

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT, DEVELOPMENT AND
INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE HELD ON A HYBRID BASIS IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
KILMORY, LOCHGILPHEAD AND BY MICROSOFT TEAMS
ON THURSDAY, 19 MARCH 2026**

Present: Councillor John Armour (Chair)

Councillor Iain Shonny Paterson	Councillor Liz McCabe
Councillor Willie Hume	Councillor Ross Moreland
Councillor Andrew Kain	Councillor Gary Mulvaney
Councillor Jim Lynch	Councillor Alastair Redman
Councillor Tommy MacPherson	Councillor William Sinclair
Councillor Ian James MacQuire	Councillor Andrew Vennard
Councillor Luna Martin	Councillor Peter Wallace

Attending: Kirsty Flanagan, Executive Director
Andrew Summers, Head of Roads and Infrastructure Services
Stuart McLean, Committee Manager
Ishabel Bremner, Economic Growth Manager
Jonathan Welch, Transformation Projects and Regeneration Manager
Hugh O'Neill, Networks and Standards Manager
Arlene Cullum, Senior Development Officer
Andrew Galloway, Local Democracy Reporter

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillor Graham Hardie.

The Committee Manager read out a Motion received in accordance with Standing Order 14. The Chair, being satisfied that the Motion was urgent, given the 1 April 2026 deadline for submitting a letter of support on behalf of the council to Highlands and Island Regional Transport Partnership funding request to the UK Government's Green Aviation Programme, moved that it be considered, and the Committee agreed to do so following discussion of agenda item 16 (Roads Capital Reconstruction Programme 2026–27).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee held on 18 September 2025 were approved as a correct record.

4. WITHDRAWAL OF UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUNDING

The Committee gave consideration to a report which provided information on the impending withdrawal of UK Government funding following the end of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund in this financial year, 2025-26 and the implications for Argyll and Bute.

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee considered and agreed a collective, cross-party response on behalf of Argyll and Bute Council to the Secretary of State for Scotland, based on the HIREP response (as contained in Appendix 3 of the report), further to the notification by the UK Government that there would be no Local Growth Fund allocation to Argyll and Bute for the next 3 financial years.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth, dated 17 February 2026, submitted)

5. FILM IN ARGYLL - SCREEN SECTOR UPDATE REPORT

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing an update on the Council's Film in Argyll service in attracting inward investment into Argyll and Bute from the screen sector. The report outlined the economic benefits that this brings to the local economy, including the opportunities to promote and market the area.

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee:

1. noted the contents of the report; and
2. noted the continued positive economic impact the screen sector has on Argyll and Bute.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth, dated 26 January 2026, submitted)

6. LATEST UPDATE ON THE SETTLEMENT PROJECT SUPPORT OFFICER ACTIONS

The Committee gave consideration to a report which provided an update on the progress of the Settlement Project Support Officer actions.

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee:

1. noted that the report highlighted the progress of actions to date;
2. reviewed the Settlement Project Support Officer actions and updates; and
3. agreed that a further report would be provided to the Committee in December 2026.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and

Economic Growth, dated 19 March 2026, submitted)

7. UPDATE ON THE ARGYLL AND THE ISLES STRATEGIC TOURISM PARTNERSHIP'S TOURISM STRATEGY FOR ARGYLL AND BUTE

The Committee gave consideration to a report which provided detail on the progress of the Visitor Economy Growth Strategy refresh 2025–28.

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee:

1. noted the background to the Argyll and the Isles Strategic Tourism Partnership Strategy ; and
2. endorsed the work of officers to work in partnership with the Argyll and the Isles Strategic Tourism Partnership to refresh the content of the Argyll and the Isles Strategic Tourism Partnership Tourism Strategy 2025-28.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth, dated 10 February 2026, submitted)

8. TRANSFORMATIONAL PROJECTS AND REGENERATION TEAM - LARGE SCALE PROJECT UPDATE REPORT

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing an update on the current progress of the large-scale, externally funded project work of the Transformational Projects and Regeneration Team, and key issues that may impact on the successful delivery of projects.

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee:

1. considered the current progress contained within the report; and
2. noted that further updates relating to pending funding bids would be brought back to the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee in due course to update Members.

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

*** 9. PUBLIC CONVENIENCE DOOR ACCESS CONTROL PROJECT**

The Committee gave consideration to a report which provided an update on the public convenience door access control project.

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee:

1. noted the outcomes of the review of the door-access charging systems, undertaken following the Committee decision of June 2024 to pause the rollout pending assessment of system reliability and income performance;
2. approved the proposal to retain charging at the four higher-performing sites (Inveraray, Helensburgh, Ardrishaig and Lochgilphead), where income levels remain sustainable and operational performance is acceptable;
3. agreed to recommend to Council that the remaining five sites revert to free access supported by honesty boxes, on the basis that this provides a proportionate, low-cost means of maintaining a public contribution mechanism at locations where charging infrastructure is not commercially viable;
4. noted that public conveniences are a non-statutory service and that charging was introduced as a means of supporting financial sustainability. The proposed hybrid model ensures income continues to be generated in a way that is proportionate and operationally manageable; and
5. agreed that the remaining unspent funding from the original £300,000 programme (c. £150k) be held over for a further report setting out future options for the Public Convenience estate.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Roads and Infrastructure Services, dated 1 March 2026, submitted)

10. ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STRATEGY - PROGRESS AND PROPOSED DELIVERY MODEL

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing an update on the delivery of Argyll and Bute's Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy and set out the proposed approach for implementing new charging infrastructure across the region.

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee:

1. noted the progress made to date on the assessment of proposed hub locations, existing network provision, site deliverability, and indicative costs for Phase One of the Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy;
2. approved the continued development of Phase One hub sites as identified through the updated hub appraisal, confirming that delivery remains within the approved Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund allocation;
3. agreed that a working allocation be retained for Islay, pending further detailed appraisal of alternative hub site options due to constraints identified at the current assessed location;
4. noted the updated working assumption for Phase One hub delivery, with the remaining balance to be delegated to Area Committees for Phase Two development in line with the previously approved area-based funding split;

5. endorsed ongoing work to assess procurement options, including the consideration of partners' commitment to achieving full readiness to commence the procurement process by winter 2026, and requested that officers present a preferred delivery model in a future report; and
6. agreed that a further update report be brought to Committee, setting out the preferred procurement route, refined cost estimates, and an implementation programme for Phase One hubs followed by Phase Two localised provision.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Roads and Infrastructure, dated 19 March 2026, submitted)

Councillor Iain Shonny Paterson left the meeting at 12:14pm, during discussion of agenda item 11 (Update on the Review of Public and School Transport).

11. UPDATE ON THE REVIEW OF PUBLIC AND SCHOOL TRANSPORT

The Committee gave consideration to a report which provided an update on the review of school and public transport.

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee:

1. noted that the council's existing service delivery arrangements are currently the most viable option;
2. agreed that officers continue to review service provision with contractors and the council's own team to ensure that school and public transport services continue to deliver best value for the council;
3. noted the options for reducing costs identified at paragraph 4.11b of the report;
4. agreed that officers review the policy options at paragraph 4.11b of the report to ensure that our services reflect best practice; and
5. agreed that officers continue to implement the action plan identified in paragraph 5.5 of the report.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Infrastructure Services, dated 2 February 2026, submitted)

12. REVIEW OF ROADS AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES - UPDATE

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing a further update on progress with the Roads and Infrastructure Services (RIS) Review. The report set out a clear mapping of the original 119 recommendations against the 12 priority improvement actions, noted progress on those actions currently being taken forward, and identified those actions that will not be progressed, together with the reasons for this.

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee:

1. noted the progress to date on the RIS review and the outstanding actions;
2. noted that a further report on progress would be presented to the Committee in June 2026; and
3. noted the progress with savings.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Roads and Infrastructure Services, dated 10 March 2026, submitted)

Councillor Gary Mulvaney left the meeting at 12:48pm, during discussion of agenda item 13 (Update on measures to protect against rockfalls on B8035, Gribun, Mull).

* **13. UPDATE ON MEASURES TO PROTECT AGAINST ROCKFALLS ON B8035, GRIBUN, MULL**

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing an update on the progress in pursuing the most appropriate method of protecting the road and its users from rockfalls and landslides at the B8035 at Gribun, Mull.

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee:

1. noted the report;
2. agreed that officers engage with the Scottish Government and local communities to pursue preferred option, Option 10 in Appendix 1 of the report, targeted descaling of the cliff to remove loose rock and boulders;
3. noted that the Committee would not support delisting the road at Gribun; and
4. agreed to recommend to the Policy and Resources Committee that £0.300m previously allocated to Gallanach rock fall from the Crown Estates fund be transferred for Gribun works and that an additional £0.200m from the Crown Estates fund in 2026/27 is also agreed.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Roads and Infrastructure Services, dated 24 February 2026, submitted)

14. PROJECT 20 - REQUEST TO PROGRESS TO IMPLEMENTATION

The Committee gave consideration to a report which sought consent from members for the implementation of proposed speed limits via Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTROs).

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee agreed that the project proceeds with the implementation of speed restriction TTROs following engagement with local Elected Members, Community Councils and the completion of the pre-implementation baseline speed surveys in each of our Council areas.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Infrastructure Services, dated 3 February 2026, submitted)

15. CEMETERY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME - PROGRESS REPORT 2025/26

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing details on the progress of the Cemetery Development, priority schemes programme, included as part of the annual update paper on available lair space, presented at the 2025 December Committee meeting.

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee:

1. noted the progress on fulfilling the conditions regarding Ecology and Archaeological surveys, in pursuit of full planning approval towards the construction of additional lair space at four specific cemeteries;
2. noted the efforts taken so far towards finding suitable land in Cowal and Mull towards sustaining a local burial service;
3. assessed the added value of further full-scale Archaeological investigations at Calgary, towards developing phase 1 of the proposed cemetery extension, as a parallel operation; and
4. agreed to assist and support officers in engaging further with local communities and landowners in Cowal and Mull, towards obtaining small sections of suitable ground or the development of local cemetery extensions or new facilities to preserve the burial service locally.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Roads and Infrastructure Services, dated February 2026, submitted)

16. ROADS CAPITAL RECONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME 2026-27

The Committee gave consideration to a report which provided details of the proposed roads reconstruction programme for 2026-27. Information provided related specifically to carriageway safety through surface treatments and improvements in roadside ditches, drains and culverts crossing under the road, as a response to the effects of Climate Change, to improve the resilience and safe use of the road network by replacing timber post safety barriers and upgrading road signs in the most needed areas.

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee:

1. endorsed the proposed capital works programme 2026-27 totalling £12M.

2. agreed to allocate:
 - a) £2.1M Strategic Schemes;
 - b) £2M Strategic Network Surface Dressing Treatment Schemes;
 - c) £1M for Vehicles Safety Fencing;
 - d) £100k Road signage improvements; and
 - e) £6.8M Area Resurfacing and Drainage schemes.
3. requested that officers engage with Elected Members regarding the unallocated £900K and that a final list of schemes within the overall budget and programme of works for 2026/27 be considered at the June 2026 meeting of the Committee.;
4. agreed that details of each Area Committee's Capital Works in Appendix 2 of the submitted report would be forwarded to individual Elected Members; and
5. noted that now a budget for roads reconstruction has been agreed for 2027-28, officers will carry out consultation with members in the third quarter of 2026-27 in respect of the 2027-28 programme.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Roads and Infrastructure Services, dated 10 March 2026, submitted)

17. NOTICE OF MOTION UNDER STANDING ORDER 14

The following Notice of Motion Under Standing Order 14 was before the Committee for consideration –

HITRANS (Highlands and Islands Regional Transport Partnership) have asked the council, at short notice, to provide support of their funding request to the UK Government's Green Aviation Programme. This fund is designed to accelerate zero-emission aviation technologies while supporting regional connectivity, economic development, and net zero objectives. HITRANS is required to submit its application to this fund before 11am on 1st April 2026 and has, at short notice, requested a letter of support to accompany its submission. Given the imminent nature of the deadline and the request for support from the Council, there is therefore an element of urgency in bringing this matter before Members.

If successful, the funding will support HITRANS' proposed Zero Emission Test and Demonstration (ZATE) project which builds on the success of the Sustainable Aviation Test Environment (SATE) programme and will deliver real-world zero-emission flight trials across the Highlands and Islands region, with clear benefits for remote and coastal communities.

Therefore, the Environment Development and Infrastructure committee agrees to;

1. Support HITRANS in its funding submission to the UK Government's Green Aviation Programme to access funding opportunities designed to accelerate zero-emission aviation technologies while supporting regional connectivity, economic development, and net zero objectives; and

2. Ask the Policy Lead for Roads, Transport and Amenities to write a letter to the UK Government's Department for Transport in support of HITRANS' funding submission to its £43 million green aviation programme.

Moved by Councillor Ross Moreland, seconded by Councillor Luna Martin

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee agreed the terms of the Motion.

(Reference: Notice of Motion Under Standing Order 14, moved by Councillor Ross Moreland, seconded by Councillor Luna Martin, submitted)

**18. ENVIRONMENT, DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE
WORK PLAN 2026/27**

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee workplan was before the Committee for noting.

Decision

The Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee noted the content of the workplan.

(Reference: Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee workplan, dated March 2026, submitted)