructure to ensure it is capable of receiving existing and planned new ferries (including at Craignure, Fionnphort/Ruahaich, Port Askaig, Dunoon, Kilcreggan and Campbeltown).
- Creating a new municipal harbour authority in Oban, ensuring that proposals are submitted to Scottish ministers as soon as possible following consideration by the Harbour Board in December 2022, and putting preparations in place to commence operations upon approval by ministers.
- Seeking funding for the procurement of new council-operated vessels including Islay/Jura, Luing and Easdale.
- Finalising the demand, economic impact and business case assessment for the Helensburgh Pier strategy in 2023.

Waste and recycling services:

Reduce our carbon emissions by:

- Delivering a solution that enables the council to divert its biodegradable waste from landfill, within 2026, while seeking a short term derogation to allow the PPP contract to expire.
- Encouraging households to increase use of recycling services to reach at least the Scottish average (with service exploring options to stretch targets where possible).

Housing:

Argyll and Bute has a good track record in delivering affordable homes but to support our drive to grow the population, we need to do more. We will seek to increase availability of all types of housing, including affordable homes, by:

- Supporting the provision of over 1,000 affordable homes by 2027 (247 in 2022/23 plus at least 750 additional homes over the life of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan).
- Exploring additional options to increase the availability of all tenures of housing - mid market rents, shared equity, affordable by design and other developments - in the area.
- Considering the implementation of short term lets control zones to open up more housing availability.
- Continuing to support households to improve energy efficiency and tackle rising living costs through annual investment through and implementation of the Home Energy Efficiency Programme in Argyll and Bute.

- Developing the opportunity for the council to become a Rural Housing Body - where it would be more directly involved in the delivery of housing or land for housing.

Communities:

We will build up and strengthen our communities as attractive, vibrant places to live, work and do business by:

- Creating area-based plans for all our communities, reflecting investment opportunities and local service prioritisation.
- Seeking ways of securing more community wealth building opportunities across Argyll and Bute and supporting communities to gain maximum benefit from developments in their area.
- Seeking to maximise scope for community involvement and participation, including exploring the role that community transfers can play.

Potential and Growth - turning opportunities into reality

We believe Argyll and Bute has tremendous potential and many opportunities. To turn those into reality, we need to make assets work now while we plan for and invest in the future. We will do this by:

Economic Development - investing in the future:

- Achieving sign-off of the Rural Growth Deal business and cases and begin delivering priority projects like The Marine Industry Training Centre, UAV Drone Hub and Seaweed Academy.
- Securing of Levelling Up funding for projects, including Argyll and Bute Western Seaboard Marine Gateways Initiative, targeting the Royal Hotel in Rothesay and Dunoon's historic pier; and Connected Argyll and Bute – Whisky Islands; and Lorn Economic Growth Zone which targets a package of transport infrastructure improvements.
- Complete site development of Helensburgh Waterfront project securing long-term economic benefit and provision of a public skateboard facility
- Delivering the £15m Campbeltown Flood Prevention Scheme.
- Completing the Ardrishaig Public Realm Project.
- Driving forward additional strategic economic development projects including progression of the Dunbeg housing, commercial and infrastructure projects and the North Lorn Economic Growth Zone through the Lorn Arc TIF scheme.
- Delivering and completing more Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) Projects - in Dunoon, Lochgilphead, Tarbert and Helensburgh.
- Maximising community economic and employment opportunities from the Islay Scotwind offshore wind project.
- Preparing an options appraisal for implementation of a transient visitor levy.

Commercial Services - making assets work now:

- Increasing commercial development of business and retail space, including the Kilmory Industrial Park, and identifying other opportunities wherever possible.
- Exploring additional commercial opportunities at Oban Airport.
- Delivering the Modern Workspace Project, rationalising the council estate and facilitating hybrid working solutions.
- Leading the development and creation of Craigendoran Business Park as a business, engineering and innovation hub.

- Exploring opportunities for sharing services where possible - both to help grow our income through providing our expertise, and enhancing service delivery in communities where we need to source options from elsewhere.
- Driving down further our own carbon emissions, achieving net zero by 2045 and exceeding our target of a 75% reduction by 2030, building on our good track record in relation to combatting climate change, through the delivery of our Decarbonisation Plan
- Securing Carbon Literate Organisation status by the end of 2023, including completion of the rollout of carbon literacy training to all councillors.

Partnership and Action - everyone has a part to play in Argyll and Bute's success

In our Priorities for the Council Term 2022 to 2027, we have set out our areas for action to deliver our vision for Argyll and Bute. There are elements of that vision which require action from other agencies at all levels - from our communities right up to national government. We will commit to working in partnership wherever we need to as well as calling on others, with responsibility, to take the action that is required to safeguard Argyll and Bute's success. This will include:

- Continuing to build up our strong track record in partnership working and seeking new ways of working with communities, other organisations, and the third and private sectors.
- Continuing to work in partnership with further education and higher education providers in Argyll and Bute to ensure young people have access to high quality innovative educational opportunities that support local employers and the Argyll economy.
- Lobbying for support for the higher-than-average energy costs faced by Argyll and Bute communities.
- Pressing the case for retaining delivery of care services locally, where community knowledge, relationships and experience are best placed to identify and meet local needs and local accountability.
- Calling for funding support to tackle challenges in local social care delivery - including recruitment, retention and development of care staff in communities - rather than centralisation of services.
- Continuing to call for planning, construction and opening of the replacement route at the Rest and Be Thankful within the life of the this Scottish Parliament
- Working in partnership with the Rothesay Pavilion Charity Trust to lobby for funding to complete the refurbishment of the Pavilion.
- Seeking additional funding support to address the unprecedented severe weather damage to the sea defences supporting Bute's main island roadway at Ardbeg.
- Working with the Community Planning Partnership to develop a Climate Change Strategy for the region as a whole.
- Adding our voice to those of our local government colleagues across Scotland to call on national government for fair funding settlements which enable councils to deliver the services that matter to communities, and reinforcing the need for recognition of the vital contribution that local government makes to national priorities and Scotland's overall success.

Reference: Report by Chief Executive dated 1 November 2022, submitted; Motion by Councillor Robin Currie, Seconded by Councillor Gary Mulvaney, tabled)

9. POLITICAL MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The Council gave consideration to a report noting the result of the Ward 2 – Kintyre and the Islands By-election and the subsequent election of Councillor Alastair Redman on 30 September 2022. The report outlined a number of remaining vacancies within the Council and on its Committees, and invited the Council to consider what action it wished to take in this regard. The report also provided an update on the Council's political composition.

Decision

The Council –

1. appointed Councillor Alastair Redman to the following:
 - a) Policy Lead for Economic Growth, Communities and Corporate Services
 - b) Policy and Resources Committee
 - c) Employee Joint Consultative Committee
 - d) Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers
 - e) Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership Management Committee
 - f) Argyll Community Housing Association Board;
2. appointed Councillor Garret Corner as Chair of the Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Committee;
3. appointed Councillor Gary Mulvaney to the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee;
4. appointed Councillor Amanda Hampsey to the Argyll and Bute Harbour Board; and
5. noted the updated political composition of the Council.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Legal and Regulatory Support dated 11 October 2022, submitted; Motion by Councillor Robin Currie, seconded by Councillor Gary Mulvaney, tabled)

10. 2023 REVIEW OF UK PARLIAMENT CONSTITUENCIES - BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR SCOTLAND PROPOSALS

The Council gave consideration to a report providing information on the Boundary Commission for Scotland consultation on its proposals relating to the 2023 Review of UK Parliamentary Constituencies. The proposals aligned with the decision of the Council on 25 November 2021 in regard to the geographic extent of the boundary; and that they take into account the comment from the Council in regard to the name of the boundary.

Decision

The Council –

1. noted the publication of the Boundary Commissions revised proposals for UK Parliamentary constituencies which have maintained the proposal for the Argyll and Bute constituency area being spread north to incorporate part of ward 21 (Fort William and Ardnamurchan); and

2. welcomed the change of name of the proposed constituency to Argyll, Bute and South Lochaber.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Legal and Regulatory Support dated 9 November 2022, submitted; Motion proposed by Councillor Robin Currie, seconded by Councillor Gary Mulvaney, tabled)

11. DRAFT PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2023-24

The Council's Standing Orders for meetings require the Council to approve a Programme of Meetings for the Council and its Committees every year. The Council gave consideration to a draft programme of meetings for the year 2023-24 based on the current committee cycle.

Decision

The Council approved the draft Programme of Meetings for the year 2023-24.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Legal and Regulatory Support dated 8 November 2022, submitted)

12. 2021-22 AUDITED ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

The Council gave consideration to a report advising of the conclusion of the audit of the accounts. The audit was completed within the required timescales and minimal adjustments were made to the accounts during the audit process. Audit Scotland had issued their annual audit report for 2021-22 which was predominantly positive.

Decision

The Council –

1. noted that unqualified certificates have been issued for both the Council 2021-22 Accounts and the 2021-22 Charitable Trusts;
2. approved for signature the Council's audited annual accounts for 2021-22; and
3. noted Audit Scotland's Annual Audit Report for 2021-22.

(Reference: Report by Section 95 Officer dated 17 November 2022; and briefing note dated 22 November 2022, submitted)

13. AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

The Council gave consideration to a report providing the Chair of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee's annual overview of the Committee's activity during the financial year 2021-22 and a summary of the key developments since the commencement of 2022-23. The report set out how the Committee had fulfilled its remit and provided assurance to the Council.

Decision

The Council endorsed the Chair of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee's Annual Report 2021-22.

(Reference: Report by Chair of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee dated 23 November 2022, submitted)

The Depute Provost thanked the Chair of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee for his informative presentation. She noted that this was the last meeting of the Council where he would be in attendance as he would be retiring as Chair of the Committee in March 2023. The Depute Provost noted that Mr Caldwell had worked with the Council as a lay member firstly on the Audit Committee and latterly on the Audit and Scrutiny Committee; and had been Chair of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee for the past 6 years. She noted the impressive commitment he had given to the roles he had undertaken and that he had worked closely with elected Members in his role as Chair. The Depute Provost presented Mr Caldwell with a Quaich as a token of the Council's appreciation and wished him well for the future.

14. CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER REPORT 2021 - 2022

The Chief Social Work Officer is required to provide an annual report for Scottish Government in the autumn. The Council gave consideration to the Chief Social Work Officer Report for the financial year 2021/22.

Decision

The Council –

1. noted the key activities outlined in the Chief Social Work Officer Report 2021/ 2022;
2. acknowledged the commitment of social work and social care staff in the delivery of services throughout the period of the pandemic; and
3. noted that the report would be submitted to the Office of the Child Social Work Adviser to the Scottish Government.

(Reference: Report by Chief Social Work Officer dated 24 October 2022, submitted)

15. GIGHA AFFORDABLE HOUSING UPDATE

The Council gave consideration to a report providing an update on the options on how to enable the development of five new build affordable houses at Ardmish on the island of Gigha. The report confirmed the high level of housing need and demand on Gigha.

Decision

The Council authorised an additional payment to the Isle of Gigha Heritage Trust of £99,724 from the Strategic Housing Fund (SHF) to enable the development of 5 affordable houses at Ardmish on Gigha.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth dated October 2022, submitted)

16. DUNOON PRESENTS - APPROVAL OF BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT BALLOT SUBMISSION AND BUSINESS PROPOSAL - THIRD BALLOT'

The Council gave consideration to a report seeking endorsement of the Dunoon Business Improvement District (BID) ballot submission; Business Proposal, Term Three; and Business Plan. The proposed ballot was due to take place on 2 March 2023 by postal ballot.

Decision

The Council -

1. agreed the ballot request and the Dunoon Presents Business Proposal, Term Three and the Dunoon Presents Business Plan, Term Three;
2. agreed to instruct the Returning Officer to conduct a ballot over 42 days in 2023 from Thursday 19th January to Thursday 2nd March ('the ballot day');
3. authorised the Executive Director with the responsibility for Development and Economic Growth to cast the votes on behalf of the council in favour of the BID;
4. agreed that the Council would charge £7,903 (exc VAT) per annum, to Dunoon Presents for administering the levy charge to businesses in Dunoon, with charges thereafter increased annually. The first increase would apply on 31st October 2023 and annually thereafter for the subsequent term of the BID;
5. agreed that, if Dunoon Presents were successful in the ballot, the Council would pay an estimated £6,120 per annum in levy contributions for Council properties in Dunoon; and
6. noted that if the BID group were successful in the ballot, an Elected Member from the Council would be requested to sit on the Dunoon Presents Board.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth dated 20 October 2022, submitted)

17. NOTICE OF MOTION UNDER STANDING ORDER 13

The Council gave consideration to the following Notice of Motion under Standing Order 13 that had been submitted by Councillor Tommy MacPherson, and seconded by Councillor Amanda Hampsey –

Campbeltown Brass - one of the most isolated bands in the country - are now the British National Champions, having become Scottish Champions earlier this year. These are incredible achievements for a band where the majority of its musicians are in primary or secondary education, and who, on top of the demands of practice, must also travel for very many hours each time they take part in a competition.

The band are well known across the Kintyre community and further afield. They are very active locally, playing at local functions as well as hosting their own events. They also play at events around Argyll and Bute and have even played for international crowds at a number of Six Nations rugby tournaments. Some of their members are involved in the

National Youth Brass Band of Scotland, spreading the word about Argyll's musical talent to a much wider audience.

Despite their championship status, Campbeltown Brass see themselves first and foremost as a band for the community - a community which is delighted to have champions in its midst.

In light of the very considerable achievements and success of Campbeltown Brass, the Council:

- 1) Congratulates Campbeltown Brass on their latest successes and for securing national champion status.
- 2) Acknowledges the dedication, commitment and talent of everyone involved with Campbeltown Brass, including the musicians themselves, their instructors and conductors, the families and friends of the band who volunteer their time and resources to support their endeavours, and the local community who provide such tremendous encouragement and support.
- 3) Notes that the Provost will send a letter of congratulations to Campbeltown Brass in recognition of their very considerable successes over the course of 2022.

Decision

The Council agreed the terms of the Motion.

(Reference: Notice of Motion under Standing Order 13 by Councillor Tommy MacPherson, seconded by Councillor Amanda Hampsey, submitted)

The Council 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 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

18. COUNCIL CONSIDERATION OF ABSENCE

The Council gave consideration to a report seeking approval of an ongoing absence from Council business of an elected member for a period up to 30 June 2023.

Decision

The Council approved the absence from Council business of an elected member until 30 June 2023, or until their return to business, whichever is the earlier.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Legal and Regulatory support dated 7 November 2022, submitted)