

LEADERSHIP PANEL.

Minutes of meeting in County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr and remotely
on 24 November 2020 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillor Peter Henderson (Chair).

Present Councillors Siobhian Brown, Ian Cochrane, Julie Dettbarn, William Grant,
Remotely: Brian McGinley and Philip Saxton.

Attending: E. Howat, Chief Executive; C. Caves, Head of Legal, HR and Regulatory Services;
T. Baulk, Head of Finance and ICT; J. McClure, Committee Services Lead Officer;
and D. Mulgrew, Committee Services Assistant.

Attending D. Hutchison, Depute Chief Executive and Director – People; D. Gillies, Director –
Remotely: Place; T. Eltringham, Director of Health and Social Care; J. Bradley, Assistant
Director – People; P. Bradley, Service Lead – Professional Design Services;
K. Dalrymple, Service Lead – Neighbourhood Services; T. Burns, Service Lead –
Asset Management and Community Asset Transfer; D. Yuille, Service Lead –
Special Property Projects; M. Alexander, Service Lead – Housing Services;
C. Monaghan, Service Lead – Community Services and Facilities; T. Leijser,
Service Lead – Economy and Regeneration; J. Rodden, Service Lead – Facilities
Management; K. Anderson, Service Lead – Corporate and Housing Policy;
G. Farrell, Service Lead – Organisational Development and Customer Services;
J. Nicol, Service Lead – Planning and Building Standards; S. Hunter, Chief Social
Work Officer; F. McDougall, Quality Improvement Manager (SWEIC);
S. Mulholland, Quality Improvement Manager (ASN); and E. Harrigan, Head
Teacher, Girvan Academy.

Also

Attending P. Davey, E. Terras, I Gall, T. Robinson, D. Hoey and I. McCann (for items 5 to 7
Remotely: only).

1. Opening Remarks.

The Chair took the sederunt and confirmed that today's meeting was not open to the press and public, which was permissible under the COVID-19 legislation. He also confirmed to Members the procedures to conduct this meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest.

There were no declarations of interest by Members of the Panel in terms of Council Standing Order No. 17 and the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

3. Minutes of previous meeting.

The [minutes](#) of 27 October 2020 (issued) were submitted and approved.

4. **Decision Log.**

The Panel

Decided:

- (1) to note that there were no overdue actions;
- (2) to approve the actions listed with [revised due dates](#);
- (3) to note the recently [completed actions](#); and
- (4) that Standing Orders for Meetings, existing protocols and timescales for completion of reports should be reviewed.

Children and Young People.

5. **Educational Services Standards and Quality Report 2019/20 and Improvement and Recovery Plan 2020/21.**

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 16 November 2020 by the Depute Chief Executive and Director – People seeking approval of the Educational Services Standards and Quality Report, which covered academic session 2019/20 and the Improvement and Recovery Plan for 2020/21.

Having welcomed the clear layout of this report and having thanked all staff within schools for their excellent work in continuing to provide education, the Panel,

Decided:

- (1) to note the positive progress being made by Educational Services;
- (2) to approve the Standards and Quality Report 2019/20, attached as Appendix 1 to the report;
- (3) to approve the Educational Services Improvement and Recovery Plan 2020/21, attached as Appendix 2 to the report; and
- (4) to agree the publication of the report and plan in line with the Education (Scotland) Act 2016.

6. **The South West Educational Improvement Collaborative Regional Improvement Plan 2020/21.**

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 16 November 2020 by the Depute Chief Executive and Director – People seeking approval to publish the South West Educational Improvement Collaborative (SWEIC) Regional Improvement Plan 2020/21 which had been submitted as draft to Education Scotland on 23 October 2020.

Having thanked all officers involved in producing this document and having welcomed this collaborative approach, the Panel

Decided:

- (1) to approve the SWEIC Regional Improvement Plan 2020/21, attached as Annex 1 to the report; and
- (2) to agree to the publication of the SWEIC Regional Improvement Plan 2020/21 in accordance with paragraph 4.2 of the report.

7. Update on Pupil Equity Fund and Scottish Attainment Challenge.

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 16 November 2020 by the Depute Chief Executive and Director – People requesting that the Panel confirm that it was content with the current approach to the use of Pupil Equity Fund and Attainment Challenge Scotland funding; and advising the Panel of the progress made by schools during 2019/20 in improving equity in educational outcomes.

The Panel, having thanked all staff in the Education Service for their hard work during the pandemic and having welcomed the flexible approach to utilising this funding,

Decided:

- (1) to confirm the current approach being taken to the use of Pupil Equity Fund and Attainment Challenge Scotland funding;
- (2) to note the work undertaken by schools and partners in supporting children and families during the school closures period between March and August 2020; and
- (3) to note the progress made in achieving equity in educational outcomes during session 2019/20.

Economy and Culture.

8. Tourism and Events : Interim Strategic Approach.

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 16 November 2020 by the Assistant Director – People seeking approval of the Interim Strategic Approach to Tourism and Events.

The Panel, having noted the need to maximise the use of social media for advertising tourism and events,

Decided: to agree the Interim Strategic Approach to Tourism and Events.

9. **Town Centre Fund.**

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 16 November 2020 by the Director – Place providing information on the Scottish Government Town Centre Fund; and seeking approval of a proposed programme of town centre improvement projects, along with a shopfront grants scheme to be implemented across the South Ayrshire five towns utilising the fund.

The Panel, having welcomed this fund and having noted that a press release was being issued on this matter,

Decided:

- (1) to note the receipt of £382,000 from the Scottish Government Town Centre Fund; and
- (2) to approve the implementation of a programme of town centre improvements utilising the Town Centre Fund, including establishment of a town centre shopfront grants scheme to support town centre businesses across the five towns.

10. **Economy and Regeneration.**

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 17 November 2020 by the Director – Place, bringing forward a Strategic Economic Plan for the Council, Vision 2030, with these proposals strengthening the economic development function of the Council and assuring that the service delivered on the Council Plan and the Directorate Place Plan.

The Panel, having thanked the Service Lead – Economy and Regeneration and his staff for the work undertaken on this matter and having noted that a publicity booklet would be issued in the next few weeks,

Decided:

- (1) to endorse the Strategic Economic Plan : Vision 2030 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report; and
- (2) to note the content of the proposed summary Service Activity Plan in Appendix 2 to the report that supported the Implementation of the Strategic Economic Plan : Vision 2030.

Environment.

11. **Biodiversity Duty Report 2018 to 2020.**

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 16 November 2020 by the Assistant Director - Place seeking approval of the third South Ayrshire Council progress report in relation to its public sector biodiversity duties and a commitment to the Edinburgh Declaration.

The Panel, having thanked the Service Lead – Neighbourhood Services for his work on this matter and having noted the works currently being undertaken in relation to the quality of sea water,

Decided:

- (1) to approve the publication of the third South Ayrshire Council Biodiversity Duty Report 2018-2020 as contained in Appendix 1; and
- (2) to grant authority to the Director – Place to sign the Edinburgh Declaration reaffirming the commitment by the Council to mainstreaming biodiversity action as an integral part of the Council's green recovery from COVID-19.

12. Landslip to Rear of Properties on Holmston Road, Ayr.

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 16 November 2020 by the Assistant Director – Place seeking approval for funding to undertake structural repairs to the area to the rear of properties on Holmston Road, Ayr, following a landslip in August 2019.

The Panel, having noted that the timescales for these works would be weather dependent, however, no additional costs were anticipated should the works take longer than predicted,

Decided:

- (1) to approve the funding of works to the value of £148,634.40 to reinstate this major landslip to the rear of properties on Holmston Road, Ayr; and
- (2) to approve the allocation of £129,634.40 funding from the Repairs and Renewal Fund and £20,000 from General Reserves.

13. Proposed Marketing of Belleisle Lodge House.

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 16 November 2020 by the Director – Place seeking approval to declare the lodge house at the main entrance to Belleisle surplus to requirements; and to advertise the building for sale on the open market.

A full discussion took place in relation to the marketing of the Lodge House and the Panel amended the officer's recommendation in the report and

Decided:

- (1) to declare the Belleisle Lodge House surplus to requirements and grant delegated powers to the Director – Place to market the lodge house with up to an additional 50 m² of adjacent and attached land to the lodge for sale in accordance with the development brief prepared by the Service Lead - Planning and Building Standards with the inclusion of a buy back right in the sale conditions that may be exercised if the redevelopment of the lodge was not completed within three years of the sale; and
- (2) to report back to this Panel on any offers received following the marketing of the property.

14. Review of School Meals Price Increase.

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 16 November 2020 by the Assistant Director – Place seeking approval to retain the current pricing for school meals and not to increase prices as originally approved through the budget setting process for 2020/21.

The Panel, having noted the significant reduction in the uptake of school meals; and that there were no difficulties at present in procuring ingredients,

Decided:

- (1) to approve the contents of this report and retain the cost of school meals at £2.15 in primary schools and £2.25 in secondary schools;
- (2) to approve the removal of the saving associated with the increase in school meal prices as this would not be achieved (FM-S7, £50,000); and
- (3) to note that the shortfall in achieving the saving had already been factored in to the service full year out-turn projections notified to this Panel in August 2020.

15. South Ayrshire Council Food Growing Strategy.

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 16 November 2020 by the Assistant Director – Place seeking approval of the first South Ayrshire Council Food Growing Strategy, as set out in Annex 1 to the report.

The Panel, having thanked the Service Lead - Neighbourhood Services for his work undertaken in communities in creating allotments; and having noted that this Strategy would be expanded to include the whole of South Ayrshire; and that this Strategy would now be published on the Council's website,

Decided: to approve the first South Ayrshire Council Food Growing Strategy, attached as Annex 1 to the report.

Housing and Community Wellbeing.

16. Development of Land for Affordable Housing at the Former Tarbolton Primary School.

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 16 November 2020 by the Director - Place seeking approval to proceed with the development of affordable housing at the former Tarbolton Primary School site; and of the proposed funding package for the development.

The Panel, having welcomed this report due to the need for rural housing

Decided:

- (1) to agree the development of the vacant site at the former Tarbolton Primary School for the development of fourteen new affordable homes;
- (2) to approve the proposed funding package for the project as detailed in Section 6.3 of the report; and
- (3) to grant authority to award the contract to Company A to carry out the works, utilising the Scottish Procurement Alliance's framework for Housing Construction.

17. Annual Assurance Statement - Housing.

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 16 November 2020 by the Assistant Director – Place providing an update on the Regulatory Framework for Housing; and seeking approval to submit the Annual Assurance Statement to the Scottish Housing Regulator and publish the statement for tenants and other customers.

The Panel, having highlighted the importance of the feedback from tenants,

Decided:

- (1) to note the content of the Assurance Action Plan outlined in Appendix 1 of the report, outlining the assurances and evidence in relation to the regulatory requirements;
- (2) to approve the Annual Assurance Statement outlined in Appendix 2 of the report noting that the Council was complying with all of the requirements and outcomes, with the exception of full compliance in the area of gas safety, and that this was directly related to the impact of Covid-19;
- (3) to approve the submission of the Annual Assurance Statement to the Scottish Housing Regulator by 30 November 2020 and approve the statement to be published for tenants and others customers; and
- (4) to note the requirements of the new Regulatory Framework and the impacts of Covid-19 on specific activities and areas of service delivery relating to: the relet times for empty houses, homelessness services, rent arrears and income collection, progress to meet fire and carbon monoxide standards in Council owned housing stock and progress against the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) and the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (ESSH).

18. Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) – 2021/22 to 2025/26.

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 16 November 2020 by the Assistant Director – People seeking approval of the content of the draft Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) for submission to the Scottish Government.

The Panel, having thanked the Service Lead – Corporate and Housing Policy and his staff for their work on this Strategy and having welcomed the partnership working with the Health and Social Care Partnership to meet people’s housing needs,

Decided:

- (1) to approve the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report for onward submission to the Scottish Government; and
- (2) to delegate authority to the Assistant Director – People to amend and finalise this document based on feedback received from the Scottish Government.

Adjournment

The time being 12.10 p.m., the Panel agreed to adjourn for twenty minutes.

The Panel resumed at 12.30 p.m.

Adults’ Health and Social Care.

19. Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report.

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 16 November 2020 by the Chief Social Work Officer providing an update on the performance of statutory social work services for the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

The Panel, having thanked the Chief Social Work Officer and his staff for their exemplary work during the pandemic

Decided: to note and approve the performance of statutory social work services.

Corporate.

20. Post Covid-19 Recovery Planning.

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 16 November 2020 by the Depute Chief Executive and Director – People providing an update on the recovery of services post-Covid-19.

The Panel, following discussion on referring this matter to the Budget Working Group to examine recovery issues,

Decided:

- (1) to note the update on service recovery, as outlined in Appendix 1 to the report; and
- (2) to refer this report to the Budget Working Group for its consideration.

21. The South Ayrshire Way Strategic Change Programme – Preparing for the Future.

There was submitted a joint [report](#) (issued) of 17 November 2020 by the Depute Chief Executive and Director – People and the Director – Place seeking approval of a proposed strategic change programme with associated governance arrangements.

The Panel, following a full discussion and contrary to the officer's recommendation in the report

Decided: to continue consideration of this matter to allow a briefing to take place with the Members of the Administration, following which the report should be considered at a Special Meeting of this Panel, to be arranged before the end of the year.

22. Webcasting/Hybrid Meetings Solution - Procurement.

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 16 November 2020 by the Head of Finance and ICT seeking final agreement to procure a suitable Webcasting and Hybrid meeting solution for formal Council meetings or Panels, following conclusion of the further market engagement recently undertaken.

The Panel, having thanked the Head of Finance and ICT and his staff in ICT for their prompt action in progressing this matter,

Decided:

- (1) to note the conclusion of the recent market engagement;
- (2) to note that Council previously agreed to meet the implementation and ongoing support costs for the first three years of operation from the Efficiency and Improvement Fund; and
- (3) to agree to procure a suitable solution via the appropriate procurement route, thereby ensuring best value was achieved.

Resources and Performance.

23. Budget Management – Revenue Budgetary Control 2020/21.

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 18 November 2020 by the Head of Finance and ICT presenting a financial overview of the General Services Revenue Account, Housing Revenue Account and Common Good Accounts for 2020/21 as at 30 September 2020.

The Panel, having commended this report

Decided:

- (1) to note the revised Directorate budgets following the budget movements outlined in paragraph 3.3 and note that the impact of Covid-19 had been included in the projections;

- (2) to approve the budget transfers as outlined in the Directorate financial performance reports at Appendix 1 and summarised in paragraph 4.1.10 of the report;
- (3) to approve the new requested earmarking of resources to be carried forward to 2021/22 as summarised in paragraph 4.1.11 of the report; and
- (4) to otherwise note the projected in year under-spend of £1.360m after earmarking and inclusive of the latest Covid-19 cost implications.

24. General Services Capital Programme 2020/21 : Monitoring Report as at 30 September 2020.

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 16 November 2020 by the Director – Place providing an update on the actual capital expenditure and income, together with progress made on the General Services Capital Programme projects as at 30 September 2020 (Period 6); and seeking approval of changes to budgets in 2020/21 and future years.

The Panel

Decided:

- (1) to note the progress made on the delivery of the General Services Capital Programme to 30 September 2020, resulting in spend of £11,996,931 or 31.47%, as detailed in Appendix 1;
- (2) to approve the adjustments contained in Appendix 2, leading to a revised budget of £40,171,743 in 2020/21 and £81,918,730 in 2021/22; and
- (3) to note the ongoing impact of Covid-19 and the potential for further reductions to forecasted expenditure this year and also potential additional costs in construction contracts.

25. Performance Review of Common Good Funds.

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 16 November 2020 by the Director – Place providing an update on the performance of Common Good Funds administered by the Council.

The Panel, having scrutinised the governance and asset management arrangements under which all Common Good Funds operated,

Decided: to request that a review of Common Good Funds be undertaken within the next 12 months and reported back to this Panel before the end of 2021.

Time of Meeting.

The time being 1.30 p.m., the Chair asked the Panel if they would be willing to 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 Panel so concurred.

26. Housing Capital Programme 2020/21 : Monitoring Report as at 30 September 2020.

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 16 November 2020 by the Director – Place providing an update on the actual capital expenditure and income, together with progress made on the Housing Capital Programme projects as at 30 September 2020 (Period 6); and seeking approval of changes to budgets in 2020/21.

The Panel

Decided:

- (1) to note the progress made on the delivery of the Housing Capital Programme to 30 September 2020, resulting in spend of £4,781,035 or 35.95%, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (2) to approve the adjustments contained in Appendix 2 to the report, leading to a revised budget of £13,985,195 in 2020/21 and £36,001,156 in 2021/22; and
- (3) to note the ongoing impact of Covid-19 and the potential for further reductions to forecasted expenditure this year and also potential additional costs in construction contracts.

27. ICT Support and Maintenance Contracts.

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 16 November 2020 by the Head of Finance and ICT requesting that the Panel review and agree the ongoing contractual obligations in respect of the support and maintenance of key ICT systems for the 2021/22 financial year.

The Panel

Decided: in accordance with paragraph 22.1 of the Standing Orders Relating to Contracts, to approve the annual renewal of the support and maintenance contracts for 2021/22 which were necessary to access support, maintenance and, in some instances, system upgrades of ICT systems, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report

28. People Strategy 2020-2022.

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 16 November 2020 by the Assistant Director – People seeking approval of the draft corporate People Strategy 2020-2022.

The Panel, having thanked the Service Lead – Organisational Development and Customer Services and her staff for the work undertaken during the pandemic,

Decided: to approve the proposed People Strategy attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

Adjournment

The time being 1.40 p.m., the Panel adjourned for five minutes.

The meeting resumed at 1.45 p.m.

29. Exclusion of press and public.

The Panel 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 paragraph 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

Economy and Culture.

30. Planning and Building Standards Service Proposed Restructure.

There was submitted a report (Members Only) of 19 November 2020 by the Director – Place outlining proposals to amend the 4th tier management arrangements within the Planning and Building Standards Service and implement a revised operating model.

The Panel

Decided:

- (1) to approve the implementation of a revised operating model for the Planning and Building Standards Service;
- (2) to note the savings identified at paragraph 6.2 of the report; and
- (3) to note that the associated voluntary severance cost could be met from the workforce Change Fund.

31. Economy and Regeneration Restructure.

There was submitted a report (Members Only) of 19 November 2020 by the Director – Place bringing forward proposals to restructure the Economy and Regeneration Service to strengthen the economic development function of the Council and assure that the service delivered on the Council Plan and the Directorate Place Plan.

The Panel

Decided: having considered the proposals set out in the report, to approve the proposed functions and structure of the Economy and Regeneration service set out in Appendices 1 and 2 of the report.

Housing and Community Wellbeing.

32. Trading Standards and Environmental Health Structure.

There was submitted a report (Members Only) of 19 November 2020 by the Head of Legal, HR and Regulatory Services seeking approval for changes to the staffing structure within Trading Standards and Environmental Health (TSEH).

The Panel

Decided:

- (1) to approve the proposed increase to staffing levels within TSEH; and
- (2) to approve the proposed funding arrangement.

Corporate.

33. Proposed Restructure within People Directorate.

There was submitted a report (Members Only) of 19 November 2020 by the Depute Chief Executive and Director – People proposing changes to the structure based on a review of the management of education quality and improvement and the integration of this work with the Assistant Directors – People.

The Panel

Decided:

- (1) to approve the proposed restructure outlined at paragraph 4.1 of the report;
- (2) to note the savings identified at paragraph 4.2 of the report; and
- (3) to note that severance costs could be met through the workforce change fund.

34. Consideration of Disclosure of the above Confidential Reports.

Decided: to authorise the disclosure under Standing Order 32.4 of the whole of the following reports:-

- Planning and Building Standards Service Proposed Restructure;
- Economy and Regeneration Restructure;
- Trading Standards and Environmental Health Structure; and
- Proposed Restructure within People Directorate.

The meeting ended at 2.10 p.m.