

South Ayrshire Council – 6 March 2024

Formal Questions

Received from:	Councillor William Grant
Response to be provided by:	Mike Newall, Chief Executive

	<i>Question</i>	<i>Response</i>
1.	With the proposal for a Golf Academy what will be the increased costs for this?	The feasibility cost for the construction of an enhanced practice facility/ driving range at Belleisle Golf Course is £1.3m
2.	What has been the cost of KC advice to the council in the previous 12 months?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KC – advice on voting procedures and standing orders – total £7620 including VAT • KC – representation at Craiginmoddie, Carrick and Knockcronal Windfarms Combined Planning Inquiry – total £129,990 including VAT
3.	Regarding Hourstons building are we in a position to start work and do we have an agreement with NHS on this?	<p>We are at RIBA Stage 2 Property Design Services and H&SCP/NHS working together to define user requirements and design property to best fit with requirements within budget limits approved by Council on 29 February</p> <p>The first works to be undertaken will be the demolition of Arran Mall</p> <p>Construction works at Hourstons is currently expected to start on site in 2025</p> <p>Discussions are advanced with the NHS to confirm prioritised user requirements and outline terms but no formal agreement yet (proposals to be finalised to allow an agreement to be progressed)</p>
4.	The Ayrshow was an excellent event. What has been the cost to the council and is this the final cost. And does this include all staff time during the event?	The initial report in November detailed that the cost to the Council to deliver the event was £364,000 and in addition the event generated a total income of £256,325. Work is still ongoing to confirm final invoices and budget coding and at that point we will have confirmation of the final cost. It became apparent after the report was submitted in November last year., that some of the invoices had been incorrectly coded and so these were not included in the initial figure. In

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		<p>addition a combination of late invoices and a significant number of duplicate invoices were received and so at present we can only give a figure on what has been verified and that now stands at £469,336. There remain a number of budget lines still under review to ensure that they are accurately coded and some of these may relate to the air show. The total currently under review is £65,000. In addition our income has also risen to £264,814.</p> <p>The spend was higher than previously projected as external supplier costs have increased significantly since previous large-scale events were delivered. However, the International Ayr Show - Festival of Flight delivered significant economic benefit to Ayr by attracting over 240,000 people into the area and it put South Ayrshire in the spotlight by highlighting the area as a destination of choice.</p> <p>No staffing costs were charged to the Ayr Show – departments supported the event within existing resources and remits.</p> <p>We are focused on planning for this year's event, and we are able to plan and project costs more accurately as we now have last year's costs to use as a benchmark.</p>

Received from:	Councillor Duncan Townson
Response to be provided by:	George Hunter, Assistant Director - Communities

	<i>Question</i>	<i>Response</i>
1.	<p>Did the two hour parking see an increased footfall in the High Street during its festive period offering?</p> <p>If we were to continue this throughout the year, or look at other peak times such as Easter, back to school etc, would this benefit the High Street?</p> <p>Was there any negative effects on Council Parking income during this period, or did we see an increase?</p>	<p>2 hours free parking was introduced in the summer of 2023. The Christmas parking in December was free all day. We have now reverted back to two hours free parking and all machines are programmed to accommodate this.</p> <p>There has been a negative effect on income to ARA's parking budget and coupled with parking levels not back to pre-covid levels this has generated a significant income shortfall putting additional pressure on ARA's revenue budget Any additional income generated as per the legislation must be re-invested in the public road network.</p> <p>Data provided through our footfall counting indicates a decrease in footfall in Ayr town centre by about 2.6% for Dec '23, whilst an increase in footfall for Jan '24 over Jan '23 by about 10%.</p> <p>The relationship between car parking charges and footfall is a complex issue. Parking charges are only one aspect of a complex interplay of factors influencing willingness to travel by car, time and money spent, and business activity in town centres. The situation around the Station Hotel and disruptions caused further complicates the situation. Anecdotal information from businesses calling into the Council during December would suggest that any free parking was simply absorbed by people working in the town, thereby reducing any perceived availability of spaces for visitors.</p> <p>We do know that managed parking plays a key role in the success of our town centres, along with other factors such as what the town has to offer in terms of:</p> <p>The quality of the environment and experience; and</p> <p>Wider access opportunities, including public transport.</p> <p>The emerging Ayr Town Centre Framework identifies a range of actions and projects for which the aims are consistent with the above and aim to increase footfall.</p>

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		Whilst we acknowledge and welcome the increase in footfall in Ayr town centre, we will continue to monitor footfall activity through the available data channels.

Received from:	Councillor Brian McGinley
Response to be provided by:	Councillor Martin Dowey, Leader of the Council

	<i>Question</i>	<i>Response</i>
1.	What plan B does the administration have for developing the Arran Mall site now that the proposal to build a care village with the SAHSCP has been stopped by the NHS ban on capital projects?	Although the Council's intentions for developing Arran Mall into a care village would be supported by the SAHSCP and the NHS. This did not involve NHS capital support. The constraints of NHS capital support should not impact on the Council's intentions to develop the Arran Mall into a care village.
2.	Why have elected members not been kept informed of the financial costs associated with the demolition of the station hotel and what process has been used to approve this spend?	Following the fire at the former Station Hotel, the Council, operating under s29 of the Building (Scotland) Act 2003, commenced the undertaking of emergency safety works. Operating under section 29 meant that the Council could only undertake works that were required to make the building safe to the public. The extent of this work was not known until an advanced stage of the works had been undertaken. This dynamic situation has meant that the cost of works necessary only became evident during January 2024 and these are still fluid. In addition the Council is making a claim for reimbursement of emergency costs from the Scottish Government through the Bellwin Scheme, and it is not known the outcome of this submission. Some confidence can now be attached to the extent of safety works. With this confidence a briefing note is being prepared for all Elected Members and officers will provide a full briefing on the works that have been undertaken, costs and planned actions following conclusion of safety works.

Received from:	Councillor Philip Saxton
Response to be provided by:	Kenny Dalrymple, Assistant Director – Housing and Operations

	<i>Question</i>	<i>Response</i>
1.	Can you give me an update on progress of discussions with EE or other parties on re-locating or dismantling the telecommunication mast on the high flat building Ayr	The discussions with EE/MBNL have been deemed confidential and are included as a confidential addendum to the report on Affordable Housing, Riverside Place, Ayr at Council on 06 March 2024.

Received from:	Councillor Craig Mackay
Response to be provided by:	Mike Newall, Chief Executive

	Question	Response
1.	School Streets: Further to me raising this at Council in June 2023, can an update be provided on the progress of School Streets trial schemes to improve road safety around schools?	ARA carried out several meetings at Alloway, Kingcase and Heathfield with teachers, parents and residents. There was insufficient support from either groups to trial school streets. ARA propose contacting other school communities to establish interest potential requiring support from Education colleagues.
2.	Boundary Wall – Fullarton Crescent, Troon: Noting a constituent's protracted difficulties getting help with a wall on council land behind his house which collapsed into his property in September 2022, and my own subsequent enquiries to officers (17th August, 12th September, 3rd January), I still have no indication of what progress has been made on agreeing which department is responsible or how this situation can be resolved. When can I expect a full response to my initial enquiry of 17th August?	Titles for this property confirm that where any boundary walls or fences are erected within the boundaries of that title, then they are the whole responsibility of the owner. If, however, they are erected on a 50/50 basis with the owner on the other side, then the responsibility for maintenance and repairs is also split 50/50. Staff from asset management will arrange to visit the property to identify where the boundary wall is placed.

Response to be provided by:	Cllr Bob Pollock, Portfolio Holder for Economic Development
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	Question	Response
3.	Dropped Kerb Parking Enforcement: Noting the recent Cabinet decision on enforcement of pavement parking, accepting the need to first	Handheld ticketing machines require to be re-programmed to carry out enforcement under these points and at the same time carry out standard parking enforcement under the Road Traffic Act.

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	<p>assess streets and consider exemption orders for parking on pavements, and the potential for this process to take longer than anticipated, is there any obstacle to immediately undertaking enforcement of aspects of Part 6 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 specifically including dropped kerb obstruction and double parking which are not dependent on exemption orders?</p>	<p>ARA parking team are currently undertaking this work to enable transition to both forms of legislation.</p>

Response to be provided by:	Cllr Brian Connolly, Portfolio Holder for Sport and Leisure
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4.	<p>Advisory Disabled Bays: How many advisory disabled off-street parking bays are situated on council properties such as swimming pools, golf courses, etc</p>	<p>HOD will request asset management team to provide a detailed response on the number of bays allocated within property curtilage.</p>

Response to be provided by:	Cllr Martin Dowey, Leader of the Council
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	Question	Response
5.	<p>Active Travel 'Easy Win' Improvements: Further to unfulfilled requests in 2023 both via the Active Travel Forum and full Council, could I again ask for provision of full details of the catch-all list of minor</p>	<p>Strategy was formally adopted in 2023. Over the last few months ARA have been collating audits of active travel routes, reviewing place plans and collating pinned information.</p>

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	<p>“easy win” improvements (Action Inf-19) on the Active Travel Strategy, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the list of minor works from the Active Travel Strategy consultation (including pins placed on the consultation map https://south-ayrshire-active-travel-strategy-swecouk.hub.arcgis.com/) - further minor works which have been added to the list in the two years since the strategy was adopted in March 2022 - the progress that has been made on these minor works (quite a few have been attended to) - items suggested in the public consultation that are not considered viable 	<p>This information will be presented to Community Action Group to enable approval of work packages to be procured by ARA.</p>