

MINUTES of MEETING of POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE held IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, KILMORY, LOCHGILPHEAD AND BY MICROSOFT TEAMS on THURSDAY, 4 DECEMBER 2025

Present: Councillor Jim Lynch (Chair)

Councillor John Armour	Councillor Luna Martin
Councillor Gordon Blair	Councillor Dougie McFadzean
Councillor Math Campbell-Sturgess	Councillor Yvonne McNeilly
Councillor Audrey Forrest	Councillor Ross Moreland
Councillor Kieron Green	Councillor Gary Mulvaney
Councillor Amanda Hampsey	Councillor Dougie Philand
Councillor Mark Irvine	Councillor Peter Wallace
Councillor Reeni Kennedy-Boyle	

Also Present: Councillor Tommy MacPherson

Attending: Pippa Milne, Chief Executive
Douglas Hendry, Executive Director
Kirsty Flanagan, Executive Director
Carolyn Earl, Interim Head of Financial Services
Fergus Murray, Head of Development and Economic Growth
Shona Barton, Governance Manager
Stuart Green, Corporate Support Manager

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 9 October 2025 were approved as a correct record.

*** 4. FINANCIAL MONITORING OVERVIEW - 31 OCTOBER 2025**

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing a summary of the overall financial position of the Council for 2025-26 as at 31 October 2025.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee –

1. approved the budget changes set out in Section 3 of the 2025-26 Revenue Budget Monitoring report and Section 4 of the Capital Plan Monitoring report;

2. approved 2025-26 financial support of £30k to Mid Argyll Community Pool from the Priorities Investment Fund, as outlined within paragraph 3.3.6 of the Reserves and Balances report;
3. noted the contents of the 2025-26 Revenue Budget Monitoring, Financial Risks, and Reserves and Balances reports as at 31 October 2025; and Capital Plan Monitoring report as at Quarter 2, 30 September 2025; and
4. agreed to recommend to Council that the revenue budget virements over £0.200m, set out at paragraph 3.2 of the Revenue Budget Monitoring report, are approved.

(Reference: Report by Section 95 Officer dated 20 November 2025, submitted)

5. BUDGET OUTLOOK 2026-27 TO 2030-31

The Committee gave consideration to a report summarising the Budget Outlook for the 5-year period 2026-27 to 2030-31 and providing an update to the position previously reported to the Policy and Resources Committee in October 2025.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee –

1. considered the current Budget Outlook position for the period 2026-27 to 2030-31; and
2. noted the revised Chief Executive pay agreed at COSLA Leaders, noting the consequential increases in remaining Chief Officers pay to maintain the Council's established policy position as set out at paragraph 4.3.12 and agreed that the cost of implementing these measures would be met from the existing earmarked reserve set aside for pay inflation increases in 2025-26 and the cost for 2026-27 and subsequent years would be added into the budget outlook estimates of the Council and IJB.

(Reference: Report by Section 95 Officer dated 19 November 2025, submitted)

6. ASPIRING PLACES: COMMUNITY PROJECTS IN ARGYLL AND BUTE

The Committee gave consideration to a report setting out key findings from an evaluation that had been completed following the launch of the Aspiring Places initiative. The report proposed that a wider and deeper piece of work was now required to build on understanding and to develop more sustainable solutions to managing grant funding.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee –

1. noted the successful launch of the Aspiring Places platform and that it remained a live site for the benefit of communities, funders and the Council;
2. noted the key findings from the evaluation of the scheme as set out in paragraphs 4.7 to 4.33 of the submitted report and in particular an emerging need to develop a more sustainable approach to managing government grant funds in an equitable manner for the Council and our communities alike; and

3. requested the Chief Executive to undertake a formal review of the approach to the management of grant funding in a manner that is aligned with the Corporate Plan and Connect for Success principles.

(Reference: Report by Chief Executive dated 5 November 2025, submitted)

* **7. ROYAL NATIONAL MOD 2028 - UPDATE**

The Committee gave consideration to a report seeking formal approval for Argyll and Bute to host the Royal National Mòd (RNM) in 2028.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee –

1. agreed to host the RNM in Oban in 2028;
2. agreed to enter into an agreement with An Comunn to provide a maximum of £200K financial support over a four year period with the final payment in financial year 2028-2029;
3. agreed to enter into an agreement with Live Argyll to secure the use of the venues for the duration of the RNM for £25k;
4. agreed to recommend to Council that the total financial commitment of up to £225k is funded from the Unallocated General Fund; and
5. noted that this agreement would enable An Comunn Board to proceed with announcing the location of the RNM 2028 and to proceed with planning, publicity and attracting other funding to enable the event to take place.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth dated 27 October 2025, submitted)

8. EVALUATION OF THE ARGYLL AND BUTE GIFT CARD SCHEME

The Committee gave consideration to a report presenting an overview of the Love Local Argyll and Bute Gift Card Scheme, introduced in 2021 as part of the Council's COVID-19 economic recovery response.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee –

1. noted the positive outcomes of the Love Local Argyll and Bute Gift Card scheme, including its role in supporting local businesses and facilitating targeted public funding since its introduction in 2021;
2. approved proposals to continue the scheme until the end of the current contract term (12 October 2027), with a focus on optimising impact, supporting businesses and winding down the scheme;

3. approved the revised contract terms offered by Miconex, including a 15% discount on physical program fees and the waiver of digital program fees for the remainder of the term;
4. approved additional spend of £17,040 in respect of the cost of proposals to continue the scheme until the end of the current contract term (12 October 2027), to be funded from the remaining uncommitted earmarked reserve balance (£22,826) in respect of LACER funding;
5. agreed that the Council would provide notice to Miconex on or before 12 April 2027 to terminate the scheme; and
6. endorsed proposals for the Council to continue to promote the “Shop Local” message through the corporate communications team and other community engagement activities.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth dated 31 October 2025, submitted)

9. POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

The Policy and Resources Committee Workplan was before the Committee for noting.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee noted the content of the Workplan.

(Reference: Policy and Resources Committee Workplan as at 4 December 2025, submitted)