

SOUTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL.

Minutes of a hybrid webcast meeting
on 12 December 2024 at 10.00 a.m.

Present in County Buildings: Councillors Iain Campbell (Provost), Laura Brennan-Whitefield, Ian Cavana, Alec Clark, Ian Davis, Brian Connolly, Chris Cullen, Julie Dettbarn, Mark Dixon, Martin Dowey, William Grant, Hugh Hunter, Martin Kilbride, Mary Kilpatrick, Alan Lamont, Craig Mackay, Brian McGinley, Bob Pollock, Cameron Ramsay, Philip Saxton, Gavin Scott, Bob Shields, Duncan Townson and George Weir.

Present Remotely: Councillors Kenneth Bell, Ian Cochrane, Stephen Ferry and Lee Lyons.

Attending in County Buildings: M. Newall, Chief Executive; K. Braidwood, Director of Housing Operations and Development; J. Bradley, Director of Strategic Change and Communities; C. Caves, Chief Governance Officer; T. Baulk, Chief Financial Officer; C. Cox, Assistant Director – Planning and Development; K. Dalrymple, Assistant Director – Housing and Operations; G. Hunter, Assistant Director of Communities; L Reid, Assistant Director – Transformation; K. Anderson, Assistant Director – Corporate Policy, Strategy and Performance; D. Yuille, Service Lead – Special Property Projects; T. Burns, Service Lead – Asset Management and Community Asset Transfer; R. Jamieson, Co-ordinator (Asset Management); J. McClure, Committee Services Lead Officer; K. Hancox, Committee Services Officer; R. Anderson, Committee Services Assistant; C. McCallum, Committee Services Assistant; E. Moore, Committee Services Assistant; and A. Goodwin, Clerical Assistant.

Also Attending: J. Dunne, Brodies LLP (for item 4 only).

1. Provost.

The Provost

- (1) welcomed everyone to the meeting, outlined the procedures for conducting this meeting and advised that this meeting would be broadcast live;
- (2) intimated that no apologies had been received; and
- (3) referred to the recent sad death of ex-Councillor Ann Galbraith.

2. Sederunt and Declarations of Interest.

The Chief Executive called the Sederunt for the meeting and having called the roll, confirmed that Councillor Hunter declared an interest in item 12 of this Minute as he was a Trustee of Prestwick Civic Pride.

3. Minutes of previous meetings

(1) Minutes of Previous Meetings of the Council.

Provost Iain Campbell, seconded by Councillor Mary Kilpatrick, moved the Minutes of South Ayrshire Council of [10 October 2024](#) as a correct record.

The Council

Decided: to approve the Minutes of 10 October 2024 and authorise these minutes to be signed as a correct record.

(2) Minutes of previous meetings of Panels.

The Minutes of the undernoted Panels were submitted for information:-

The minutes (copies previously issued) of the undernoted meetings are for noting:-

- (i) Appeals Panel of [17 September 2024](#).
- (ii) Audit and Governance Panel of [26 September 2024 \(Special\)](#), [2 October 2024](#) and [6 November 2024](#).
- (iii) Cabinet of [25 September 2024](#) and [29 October 2024](#).
- (iv) Local Review Body of [3 September 2024](#) and [5 November 2024](#)
- (v) Regulatory Panel – Licensing of [18 September 2024 \(Special\)](#), [26 September 2024](#) and [31 October 2024](#).
- (vi) Regulatory Panel – Planning of [12 September 2024](#).
- (vii) Service and Partnerships Performance Panel of [17 September 2024](#) and [22 October 2024](#).

Variation in Order of Business

In terms of Standing Order No. 13.3, Provost, seconded by Councillor Mary Kilpatrick, moved to vary the order of business to consider items 17 to 19 on the agenda at the start of the meeting with item 18 being considered first.

In terms of Standing Order No. 19.9, there was no general agreement to the unopposed motion, therefore, the Council moved to a vote undertaken for or against the Motion. Twenty five Members voted for the Motion, two voted against the Motion and one Member abstained and the Council agreed to vary the order of business as hereinafter minuted.

Exclusion of press and public.

Councillor Martin Dowey, seconded by Councillor Bob Pollock, moved that the following three items of business on the agenda be considered in private.

In terms of Standing Order No. 19.9, there was no general agreement to the unopposed motion, therefore, the Council moved to a vote undertaken for or against the Motion. Twenty four Members voted for the Motion, three Members voted against the Motion and one Member Abstained and the Council

Decided: to agree to consider the following three items of business in private.

The Council resolved, in terms of Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, that the press and public be excluded during consideration of the remaining items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information in terms of paragraphs 8 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

4. Corton

There was submitted a report (issued – Members only) of 5 December 2024 by the Director of Housing, Operations and Development

- (1) advising the Council of the financial, legal and procurement implications arising from the request by Allanvale (Prestwick) Homes Ltd (the 'Applicant') for funding from the Council for Corton, Ayr related to their planning applications 23/00261/FURM and 23/00345/APP. These proposals are as set out in Heads of Terms (the 'Draft HoTs') submitted by the Applicant who was the current landowner at Corton; and
- (2) at this stage Council was being asked if it approved in principle providing funding of £21.41m to the Corton Landowner and, if so, to authorise officers to negotiate terms with the Applicant. This report was accordingly focused on the principle of the Applicant's proposal rather than detailed terms, which would have to be negotiated.

Councillor Bob Pollock, seconded by Councillor William Grant, moved the recommendations as outlined in the report.

Following a full discussion on the recommendations in the paper and the supporting Appendices and questions from Members responded to by J. Dunne, Brodies LLP and the Chief Governance Officer, a Member requested a roll-call vote and the Chief Governance Officer took the vote For or Against the Motion by calling the roll as follows:-

Iain Campbell	For
Mary Kilpatrick	For
Kenneth Bell	Abstain
Laura Brennan-Whitefield	For
Ian Cavana	For
Alec Clark	For
Ian Cochrane	For
Brian Connolly	For
Chris Cullen	For
Ian Davis	For
Julie Dettbarn	For
Mark Dixon	For
Martin Dowey	For
Stephen Ferry	For
William Grant	For
Hugh Hunter	For
Martin Kilbride	For
Alan Lamont	For
Lee Lyons	For
Craig Mackay	For
Brian McGinley	For
Bob Pollock	For
Cameron Ramsay	For
Philip Saxton	For
Gavin Scott	For
Bob Shields	For
Duncan Townson	For
George Weir	For

Twenty seven Members voted for the Motion and one Member abstained, therefore, the Council

Decided:

- (a) not to approve the provision to the Corton Landowner of £21.41m as requested by the Corton Applicant for the reasons detailed in the report:
 - (i) there was a significant risk that the provision of the funding would be unlawful and prohibited by section 12(1)(b) of the Subsidy Control Act 2022 (SCA) since:
 - (A) there was a significant risk that the provision of financial assistance by the Council for the infrastructure at Corton would constitute a subsidy within the meaning of the SCA because the benefit of the infrastructure is primarily to the Landowner;
 - (B) a subsidy was prohibited by section 12(1)(b) of the SCA unless the Council was satisfied that it was consistent SCA; and
 - (C) the evidence collated by officers and set out in the assessments in Appendices 4 to 10 was insufficient to demonstrate that the subsidy is consistent with the subsidy control principles for the reasons set out in the report and Appendix 8, in particular, because officers had been unable to identify a common interest objective that sought to remedy an identified market failure or social inequity and that required the funding to be provided;
 - (ii) the provision of the funding of £21.41m was not consistent with the Council's duty to make arrangements which secured best value as required by section 1 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 for the reasons set out in the report and Appendix 11;
 - (iii) the provision of grant funding to the Landowner to procure infrastructure works at Corton without ensuring that the Applicant appointed a contractor following a regulated procurement procedure may place the Council in breach of its duty under regulation 14 of the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015; and
 - (iv) the provision of the funding to the Applicant to purchase the land at the values requested in the Applicant's Heads of Terms would breach the Council's Acquisition and Disposals Policy and the valuation of the land at the level sought by the Applicant did not represent best value; and
- (b) requests officers to advise the Applicant and the Regulatory Panel that the request for funding was refused and asked the Regulatory Panel to determine the Planning Applications 23/00261/FURM and 23/00345/APP in accordance with the planning considerations.

5. Solar Farms Feasibility Study

There was submitted a report (issued – Members only) of 4 December 2024 by the Director of Housing, Operations and Development providing an update on Asset Management's recently commissioned phase 1 feasibility study for solar generation on South Ayrshire land; and seeking approval for Asset Management to pursue the development and 2nd phase feasibility work on Auchincruive bing, also known as the Glenburn bing in Prestwick; and the Cockhill Farm site, of the A713, Ayr.

Councillor Pollock, seconded by Councillor Kilbride moved an addition to the recommendation in the report as follows:

"The existing recommendations in the report remain and an additional recommendation be added, namely:

In addition to the two sites identified in 2.1.2 of the report, request officers to submit a bid to the Transformation Board to commission further phase 2 consultancy support related into the potential of the 'Greenan Grazing site' (identified in Appendix A) and note that where the bid, together with funding, is approved by the Transformation Board then further work will be commissioned by officers into the feasibility of the Greenan site."

A Member then requested an adjournment to consider this addition to the recommendation.

Adjournment

The time being 11.08 a.m., the Council adjourned.

Resumption of Meeting

The Council resumed at 11.15 a.m.

A full discussion took place and questions were raised by Members and responded to by the Assistant Director – Planning, Development and Regulation and the Service Lead – Asset Management and Community Asset Transfer.

A Member requested a roll-call vote and the Chief Governance Officer took the vote For or Against the Motion by calling the roll as follows:-

Iain Campbell	For
Mary Kilpatrick	For
Kenneth Bell	For
Laura Brennan-Whitefield	For
Ian Cavana	Against
Alec Clark	For
Ian Cochrane	For
Brian Connolly	For
Chris Cullen	For
Ian Davis	For
Julie Dettbarn	For
Mark Dixon	For
Martin Dowey	For
Stephen Ferry	For
William Grant	For
Hugh Hunter	For
Martin Kilbride	For
Alan Lamont	For
Lee Lyons	For
Craig Mackay	For
Brian McGinley	Against
Bob Pollock	For
Cameron Ramsay	Abstain
Philip Saxton	Against
Gavin Scott	For
Bob Shields	For
Duncan Townson	Abstain
George Weir	For

Twenty three Members voted for the Motion, three Members voted against the Motion and two Members abstained, therefore, the Council

Decided:

- (1) to note the findings of the commissioned APSE report 'Potential Solar Farm on Council owned land Phase 1' (as outlined in Appendix A to the report);
- (2) to consider and approve Asset Management's proposal for the Council to develop the Auchincruive Bing site in Glenburn, Prestwick and the Cockhill Farm site for a solar asset (as outlined in the Addendum (confidential) to this report);
- (3) to consider and approve the commissioning of phase 2 consultancy support from APSE for the Auchincruive (Glenburn) Bing and Cockhill sites (as outlined in Appendix B to the report);
- (4) having given approval of (3) above, to approve allocation of budget required for phase 2 consultancy support from APSE and development (£234,000) to be met from the Transformation Fund subject to final approval of the business case by the Transformation Board; and
- (5) that, in addition to the two sites identified in (2) above, to request officers to submit a bid to the Transformation Board to commission further phase 2 consultancy support related to the potential of the 'Greenan Grazing site' (identified in Appendix A to the report) and note that where the bid, together with funding, was approved by the Transformation Board then further work would be commissioned by officers into the feasibility of the Greenan site."

6. Proposed Public Realm and Redevelopment at Y

There was submitted a report (issued – Members only) of 4 December 2024 by the Director of Housing, Operations and Development providing an update on the early work undertaken on the Burns Statue Square Project; and seeking approval for the next steps

Councillor Martin Dowey, seconded by Councillor Bob Pollock, moved the recommendations as outlined in the report.

A full discussion took place and questions were raised by Members and responded to by the Assistant Director – Planning, Development and Regulation and the Service Lead – Asset Management and Community Asset Transfer.

A Member requested a roll-call vote and the Chief Governance Officer took the vote For or Against the Motion by calling the roll as follows:-

Iain Campbell	For
Mary Kilpatrick	For
Kenneth Bell	For
Laura Brennan-Whitefield	For
Ian Cavana	For
Alec Clark	For
Ian Cochrane	For
Brian Connolly	For
Chris Cullen	For
Ian Davis	For
Julie Dettbarn	For
Mark Dixon	For
Martin Dowey	For

Stephen Ferry	For
William Grant	For
Hugh Hunter	For
Martin Kilbride	For
Alan Lamont	For
Lee Lyons	For
Craig Mackay	For
Brian McGinley	For
Bob Pollock	For
Cameron Ramsay	For
Philip Saxton	For
Gavin Scott	For
Bob Shields	For
Duncan Townson	For
George Weir	For

Twenty eight Members voted for the Motion, therefore, the Council unanimously

Decided:

- (1) to note the early work undertaken on the project to establish outline proposals;
- (2) to note the projected costs for the project at £14.9m;
- (3) to agree that Council Officers submit an application to reposition existing Levelling Up Fund (LUF) funding to cover the cost of the project;
- (4) to approve the assignment of £16m from the £22m Ayr Town Centre Regeneration Works budget line in the General Services Capital Programme to allow work to continue whilst discussions were ongoing with UK Government;
- (5) to note the next stage of work, following the outcome of traffic modelling, would involve preparation of a Draft Burns Statue Square Development Plan which would be the subject of public consultation; and
- (6) to note that officers would engage with Elected Members through the Ayr Town Centre Member Officer Group as these proposals were being advanced towards a Draft Development Plan.

7. Consideration of Disclosure of the above Confidential Reports.

Decided:

- (1) not to authorise the disclosure under Standing Order 32.4 of the following report until it had been considered by the Regulatory Panel (Planning):
 - Corton
- (2) not to authorise the disclosure under Standing Order 32.4 of the following report until it had been discussed in terms of GDPR
 - Solar Farms Feasibility Study
- (3) not to authorise the disclosure under Standing Order 32.4 of the following report:
 - Proposed Public Realm and Redevelopment at Y

8. Review of Governance Arrangements Regarding Ward Capital Fund and Shorefront/ Promenade Capital Projects

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 5 December 2024 by the Director of Housing, Operations and Development recommending revised governance arrangements for Place Planning and Community Lead Projects (hereinafter known as 'Ward Capital Projects and Shorefront/ Promenade Capital Projects') to provide for a more simplified and responsive set of arrangements to approve projects whilst ensuring that proper financial, legal and other regulatory diligence was maintained

The Assistant Director – Planning, Development and Regulation introduced the report and advised that extensive discussion had taken place with Members on this matter; that it was proposed that the Director of Housing, Operations and Development's Delegated Powers be amended to enable him to formally approve expenditure from the Ward Capital Fund and Shorefront/Promenade Capital projects up to £100,000; and that the next report on the agenda was "Scheme of Delegation" as this would require to be amended should this report be approved.

Councillor Martin Dowey, seconded by Councillor Alec Clark, moved the recommendations as outlined in the report.

Comments were made and questions raised by Members in relation to:

- (1) the meaning of CAMG's "consideration of Business Case and Equalities Impact and public consultation requirements"; and the Assistant Director – Planning, Development and Regulation advised that part of the terms of the Council's Financial Regulations outlined that all capital spend required to be considered first by CAMG to ensure that the Council undertook due diligence in all spend and secured best value and that, in the main, the CAMG approved what came forward for consideration, however, sometimes due diligence had not been carried out and CAMG was not satisfied that best value had been achieved and these cases were therefore not brought forward for members' consideration. The Member then enquired if all considerations by CAMG on Ward Capital Fund and Shorefront/ Promenade Capital Projects would be brought back to Ward Members for a decision; and the Assistant Director – Planning, Development and Regulation advised that CAMG required to approve all spend. Having heard the Member outline that he was not happy that officers could block proposals without Members being given an opportunity to take a decision, the Chief Financial Officer advised that CAMG was part of the Council's governance process and that Audit Scotland at a recent meeting had outlined that they were happy that CAMG had the final say as this was a diligence process and was public spend, therefore, Members' views would be taken into account, however, individual Members could not take a decision on funding. Having heard the Member enquire if CAMG would only make recommendations and not take decisions, the Chief Financial Officer advised that CAMG made recommendations and ultimately the decision was one for Members to take;
- (2) paragraph 4.2 of the report regarding the amendment to the creation of paragraph HOD90.2 in the Scheme of Delegation, outlining that additional wording should be included to read "in relation to the Ward Capital Fund and Shorefront/ Promenade Capital projects, following consultation with the Ward Councillors in the relevant Ward, **and where there is consensus with the Ward Members**; and consideration by the Capital Asset Management Group, to formally approve expenditure from that fund on works requiring to be undertaken, provided the amount involved does not exceed £100,000"; and the Chief Executive and Director of Housing, Operations and Development agreed to this amendment;

- (3) the £100,000 threshold; and whether the value of the projects had an impact on the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA); and the Assistant Director – Planning, Development and Regulation advised that £100,000 was the figure outlined in the Financial Regulations as the threshold; and that the impact on the EIA would be on protected groups rather than financial spend; and that the more significant the spend, the more impact on the groups;
- (4) if the project was refused by CAMG, would it then go back to Ward Members for consideration; and the Chief Financial Officer advised that CAMG only generally turned a project down when it was not for capital investment purposes, and that if CAMG said no to a suggestion there was something fundamentally wrong, eg if it was revenue expenditure and not capital expenditure;
- (5) that if CAMG turned down a project, Ward Members should be advised why; and
- (6) that any benefits to the public should be highlighted in the EIA as having a positive impact.

The Council

Decided:

- (a) to agree the approval process and governance arrangements for Ward Capital and Shorefront/ Promenade Capital Projects as set out in Appendix 1 of the report; and
- (b) to request the Chief Governance Officer to amend the Council's Scheme of Delegation, to reflect the required changes to delegated powers as set out in paragraph 4.2 of the report subject to the newly created paragraph HOD90.2: "in relation to the Ward Capital Fund and Shorefront/Promenade Capital projects, following consultation with the Ward Councillors in the relevant Ward, and where there is consensus with the Ward Members; and consideration by the Capital Asset Management Group, to formally approve expenditure from that fund on works requiring to be undertaken, provided the amount involved does not exceed £100,000".

9. Scheme of Delegation

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 5 December 2024 by the Chief Governance Officer seek approval to amend the Scheme of Delegation following review.

The Chief Governance Officer introduced the report and advised that the proposed amendments to the Scheme of Delegation were as outlined in Appendix 1 to the report with the additional wording at paragraph HOD90.2 as agreed at item 8, paragraph (b) of this Minute.

Councillor Martin Dowey, seconded by Councillor Bob Pollock, moved the recommendations as outlined in the report.

A question was raised by a Member regarding the report entitled "Amendments to the Scheme for Establishment of Community Councils" which had been considered by Cabinet at its meeting of 29 October 2024, called-in and considered by Audit and Governance Panel at its meeting of 6 November 2024 and re-considered at Cabinet of 26 November 2024 when it had been decided to agree the recommendations of Audit and Governance Panel, namely that " the word "Council" be substituted for the word "Cabinet" where it occurred in the report in relation to any proposed dissolution of a Community Council; and that corresponding changes to the Council's governance documents reflect this change"; and the Member enquired if this report would be brought back to Council for further consideration; and the Chief Governance Officer advised that any proposal to dissolve a Community Council would be submitted to Council for approval, however, this report would not be re-submitted to Council as the decision had been taken by Cabinet to agree the recommendations of the Audit and Governance Panel; and she outlined the call-in procedure.

The Council

Decided: to approve the revised Scheme of Delegation (extract contained in Appendix 1 to the report) with effect from 13 December 2024.

10. **Appointments to Panels**

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 2 December 2024 by the Chief Governance Officer seeking approval to make alterations to the membership of Panels.

The Chief Governance Officer introduced the report.

Councillor Martin Dowey, seconded by Councillor Mary Kilpatrick, moved the recommendations as outlined in the report.

By way of Amendment, Councillor Philip Saxton, seconded by Councillor Brian McGinley, moved that recommendation 2.1.2 of the report be replaced by "the existing Chair of the Service and Partnerships Performance Panel, Councillor Philip Saxton, nominated by the Labour Group, shall remain as Chair of that Panel".

Councillor Saxton referred to the proposal to replace him as Chair of the Service and Partnerships Performance Panel; referred to the Chair of each scrutiny panel previously being members of the opposition; outlined that this change of Chair reduced the fundamental principles of democracy..

Point of Order

Councillor Martin Dowey raised a Point of Order in relation to this matter not concerning officers and Provost agreed.

Councillor Saxton then asked the Leader why he was being replaced as Chair of the Service and Partnerships Performance Panel and advised Councillor Cullen that accepting the Chair came at a price.

Point of Order

Councillor Chris Cullen raised a Point of Order that Councillor Saxton was accusing him of accepting a bribe and sought an apology.

Councillor Saxton outlined that he did not say that, he stated that if a Member received a position of prominence within the Council, a deal was being done. Provost stated that this was an inference that Councillor Cullen had taken something to become Chair when he was entitled to accept this position; and that Councillor Saxton should withdraw his statement. Councillor Saxton reiterated that there must have been a deal. Provost then referred to the previous administration when he was a member of the opposition and had been replaced on a Panel.

Questions were raised and comments made by Members in relation to:

- (1) why Councillor Saxton was being replaced by Councillor Cullen as Chair of the Service and Partnerships Performance Panel as he had carried out the role well; and Councillor Dowey advised that Councillor Cullen would be voting in the interests of the Alba Party and not the Conservative Party; that Councillor Cullen was a member of the Opposition and not a member of the Administration; that the Conservative Group did not do deals; that it was a decision of the Conservative Group to replace Councillor Saxton as Chair; and that this decision was a political one;
- (2) the scrutiny function should be carried out by the opposition parties and previously it was the main opposition parties who were chairs of the scrutiny panels reflecting the balance of the Council and the opposition parties had nominated the Chairs of the scrutiny panels; and Provost outlined that Councillor Cullen was a member of the opposition as an Alba Member;
- (3) that Councillor Saxton had carried out the role well and was not looking to stand down as Chair; and that scrutiny was being taken away from the opposition by a proposal being made by the Administration to remove the Councillor;

Point of Order

Councillor Chris Cullen raised a Point of Order that this was a decision for Council to make, not the administration.

The Chief Governance Officer then advised that, at the start of any administration, discussions took place with the opposition parties, proposals were made in papers after discussion with the opposition and independents and a decision was taken at Council on the members of each Panel and the Chairs of these Panels.

Further comments were then made and questions raised by Members in relation to:

- (4) the scant number of positions on Panels offered to the Conservative Group under the previous administration; and that this administration had been the most collegiate in offering positions to opposition groups;
- (5) that Councillor Cullen had only been in attendance in person at three meetings in the last twelve months;
- (6) that Councillor Saxton had left the last meeting of the former Partnerships Panel during the meeting; and
- (7) that during the previous administration the Conservative Party had refused the offer of a number of positions, including two positions on the Leadership Panel; and requesting a clear explanation as to why Councillor Saxton as a very able Chair was being replaced; and in response Councillor Dowey advised that he was happy to see Councillor Cullen as the new Chair of the Panel.

A Member requested a roll-call vote and the Chief Governance Officer took the vote For or Against the Motion by calling the roll as follows:-

Iain Campbell	Motion
Mary Kilpatrick	Motion
Kenneth Bell	Motion
Laura Brennan-Whitefield	Amendment
Ian Cavana	Amendment
Alec Clark	Motion
Ian Cochrane	Amendment
Brian Connolly	Motion
Chris Cullen	Motion
Ian Davis	Motion
Julie Dettbarn	Amendment
Mark Dixon	Motion
Martin Dowe	Motion
Stephen Ferry	Amendment
William Grant	Abstain
Hugh Hunter	Amendment
Martin Kilbride	Motion
Alan Lamont	Motion
Lee Lyons	Motion
Craig Mackay	Amendment
Brian McGinley	Amendment
Bob Pollock	Motion
Cameron Ramsay	Amendment
Philip Saxton	Amendment
Gavin Scott	Motion
Bob Shields	Motion
Duncan Townson	Amendment
George Weir	Amendment

Fifteen Members voted for the Motion, twelve Members voted for the Amendment and one Member abstained, therefore, the Council

Decided: having considered any other amendments which might be required to membership of Panels,

- (a) to note the change in the representative intimated by the Conservative Group identified at 4.2 of the report, namely that Councillor Kenneth Bell replace Councillor Lee Lyons as a Conservative member of the Licensing Board;
- (b) to appoint Councillor Chris Cullen as the new Chair of the Service and Partnerships Performance Panel; and
- (c) to request that officers make the required amendments to the list of Panels to reflect these changes.

Time of Meeting

The time being 12.30 p.m., Provost, seconded by Councillor Dowey moved that Council agree to continue the meeting beyond 2.00 p.m. as the business of the meeting was not likely to be completed by 2.00 p.m., in accordance with Standing Order No. 6.2.

The Council

Decided: to continue the meeting beyond 2.00 p.m. in accordance with Standing Order No. 6.2.

Adjournment

The time being 12.35 p.m., the Council adjourned.

Resumption of Meeting

The meeting resumed at 1.30 p.m.

Councillor Kenneth Bell did not re-join the meeting.

11. Representation on Outside Bodies

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 2 December 2024 by the Chief Governance Officer seeking approval to make amendments to the list of Outside Bodies.

The Chief Governance Officer introduced the report and advised that when Councillor Hugh Hunter had resigned from the Ayrshire Valuation Joint Board, he had been Chair of that Board.

Councillor Martin Dowey, seconded by Councillor Mary Kilpatrick, moved the recommendations as outlined in the report.

A question was raised by a Member on why the Council was just nominating a Member on KIMO International now; and another Member advised that the previous Leader of the Council had received an invitation to join this Group and had accepted the invitation. The Director of Housing, Operations and Development further advised that Ayrshire Roads Alliance and Neighbourhood Services shared the cost of the membership fees; and that around Girvan Harbour fishermen collected plastic which was placed in skips and removed by Neighbourhood Services.

In terms of Standing Order No. 19.9, there was no general agreement to the unopposed motion, therefore, the Council moved to a vote undertaken for or against the Motion. Twenty four Members voted for the Motion, two voted against the Motion and one Member abstained and the Council having considered any other amendments which might be required to representation on Outside Bodies

Decided:

- (1) to add KIMO International to the list of Outside Bodies;
- (2) to confirm Councillor Mark Dixon's appointment as the Council's representative on KIMO International;

- (3) to note the change in the representative nominated by the Conservative Group as outlined in 4.5 of the report, namely Councillor Martin Dowe to replace Councillor Hugh Hunter on the Ayrshire Valuation Joint Board;
- (4) to note the proposal that Councillor Mark Dixon be recommended to the Ayrshire Valuation Joint Board as Chair from the South Ayrshire Council membership of the Board (as outlined in 4.6 of the report);
- (5) to note the change in the representative nominated by the SNP Group identified in 4.8 of the report, namely Councillor Craig Mackay to replace Councillor Ian Cochrane on the Strathclyde Concessionary Travel Scheme Joint Committee; and
- (6) to note the feedback from the Strathclyde Partnership for Transport as outlined in 4.10 of the report namely that Council representation was from Elected Members and no officer representation was required, therefore the Director of Housing, Operations and Development be removed from the membership of Strathclyde Partnership for Transport and the Strathclyde Concessionary Travel Scheme Joint Committee.

12. Representation on Working Groups

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 2 December 2024 by the Chief Governance Officer seeking approval to make alterations to the list of Working Groups.

The Chief Governance Officer introduced the report.

Councillor Martin Dowe, seconded by Councillor Mary Kilpatrick, moved the recommendations as outlined in the report.

The Council, having considered any other amendments which might be required to representation on Working Groups,

Decided: to note the change in the representative nominated by the Conservative Group identified in 4.2 of the report, namely that Councillor Bob Pollock replace Councillor Lee Lyons on the First Tier Joint Consultative Committee.

13. Appointments to Convention of Scottish Local Authorities Policy Boards

There was submitted a **report** ([issued](#)) of 29 November 2024 by the Chief Governance Officer seeking Council's approval to make alterations to the list of representatives on the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) Policy Board.

Councillor Martin Dowe, seconded by Councillor Mary Kilpatrick, moved the recommendations as outlined in the report.

In terms of Standing Order No. 19.9, there was no general agreement to the unopposed motion, therefore, the Council moved to a vote undertaken for or against the Motion. Twenty two Members voted for the Motion, three voted against the Motion and two Members abstained and the Council, having considered any other amendments which might be required to COSLA Policy Board representation.

Decided: to note the change in the representative nominated by the Conservative Group, namely that Councillor William Grant replace Councillor Stephen Ferry on the COSLA Children and Young People Policy Board.

Councillor Bob Pollock left the meeting at this point.

14. Medium Term Financial Plan 2025-26 to 2029-30

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 29 November 2024 by the Chief Financial Officer seeking approval of the Council's updated Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2025-26 to 2029-30 and associated Budget Strategy for the 2025-26 budget.

The Chief Financial Officer introduced the report and advised

- (1) that the plan attached as Appendix 1 to the report contained details of the key factors and assumptions taken into account when assessing the financial outlook, a summary of the assessed five year financial outlook, details of the Council's reserves policy and a budget strategy providing options designed to address the estimated cumulative five year budget gap of £40m;
- (2) that, as stated in the key planning assumption 1 on page 5 of the Appendix, the plan assumed a flat cash funding position from the Scottish Government across the five year period of the plan which was effectively a real terms cut in funding; that the recent Scottish Government budget announcement would most likely have a positive impact on the funding gaps projected, especially in 2025/26; that the detailed information and level of funding that the Council would receive for 2025/26 was yet to be provided by the Scottish Government but the up-to-date funding position, once confirmed, would be factored into the ongoing Budget Working Group discussions prior to the Council setting its 2025/26 budget in February 2025;
- (3) that in the budget he planned to include an update of the five year financial outlook which would be presented based on the new information from the Scottish Government; and that, despite the potentially more positive Scottish Government funding position for 2025/26, this should not detract from the overall financial outlook and significant budget gaps estimated in the later years of the plan;
- (4) that the budget strategy contained within the plan outlined seven key strategic options designed to address the estimated gap by firstly generating more income through Council Tax and other fees and charges, limiting cost pressure rises where possible, reducing the capital investment programme to limit future rises and costs and by reducing the Council's cost base through ongoing transformational change programmes and other service proposals; and
- (5) that, in terms of reducing the costs of the Council's cost base, 50% of the Council's gross spend related to staff costs so many reports brought forward for Members' consideration through the Transformation Programme and other service saving proposals would have a significant impact on staff and service provision to the public, therefore, difficult decisions lay ahead despite the Scottish Government settlement to maintain a balanced and legal budget over the next five years.

Councillor Ian Davis, seconded by Councillor Dowey, moved the recommendations as outlined in the report with the addition of a further recommendation, namely:

"2.1.4 that Council notes that bridging budget gaps of this scale to achieve a balanced budget will need to involve the transformation of services, reductions in Council assets and, given that staff costs make up 50% of the gross budget, there is no realistic way that savings of the level required can be achieved without a reduction in overall staffing numbers."

Questions were raised by Members and comments made in relation to:

- (a) this Council being like other Local Authorities in that the Council was facing a challenging financial environment over the coming years; that the savings when updated settlements were factored in were likely to be a sum of just under £40m mentioned in figure 1 of the report to make over the next five years; that additional funding in the Scottish Government budget made a dent, however, the detailed settlement required to be examined; that with how much of the Council budget was ring-fenced, these savings would amount to a substantial percentage of the unprotected budgets; that balancing the budget at this scale required the Council to move at pace and have buy-in from all staff; that this would involve the measures mentioned in the budget strategy section of the paper including transformation of services and reduction of assets and for the Council to consider overall staffing numbers, as staff costs made up around 50% of the gross budget so there was no realistic way that this level of savings could be achieved without examining this area;
- (b) that the Council had been assisted by the funding from the Scottish Government, however, a freeze on non-essential posts would be required to enable budget setting over the next two years; that some Local Authorities were in a worse position and were facing bankruptcy; and that this was probably the most challenging time this Council had ever faced;
- (c) as 2026/27 would be a challenging time, could the Leader confirm if the decision on no compulsory redundancies would stand; and Councillor Dowey advised that the Council faced a challenging time going forward, therefore compulsory redundancies would be on the table, however, this was a decision for Council to take;
- (d) who would decide which posts were non-essential and whether liaison with Trade Unions would take place; and Councillor Dowey advised that officers, in conjunction with Trade Unions would decide which posts were non-essential;
- (e) the 17.5% pension contribution rate for the Strathclyde Pension Scheme (SPF) for 2026/27; and the Chief Financial Officer advised that the SPF set their plans over a three year period and in 2024/25 had decided that they expected Councils to contribute 6.5% for 2024/25, 6/5% for 2025/26 and 17.5% for 2026/27 and thereafter would carry out a triennial valuation when the 17.5% could go up or down;
- (f) concerns regarding the wording of the additional recommendation submitted by Councillor Davis; and Councillor Davis advised that he would be happy to discuss the wording of his additional recommendation;
- (g) the "Transformation Programme" within Appendix 2 of the report and whether there was a figure for the amount realised and how much was being sought; and the Chief Financial Officer advised that this was only now starting to gather pace and he did not have a figure at present so could not say what had been achieved to date;
- (h) page 21 of the report regarding "allocating targets if necessary being based on controllable resource methodology being reported back for Members' consideration in December 2024" and when Members would receive this; and the Chief Financial Officer advised that this had been relevant at the time the report had been written and the position may be different once the funding from the Scottish Government had been announced;

- (i) "Key Planning Assumption 4: Any increase in National Insurance contributions resulting from the planned UK government Changes will be mitigated through additional funding and will not impact on projected budget gaps" and whether there was any further information on how likely this was to happen; and the Chief Financial Officer advised that when the UK budget was announced in November 2024 there was a statement made by the UK Government advising that the public sector element would be mitigated; that, since then negotiations had been ongoing with the UK and Scottish Governments and the assessment the UK Government put on the bill for the public sector in Scotland was around £300m, however, the Scottish Government's view was that this would be around £700m so there was a disparity and this was a key risk to the budget going forward; that the Council's five year plan was based on the assumption the Council would receive funding so this may require to be reassessed;
- (j) "The modelled funding gap of £40.0m represents around 11% of the current 2024-25 net budget (inclusive of HSCP spend). This is a significant level of savings that need to be achieved." and whether the Health and Social Care Partnership would be contributing to this; and the Chief Financial Officer advised that this would be a flat cash settlement, however, any funding received relevant to the HSCP would be passed to them;
- (k) whether there had been feedback from the Scottish Government on teacher numbers as the expenditure in Education Service was £142.4m in 2024-25 or 41% of the Councils overall net budget; and the Chief Financial Officer advised that there had been discussions between the Scottish Government, COSLA and local authorities on teacher numbers and funding was being released by the Scottish Government, however, he would require to see the detail; and that it was down to individual Councils to examine the number of pupils and number of teachers, however, there were caveats attached to the funding; and that the South Ayrshire school rolls were on a downward trend;
- (l) how far school rolls would fall before action would be taken; and the Chief Financial Officer advised that this was outwith his area of expertise how this was managed;
- (m) that staff numbers required to be examined and not be delayed;
- (n) that a workforce plan was in place and this required to be worked through to examine staff numbers;
- (o) that some difficult decisions required to be made to achieve savings; that it was not prudent to predict there may be more funding received going forward; and, in relation to the pension fund, what happened in the future would depend on various factors.

The Council, having considered and approved the MTFP, attached as Appendix 1 to the report,

Decided:

- (i) to note the potential cumulative five-year budget gap based on the assumptions contained in the plan was £40.0m; and
- (ii) to approve the budget strategy as contained in Section 4 of Appendix 1, developed to address the anticipated cumulative budget gap; and

- (iii) that Council note that bridging budget gaps of this scale to achieve a balanced budget would need to involve the transformation of services, reductions in Council assets and, given that staff costs made up 50% of the gross budget, there was no realistic way that savings of the level required could be achieved without a reduction in overall staffing numbers.”

15. South Ayrshire Council Annual Performance Report 2023/2024

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 29 November 2024 by the Depute Chief Executive and Director of Education providing ‘South Ayrshire Council’s - Annual Performance Report 2023/24’.

The Chief Executive referred to the Council's ongoing improvements in relation to Best Value obligations and advised

- (1) that in 2021 and 2023 the Council was encouraged by Audit Scotland to improve in a number of areas and that Audit Scotland had noted that very good progress had been made in all of these areas;
- (2) that in March 2024 Audit Scotland had presented their [thematic audit on workforce innovation](#) to the Audit and Governance Panel which reflected positively on the arrangements put in place by the Council; this specifically referenced strong strategic links between the Council plan, service planning processes and workforce plans; the Council had developed strong data sets and good workforce intelligence;
- (3) the Council and HG&SCP had introduced a number of innovative initiatives to improve skills and capacity of future and existing workforce and the Council had engaged openly with staff groups, trade unions and service changes;
- (4) in September 2024 Audit Scotland had presented the [Audited Annual Accounts](#) to the Audit and Governance Panel and the report had reflected on previous year's recommendations relating to Best Value considerations and noted the Council had made good progress with performance reporting and had adopted a systematic and comprehensive approach;
- (5) that there had been a greater strategic focus on improving the pace of change at the Council; that good progress had been made in completing actions in year one of the new Council Plan; that the Council now had a corporate approach to self-evaluation and was now embedded in the service planning process; that the new transformation board had provided the strategic integration and ownership of the Council's transformation plans and Audit Scotland had recognised the new leadership structure of the Council was driving sustainable change; and the Council would deliver on its Best Value obligations;'
- (6) that he had recently met with Audit Scotland who had confirmed that this Council was seen as an improving Council moving at pace; and that, as mentioned in Appendix 1 of this report, the Council's staff were its greatest asset and these improvements could not have been made without their hard work and dedication;
- (7) that, since taking up his role as Chief Executive in November 2023, he had the pleasure and privilege of meeting many colleagues throughout a range of services and he was always impressed at the resilience and ongoing commitment of staff to improving outcomes for the residents of South Ayrshire who contributed to the Council making a difference every day to the people of South Ayrshire;

- (8) that, he would like to thank all staff for their efforts and hard work and was grateful to the Leader for his acknowledgement and recognition in the foreword of the annual performance report where he confirmed his pride at the commitment, compassion and kindness of employees and recognised that the staff were the Council's biggest strength;
- (9) that the hard work and efforts of employees had placed the Council in a position where it was recognised as an improving Council moving at pace and, in addition to being recognised by Audit Scotland as an improving Council, Council services had been recognised nationally by winning awards;
- (10) that the awards won amplified that South Ayrshire Council and its community partners were seen as public services that delivered for communities in the most trying of times with a clear focus on outcomes and continuous improvement;
- (11) that he would like to thank his Corporate Leadership Team, Service Leads, Co-ordinators and all staff for playing their part in the Council's improving journey; and that this was a good news story as the overall performance taken from national benchmark data showed an improving Council year on year.

The Assistant Director – Corporate Policy, Strategy and Performance introduced the report and advised

- (a) that this annual report was in an updated format which he had worked on to present the data in a concise and engaging way, however, any feedback from members on the layout would be taken on board;
- (b) that this data represented the first year of the new Council Plan and the majority of actions were either completed or on track;
- (c) that the Council Plan actions were reported to the Corporate Leadership Team quarterly with updates scrutinised by the Service and Partnerships Performance Panel in quarters 2 and 4; and updates were available on pentana for information;
- (d) that the Local Government Benchmarking Framework data highlighted that South Ayrshire Council was an improving Council but this data should not be used as a definitive overview of performance but merely as a "can opener" to explore areas for improvement; and
- (e) that the performance team had provided services with individual data packs used as part of the self-evaluation activities and to inform the Council's service improvement plans.

Councillor Martin Dowey, seconded by Councillor Ian Davis, moved the recommendations as outlined in the report.

Comments were made and questions raised by Members in relation to:

- (i) this report making good reading; the Council moving in a positive direction; the transformation team working together towards making the Council a much more viable organisation going forward; and staff doing a lot of good work;
- (ii) the case study of employment and skills being pleasing as it was heartening to see the progression of staff;

- (iii) the exciting and innovative work highlighted in the report which was ongoing in South Ayrshire, the likes of which would not be carried out in other local authorities; congratulating everyone involved in this report and welcoming what work would be undertaken in 2025;
- (iv) that, in terms of managing performance, the corporate responsibility had made a significant difference; that the progress could now be seen and it was linked to the strategic objectives which was a significant improvement; the importance of the CLT working together and officers taking responsibility for their areas; the contribution across integrated areas; and the direction and leadership of the Chief Executive who had provided focus to officers;
- (v) page 4 of the Performance Report where Culture and Leisure was shown on the table as 88% declined in terms of improvement; and the Director of Strategic Change and Communities advised that these were 2022/23 figures as the Local Government Benchmark Framework indicators run behind; that these figures could be impacted negatively by a range of circumstances and the data was based on income generated as opposed to the cost of running services and South Ayrshire Council was the only local authority which run eight golf courses which affected these figures; and that these figures were now out of date; and
- (vi) that 29.9% of the population in South Ayrshire lived in rural areas and it would be pleasing to see rural housing achieving its target; and the Chief Financial Officer advised that this matter had been discussed at Audit and Governance Panel when an explanation had been given that these figures were from 2022/23; that figures can be affected by a one off factor; and that there had been a write-off of capital expenditure which had impacted on the financial side of the indicators. The Assistant Director – Corporate Policy, Strategy and Performance further advised that the Local Government Benchmark Framework targets were useful but not a definitive guide to performance and that questions should be asked of the data and the data explored further which is what this Council had become better at in terms of service improvement and self-evaluation.

The Council, having considered the contents of the report,

Decided: to approve the 'Annual Performance Report 2023/24' attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

Having previously declared an interest in this item, Councillor Hunter left the meeting during consideration of this matter.

16. Outcome of Public Consultation - Heritage Proposals Submitted by Prestwick Civic Pride

There was submitted a joint report ([issued](#)) of 5 December 2024 by the Director of Communities and Transformation and the Director of Housing, Operations and Development

- (1) advising of the outcome of the public consultation on the submissions made by Prestwick Civic Pride (PCP) to the Council, involving a range of potential development projects on Prestwick Promenade and the Freemans Hall, Prestwick and the Salt Pans Houses; and
- (2) seeking approval of the next steps in developing a masterplan to inform the regeneration projects for Prestwick.

The Assistant Director – Planning and Development introduced the report and advised that the report set out the results of the public consultation; that of the three areas consulted on, the promenade improvements had been favoured; that it was recommended that officers take this proposal forward; and that an adjustment to the recommendations in the report was being submitted.

Point of Order

Councillor Duncan Townson raised a Point of Order in relation to the competency of the adjustment and the Chief Governance Officer advised that there was a typographical error in this document whereby there were 2 paragraphs marked 2.1.2 and no 2.1.3.

Councillor Martin Kilbride, seconded by Councillor Martin Dowe moved the recommendations that the Council

- (a) notes the work completed to date in Prestwick which included resurfacing of the former Kidz Play with electrical ducting installed to open up opportunities for future new uses in the area, benching on the promenade and installation of safety rails outside the toilet block;
- (b) requests officers to undertake a scoping exercise for a masterplan to regenerate Prestwick which would include a strategy for the development of the Seafront and to carry out Options Appraisals for each of the projects detailed in Appendix 1 as part of this exercise;
- (c) agrees that a workshop would be held with Ward Members and local community stakeholders to present the strategic purpose, objectives, and priorities of the emerging masterplan;
- (d) requests that a further report be submitted to Council in March outlining the results of the scoping exercise and the workshop with Ward Members and local community stakeholders and presents Options Appraisals for each of the Projects in Appendix 1 and, where required, a timeline for a draft masterplan and the requirements for further public consultation on the proposals; and
- (e) requests officers to record the progress of the recommendations in this paper in the Decision log for each Cabinet.

Having heard Councillor Ian Cochrane advise that he had an amendment to the Motion, the Chief Governance Officer requested an adjournment to consider this amendment.

Adjournment

The time being 2.20 p.m., the Council adjourned for ten minutes

Resumption of Meeting

The Council resumed at 2.30 p.m.

Upon reconvening, Councillor Martin Kilbride and Councillor Martin Dowe as Mover and Seconder of the Motion, agreed to accept the terms of Councillor Ian Cochrane's Amendment to the extent that (b) above should read:

"requests officers to undertake a scoping exercise for a masterplan to regenerate Prestwick on land or properties owned by South Ayrshire Council, which would include a strategy for the development of the Seafront, focussing on the promenade; and to carry out Options Appraisals for each of the projects detailed in Appendix 1 as part of this exercise."

Comments were made and questions raised by Members in relation to:

- (i) work was continuing in Prestwick forming part of the masterplan whilst this consultation was taking place; and
- (ii) part of Councillor Kilbride's Motion at (a) above and whether this was germane as it was not directly related to the purpose of the report; and Councillor Kilbride advised that during the public consultation another food outlet had been requested, however, this had been dealt with prior to the consultation, therefore (a) above was to advise Prestwick residents of works carried out and tied in with the report.

The Council

Decided:

- (I) to note the work completed to date in Prestwick which included resurfacing of the former Kidz Play with electrical ducting installed to open up opportunities for future new uses in the area, benching on the promenade and installation of safety rails outside the toilet block;
- (II) requests officers to undertake a scoping exercise for a masterplan to regenerate Prestwick on land or properties owned by South Ayrshire Council, which would include a strategy for the development of the Seafront, focussing on the promenade; and to carry out Options Appraisals for each of the projects detailed in Appendix 1 as part of this exercise;
- (III) agrees that a workshop would be held with Ward Members and local community stakeholders to present the strategic purpose, objectives, and priorities of the emerging masterplan;
- (IV) requests that a further report be submitted to Council in March outlining the results of the scoping exercise and the workshop with Ward Members and local community stakeholders and presents Options Appraisals for each of the Projects in Appendix 1 and, where required, a timeline for a draft masterplan and the requirements for further public consultation on the proposals; and
- (V) requests officers to record the progress of the recommendations in this paper in the Decision log for each Cabinet.

Councillor Hunter re-joined the meeting at this point.

17. Proposed Ward Capital Projects – Update 2023 to 2025 and Approval of New Capital Projects 2024 to 2026

There was submitted a report (issued) of 5 December 2025 by the Director of Housing, Operations and Development providing an update on implementation of ward capital projects approved by the Council at its meeting of 29 June 2023 and by the Cabinet at its meeting of 26 September 2023 and recommending further capital projects for initiation and implementation during the financial years 2024/25 and 2025/26.

The Director of Housing, Operations and Development introduced the report, advised that the programme was split into different factors for each ward and was the most up-to-date position prior to submission of the report; outlined the programme over the next 18 months; outlined that, as previously noted, resources required to design and deliver these projects was considerable and there was limited capacity available to progress all ward projects simultaneously, therefore, to assist with this, it was proposed to recruit a dedicated resource within Professional Design Services to assist with taking forward some of the larger projects. He further advised that, as some wards had an allocation close to their allocated budget, efforts were made to establish meaningful estimated costs, however, cost variances between estimated and actual costs arose and, if all projects were progressed, there was the possibility of budget overrun or abortive work; that to minimise this financial outcome and to assist with managing workloads, ward members would be asked for their priority projects and regular meetings with ward members would provide updates on projects costs and available budget and this would enable the remaining two years of implementation of these projects to be delivered; and these meetings with ward members would also discuss progress, updated financial information and consider potential future projects.

Councillor Alec Clark, seconded by Councillor Martin Dowey, moved the recommendations as outlined in the report.

Comments were made and questions raised by Members in relation to:

- (1) the considerable amount of work carried out by the Director and his team to allow these projects to progress which was much appreciated; and that 2.1.7 of the recommendations within the report should read:

"notes the arrangements **to all Elected Members** and to put in place to provide regular progress updates to all Elected Members **and Community Councils** on all place projects and to consider the feedback from Community Councils.";
- (2) that the spreadsheet of projects was a moving feast and represented a moment in time;
- (3) it being pleasing to see projects progressing, particularly in Ayr East and requesting that a new roof for Kincaidston Pavilion be added to the list of projects; and the Director of Housing, Operations and Development advised that he would take this on board;
- (4) that this was a new way of working and the focus and diligence of officers in progressing this matter was appreciated;
- (5) the Newton MUGA being over budget and the reasons for this; and the Assistant Director – Housing and Operations advised that this was due to the lighting and electrical work required and that he would provide full details of this to Ward Members; and

- (6) that, as there was uncommitted monies in the Prestwick capital project budget, could projects be progressed more quickly following the options appraisal approved at item 12 of this Minute; and the Director of Housing, Operations and Development advised that he would take this into consideration.

The Council

Decided:

- (a) to agree the capital investment projects identified in Appendix 1 (white background under project description) for initiation and implementation during the financial years 2024/25 and 2025/26;
- (b) to agree that the £2m Promenade budget line be split equally between Girvan, Ayr, Prestwick and Troon Wards;
- (c) to agree that, to ensure ongoing proper financial management, Ward Members provide a list of priority projects to avoid potential budget over-commitment;
- (d) to note that some of the amber projects in Appendix 1 would require public consultation as part of an Integrated Impact Assessment prior to being able to be recommended to Council for approval;
- (e) to note the progress made with the capital investment projects identified in green in Appendix 1;
- (f) to agree that a copy of Appendix 1 containing all potential projects would be forwarded to Community Councils and feedback sought; and
- (g) to note the arrangements to all Elected Members and to put in place to provide regular progress updates to all Elected Members and Community Councils on all place projects and to consider the feedback from Community Councils.

18. Asset Management Plan (Land and Building) 2024

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 3 December 2024 by the Director of Housing, Operations and Development seeking approval of the Council's revised Asset Management Plan (Land and Buildings).

The Service Lead – Asset Management and Community Asset Transfer introduced the report.

Councillor Martin Kilbride, seconded by Councillor Martin Dowey, moved the recommendations as outlined in the report.

Comments were made and questions raised by Members in relation to:

- (1) congratulating the Asset Management Team on receiving a top honour at The Public Finance Awards 2024 where they picked up the coveted 'Excellence in Strategic Investment or Asset Management' award which recognised the Council's proactive work on energy management which began in 2018;

- (2) whether training would be offered to staff on this and other new initiatives; and the Chief Executive advised that staff training on this matter and other matters would complement the Council's strategic approach to continuous improvement and the benefits would align well with the service redesign work ongoing in the Council; and this was being discussed at CLT; and
- (3) commending the Asset Management Team on this document as this was an important area of work and the Plan was fit for purpose and was a valuable document;

The Council

Decided:

- (a) to note the revisions and updates detailed in paragraph 4.4 of the report;
- (b) to approve the 2024 South Ayrshire Council Asset Management Plan (Land and Buildings), attached as Appendix 1 to the report;
- (c) to request that an annual update and review of the Asset Management Plan (Land and Buildings) be provided to Council; and
- (d) to request that a full review and revision as required of the Asset Management Plan (Land and Buildings) be carried out and reported back to Council by the end of December 2027

19. Notices of Motion

- (1) In accordance with Council Standing Order No. 18, a Notice of Motion was submitted by Councillor Craig Mackay and seconded by Councillor George Weir as follows:

"Off-street Disabled Parking

Council notes the response to my Formal Question in March this year that "SAC do not hold details of the number of advisory disabled bays within Council curtilages."

Council recognises that advisory disabled parking bays are not enforceable and are therefore open to abuse.

Council accepts that it was a requirement of the Disabled Parking Places (Scotland) Act 2009 for both on- and off-street advisory bays to be replaced with statutory bays able to be enforced. This requirement has never been fully implemented in South Ayrshire.

Council agrees:

- that provision will be made within the 2025-26 Revenue Budget to audit advisory disabled parking at council premises, including swimming pools, golf courses, schools and other facilities; and to progress a Traffic Regulation Order to regularise these with the Disabled Parking Places (Scotland) Act 2009.
- that a report will be presented to Cabinet with regard to provisions in the same legislation for the council to offer enforcement services (at cost) for disabled parking in car parks attached to private premises."

Councillor Mackay advised that, with the agreement of the seconder, he had submitted additional wording to his Motion as follows:

"Council agrees:

that provision of £5000 will be made within the 2025-26 Revenue Budget to audit advisory disabled parking at council premises, including swimming pools, golf courses, schools and other facilities; and that officers then bring back a report to Cabinet to enable the progression of a Traffic Regulation Order to regularise these with the Disabled Parking Places (Scotland) Act 2009; and

that a report will be presented to Cabinet with regard to provisions in the same legislation for the council to offer enforcement services (at cost) for disabled parking in car parks attached to private premises."

A full debate took place regarding the terms of the Motion and the addition to the Motion and the Council

Decided: to unanimously agree the Notice of Motion as outlined on the agenda and the addition to this Motion as outlined above.

- (2) In accordance with Council Standing Order No. 18, a Notice of Motion was submitted by Councillor Alan Lamont and seconded by Councillor Mary Kilpatrick as follows:

" This Council:

1. Notes:

- The information detailed in the background below.
- The critical role of farmers and family businesses in driving economic growth, providing employment, and ensuring food security in the South Ayrshire and beyond.
- The harm caused by the Labour Government's latest budget includes a so-called family farm tax (20% inheritance tax on the value of family farms and businesses over £1m).
- Increased National Insurance contributions for employers.

2. Believes:

- These measures unfairly target farmers and family businesses, threatening jobs, investment, and livelihoods in the region.

3. Calls upon the UK Government:

- To reverse the Family Farm Tax and the rise in employers National Insurance contributions. - To review the budget and remove measures harming farmers and family businesses.
- To consult stakeholders for fairer, more supportive policies.

This Council stands with the farmers and family businesses of South Ayrshire and demands urgent action to address these issues and asks the Chief Executive to formally write to the UK Government requesting them to undertake the actions set out in paragraph 3 above."

By way of Amendment, Councillor Philip Saxton, seconded by Councillor Brian McGinley moved:

"To continue the Motion to provide the facts on the quantities of data around those affected in South Ayrshire by the inheritance tax proposals and to assess whether Council required to take any further action."

A full debate took place regarding the terms of the Motion and the Amendment.

Following an electronic vote, nine Members voted for the Amendment and seventeen Members for the Motion which was accordingly declared carried; and the Council

Decided: to approve the terms of the Notice of Motion.

20. **Formal Questions.**

In terms of Council Standing Order No. 26.2, there were submitted **Formal Questions** from Councillors Duncan Townson, Laura Brennan-Whitefield, George Weir and Craig Mackay, along with the responses, which were made available to all Members.

Councillor Townson raised a supplementary question as follows: "I have concerns regarding the answer to Part B because Cabinet was appraised during a budget update on 26 November 2024 that there was a potential overspend of £400,000 on the airshow and as a supporter of the airshow I want to ensure we are on track and moving swiftly towards being self sustaining"; and the Director of Communities and Transformation advised that there was a significant amount of invoices associated with the airshow and income coming in following the event which took a number of months to deal with which was further complicated this year as assets had been shared with the airshow in Ireland which took place the following day; that a report would be considered at Service and Partnerships Performance Panel outlining that the airshow had been £240,000 over budget which would be met from vacancy turnover within the directorate so this was of no additional cost to the Council; that the increased costs were due to certain providers dramatically increasing costs and due to the Council's procurement journey, however, lessons had been learned and steps would be taken to drive down the costs for the 2025 airshow.

Councillor George Weir raised a supplementary question in relation to the public engagement on the Golf Development at Belleisle as follows "you advised that the feedback would be reviewed by Pangaea Golf Architecture, would it be reasonable to assume that the Council is also reviewing the feedback" and the Director of Communities and Transformation advised that early engagement had taken place around the design proposals and a full public consultation was still to take place.

Councillor Craig Mackay raised supplementary questions as follows:

- (1) "last week I saw a Council vehicle parked on a dropped kerb, can we set a good example within the Council even if we are unwilling to actively enforce public infringements at this stage"; and the Director of Housing, Operations and Development advised that he would raise this matter with the relevant service; and
- (2) "does the Monitoring Officer agree that the continued lack of any systems to manage casework makes processing enquiries less efficient for both Councillors and Officers, creates challenges keeping track of enquiries and contacts and results in queries going unanswered which reflects badly on the council"; and the Chief Governance Officer advised that she could not agree this reflected badly on the Council, however, she agreed that progress should be made on this matter, she was being guided by ICT and that her officers would also like to see progress on this.

Provost

Provost wished all Councillors and Officers a very Merry Christmas.

The meeting ended at 3.50 p.m.