

Agenda Item No 2**SERVICE AND PARTNERSHIPS PERFORMANCE PANEL**

Minutes of hybrid webcast meeting on
22 April 2025 at 10.00 a.m.

Present
in County
Buildings: Councillors Chris Cullen (Chair), Kenneth Bell, Mark Dixon, Lee Lyons and George Weir.

Present
Remotely: Councillor Ian Cochrane.

Apologies: Councillors Brian McGinley and Gavin Scott.

Attending
in County
Buildings: K. Anderson, Assistant Director – Corporate Policy, Strategy and Performance; G. Hunter, Assistant Director – Communities; W. Carlaw, Service Lead – Democratic Governance; D. Manson, Special Project Officer, Ayrshire Roads Alliance; A. Gibson, Committee Services Officer; and C. McCallum, Clerical Assistant.

Chair's Remarks.

The Chair

- (1) welcomed everyone to the meeting; and
- (2) outlined the procedures for conducting this meeting and advised that this meeting would be broadcast live.

1. Sederunt and Declarations of Interest.

The Chair called the Sederunt for the meeting and having called the roll, confirmed that that 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.

2. Minutes of previous meeting.

The Minutes of 11 March 2025 ([issued](#)) were submitted and approved. With regards to item 5 of the minute "Ayrshire Shared British Sign Language (BSL) Local Plan 2024-2030 – Operational Action Plan" the Assistant Director - Corporate Policy, Strategy and Performance advised the Panel of the success of this Council's broadcasts to date for the hearing impaired and BSL users.

3. **Action Log, Petition Update and Work Programme.**

There was submitted an update of the Action Log, Petitions and Work Programme ([issued](#)) for this Panel.

Having heard a Member of the Panel, it was agreed that the Panel be provided with statistics relating to the Petitions made to this Council, by the next meeting. It was further noted, after discussion, that the Petition Protocol was available for those who required it.

It was agreed that, in relation to the Work Programme, officers would endeavour to provide a list of items up until the end of 2025, for the next meeting.

The Panel

Decided:

- (1) to agree the current position with regard to the Action Log; and
- (2) to otherwise note the current status of the Work Programme.

4. **Active Travel Strategy Performance Report.**

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 9 April 2025 by the Director of Housing Operations and Development providing an update on Active Travel projects and the changes to external grant funding.

Having heard a Member of the Panel enquire why the Active Travel Member/Officer Working Group had not met regularly since its formation, it was noted that this was due to the delay of Active Travel funding from the Scottish Government but it had recently been re-established with another meeting due to be held soon.

After a Member of the Panel enquired as to Cycling by Design, he was advised that funding for this was now through Transport Scotland.

Having heard a Member of the Panel enquire as to Active Travel funding being spent on the removal of Japanese Knotweed, he was advised of the reason for this and that this project would soon be going out to tender.

A Member of the Panel raised the position of the Active Travel route relating to Prestwick to Barassie. The Special Project Officer, Ayrshire Roads Alliance explained the current position of this route and also intimated the background to the meaning of the RIBA stages for the various projects, as detailed in the report.

Having heard a Member of the Panel enquire if more details on the projects, including timelines and deadlines for the next five to ten years could be provided to Members, it was agreed that a Members' written briefing be provided by officers.

A Member of the Panel enquired, given the delays in the Member/Officer Working Group, how was community input being managed; the mitigation of any risks; and a low carbon strategy. The Special Project Officer responded to the points raised and it was noted that there was a community action group; there was no risk strategy in place should funding not be available from the Scottish Government; and the work with the Procurement team surrounding low carbon strategies.

It was confirmed that the role of the Active Travel Member/Officer Working Group was to make recommendations rather than to take decisions.

Having heard a Member of the Panel, the Special Project Officer, Ayrshire Roads Alliance gave an update on the position regarding a project in Maybole.

The Panel

Decided: to note this report and to continue to commit supporting Active Travel in South Ayrshire.

5. **South Ayrshire Inward Investment Strategy.**

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 8 April 2025 by the Director of Communities and Transformation providing an update on the implementation of the Inward Investment Strategy.

A Member of the Panel indicated that there was currently a lot of activity in this area and that the potential of 1,000 jobs being created through this Strategy was to be commended.

Having heard various Members of the Panel advise of the need for additional housing and infrastructure due to the creation of new jobs, the Assistant Director – Communities advised that this was being examined through this Council's Local Development Plan, together with liaison with fellow officers.

A Member of the Panel enquired how progress was evaluated. The Assistant Director – Communities responded that various measures could be used to evaluate progress such as the number of businesses/jobs created.

Following a Member of the Panel advising that the lack of commercial buildings was a concern and enquiring if there was a timeline to resolve this issue; and that as the funding of temporary posts was due to be concluded soon, was there a plan to deal with this, the Assistant Director – Communities advised that two pieces of land at the Prestwick Aerospace site had been identified and the benefits of the Growth Deal; and that two officers had moved to Ayrshire Growth Deal and that it was hoped to make other posts more secure in the future.

The Panel

Decided: to note

- (1) the progress made with the South Ayrshire inward investment Strategy; and
- (2) that an annual progress report would be provided to this Panel in 2026.

6. **Update on Business Relief Programme Approved in 2024.**

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 8 April 2025 by the Director of Communities and Transformation providing an update on the Business Relief Programme approved by Cabinet on 12 March 2024.

Having heard a Member of the Panel enquire how absentee landlords in the lower end of the High Street, Ayr were made aware of this initiative, the Assistant Director – Communities advised that landlord approval was required for any changes to their buildings and that there was generally an appetite for shop front schemes with key areas being targeted.

Following discussion, it was agreed that there be updates on progress, including the Shop front Scheme, every six months, through the Members' Bulletin.

Having heard a Member of the Panel, it was confirmed that figures relating to the foot fall in Ayr Town Centre were available and were analysed.

A Member of the Panel asked was there any support for the retailers who were in the High Street, Ayr, who did not benefit from the Shop Front Scheme. The Assistant Director – Communities advised that it was hoped to grow the Shop Front Scheme using the Levelling Up fund and securing additional funds to target additional businesses in the area, some businesses were supported via Business gateway funding.

The Panel was assured that although there was currently £300,000 unspent in the budget, this would be taken up.

The Panel

Decided:

- (1) to note the progress and achievements in relation to the implementation of the programmes that were approved by Cabinet on 12 March 2024; and
- (2) to endorse the approaches and activities, as set out within the report.

The meeting ended at 11.00 a.m.