

CABINET

Minutes of a hybrid webcast meeting on 17 February 2026 at 10.00 a.m.

Present

in County Hall: Councillors Brian Connolly (Chair), Alec Clark, Ian Davis, William Grant, Hugh Hunter, Martin Kilbride and Bob Shields.

Attending Remotely: Councillor Chris Cullen

Attending in County

• Hall: S. Penman, Chief Executive; K. Braidwood, Depute Chief Executive and Director of Housing, Operations and Development; J. Bradley, Director of Communities and Transformation; M. Inglis, Director of Health and Social Care Partnership; C. Caves, Chief Governance Officer; K. Dalrymple, Assistant Director – Housing and Operations; C Cox, Assistant Director – Planning and Development; K. Anderson, Assistant Director - Corporate Policy, Strategy and Performance; S. McCardie, Service Lead, Performance, Community Planning and Sustainability; G Cockburn, Service Lead – Education Support Services; T. Burns, Service Lead, Asset Management and Community Asset Transfer; C. McMenamin, Service Lead, Legal and Licensing; L. McChristie, Coordinator – Licensing; C. Love, Team Leader – Community Asset Transfer; G. Ferguson, Quality Improvement Manager – Education; J. Chapman, Committee Services Officer and R. Anderson, Committee Services Assistant.

Also

present in County

Hall: D. Gemmell, H. McGuire, S Bell, G Laird, K. Nelson and D. Griffin.

Also

Attending

Remotely: C. McGhee, Chief Internal Auditor.

Opening Remarks.

The Chair took the sederunt, confirmed to Members the procedures to conduct this meeting and advised that the meeting was being broadcast live.

1. Declarations of Interest.

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

2. **Minutes of previous meeting.**

As Councillors Grant and Hunter were not in attendance at this meeting, they were not eligible to vote on these minutes.

The minutes of 20 January 2026 ([issued](#)) were submitted and approved.

3. **Decision Log.**

Following a comment from a Member in relation to overdue actions having no due dates, the Chief Executive advised that he will liaise with the appropriate Officers, The Cabinet

Decided:

- (1) to approve the overdue actions; and
- (2) to approve the actions listed with revised due dates.

Education and Lifelong Learning.

4. **Capacities for Special Schools and Bases**

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 20 January 2026 by the Director of Education seeking approval for the revised increase capacity of special schools and bases across South Ayrshire.

The Cabinet

Decided: to agree the revised increased capacities for special schools and bases as outlined at 2.1 of the report.

5. **Retention of Places in Mainstream Schools**

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 20 January 2026 by the Director of Education seeking approval of proposed amendments to the number retained places in certain mainstream schools.

Following discussion, the Cabinet

Decided:

- (1) to consider and approve the proposals to increase the number of retained places at Forehill Primary School, from 2 to 3 per class, and at Grammar Primary School, from 1 to 2 per class;
- (2) to consider and approve the number of retained places per stage at S1 to S4 in South Ayrshire Council secondary schools, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report; and
- (3) to delegate authority to the Director of Education to immediately notify schools affected by these proposals.

Councillor Clark joined the meeting during the proceeding item.

6. Inspection of Southcraig School: Education Scotland Report

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) 21 January 2026 by the Director of Education advising of the outcome of the Education Scotland Inspection of Southcraig School.

Following discussion, the Cabinet, having considered the contents of the National report by Education Scotland as contained in Appendix 1 to the report,

Decided: to agree that the main points for action would be addressed by the Headteacher and Quality Improvement Manager.

Housing and Property Services.

7. Ash Dieback – Update Report

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 21 January 2026 by the Depute Chief Executive and Director of Housing, Operations and Development providing an annual report relating to the implementation of the Ash Dieback Plan; and seeking approval for year 4 funding of the Council's Ash Dieback Plan.

Following discussion, the Cabinet

Decided:

- (1) to approve the carry forward of £10,071 Ash Dieback allocated funds in the Neighbourhood Services budget to financial year 2026/27 for year 4 of the programme;
- (2) to approve funding of £140,000 from Housing Development and Operations projected underspend for financial year 2025/26 to enable Neighbourhood Services to undertake a fourth year managing trees that posed a significant risk, which included reinspection of all Ash trees; and
- (3) to approve funding of £70,000 from Housing Development and Operations projected underspend for financial year 2025/26 to enable Ayrshire Roads Alliance to undertake a third year of managing trees that posed a risk to South Ayrshire Council roads, which included re-inspection of all adopted 'A' and 'B' class roads within the boundary of South Ayrshire.

8. Prestwick Sailing Club Community Asset Transfer under Part 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 22 January 2026 by the Depute Chief Executive and Director of Housing, Operations and Development presenting the proposal for the Community Asset Transfer of ownership of the land at Prestwick Sailing Club, 31 Grangemuir Road, Prestwick to Prestwick Sailing Club SCIO, under Part 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015; for a price less than best consideration.

Following discussion, the Cabinet

Decided:

- (1) to consider and agree the Council's responses to the representations received following publication of the Notice of Asset Transfer Request; to approve publication of the responses on the Council website and notification of those who responded to the consultation. A copy of the Notice of Asset Transfer Request could be viewed at [Prestwick Sailing Club SC050995 - South Ayrshire Council](#) and the Report on Representations to Public Notice was available to view as Appendix 9 to the report;

- (2) to refuse the proposal to transfer ownership of the land at Prestwick Sailing Club, as shown in Appendix 1, under Part 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 (the Act) to Prestwick Sailing Club (PSC) SCIO for the discounted sum of £10,000 (ten thousand pounds) Sterling, having regard to the recommendations made by the Community Asset Transfer Assessment Group (Appendix 2) for the following reasons:
 - (a) Best Value

The proposal does not satisfy the requirements of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 section 1, the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 section 74(2) and the Disposal of Land by Local Authorities (Scotland) Regulations 2010, in that the proposal does not represent best value to the Council or to the Prestwick Common Good, the proposed consideration is less than the best that can reasonably be obtained, the disposal for that consideration is not reasonable and the contribution to the promotion or improvement of economic development or regeneration, public health, social wellbeing or environmental well-being is not sufficient to justify the discount;
 - (b) Deliverability

No clear plan has been submitted for the funding and delivery of the project to redevelop the clubhouse and facilities;
 - (c) Common Good:

The proposal does not satisfy the requirements of the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994 section 15(4)(a) in that the land asset is classified as inalienable Common Good, the proposal will mainly be of benefit to the members of the Prestwick Sailing Club as opposed to the wider inhabitants of the former Burgh of Prestwick and will result in the permanent loss of the land asset from the Prestwick Common Good along with the annual income derived from the rental, with no land or income being provided in substitution; and

- (3) to note that, under the provisions of the Act, if their request was refused, PSC could apply to the Council for an internal review of the decision to be undertaken. Following that review, if the decision to refuse the proposal was upheld or conditions were attached to its approval which PSC considered unacceptable, PSC could then Appeal to the Scottish Ministers.

Planning and Regulatory Services

9. Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 – Taxi and Private Hire Policy Review

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 21 January 2026 by the Chief Governance Officer seeking approval to carry out a consultation with taxi and private hire trade on the Council's Policy, Guidelines and Code of Conduct applicable to the Licensing, Operation and Testing of Taxis and Private Hire Cars ('the Policy).

Following discussion, the Cabinet

Decided:

- (1) to note the terms of this report;
- (2) to request the Chief Governance Officer to carry out a consultation with the taxi and private hire trade on the Policy in order to establish views on the following:
 - (a) the additional areas being considered for introduction into the Policy, which were:
 - medicals for drivers;
 - criminal record checks for non-UK national applicants and applicants that had spent a significant time abroad;
 - CCTV for vehicles;
 - extended time limits for retiral of electric and hybrid vehicles as taxi and private hire vehicles in South Ayrshire;
 - (b) the current Policy and whether there were any further areas the trade would like the Council to consider reviewing;
- (3) to request the Chief Governance Officer to:
 - (i) seek the views of the Co-ordinator – Licensing and the Civic Licensing Standards Officer and Co-ordinator – Fleet regarding 2.1.2 (a) and any feedback received from the trade in terms of 2.1.2 (a) and (b) above;
 - (ii) seek the view of the Co-ordinator – Sustainability, Climate Change and Nature regarding extended time limits for retiral of electric and hybrid taxi and private hire vehicles; and
 - (iii) request the Co-ordinator – Licensing to carry out a Policy wording review ensuring it was clear and concise.

Finance and Corporate Services

10. General Services Capital Programme 2025/26: Monitoring Report as at 30 September 2025

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 30 January 2026 by the Depute Chief Executive and Director of Housing, Operations and Development providing an update on the actual capital expenditure and income, together with progress made on the General Services Capital Programme projects as at 31 December 2025 (Period 9), and to agree the changes to budgets in 2025/26, 2026/27 and 2027/28.

Following discussion, the Cabinet

Decided:

- (1) to note the progress made on the delivery of the General Services Capital Programme to 31 December 2025, resulting in spend of £23.903m, or 44.07%, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (2) to approve the adjustments contained in Appendix 2 to the report; and
- (3) to approve the revised budget for 2025/26 at £37.173m, 2026/27 at £96.738m and 2027/28 at £81.688m, as highlighted in Appendix 2 to the report.

Council Leader, Economy and Strategy

11. Good Food Nation

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 21 January 2026 by the Chief Executive advising of this Council's requirements in relation to the Good Food Nation Act; and seeking approval to progress work towards meeting these requirements on a pan Ayrshire basis.

Following discussion, the Cabinet

Decided:

- (1) to note the requirements of the Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act to create a local Good Food Nation Plan; and
- (2) to authorise officers to work with the other relevant authorities in the Ayrshire region towards meeting the Council's requirements and in doing so contributing to wider joined up regional and local strategic outcomes and actions.

12. **Refreshed Community Engagement Strategy**

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 19 January 2026 by the Chief Executive seeking approval of the refreshed Community Engagement Strategy.

Following discussion, the Cabinet

Decided:

- (1) to approve the refreshed Community Engagement Strategy (Appendix 1 to the report); and
- (2) to note the Consultation Checklist (Appendix 2 to the report) which had been developed to support services throughout the consultation process.

Finance and Corporate Services/Housing and Property Services

13. **Housing Capital Programme 2025/26: Monitoring Report as at 31 December 2025**

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 29 January 2026 by the Depute Chief Executive and Director of Housing, Operations and Development providing an update on the actual capital expenditure and income, together with progress made on the Housing Capital Programme projects as at 31 December 2025 (Period 9), and seeking approval of the changes to budgets in 2025/26 and 2026/27.

The Cabinet

Decided:

- (1) to note the progress made on the delivery of the Housing Capital Programme to 31 December 2025, resulting in spend of £18.541m, or 42.97%, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (2) to approve the adjustments contained in Appendix 2 to the report; and
- (3) to approve the revised budget for 2025/26 at £25.051m and 2026/27 at £65.322m, as highlighted in Appendix 2 to the report.

14. **Exclusion of press and public.**

The Cabinet 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 item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information in terms of paragraph 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

Housing and Property Services

15. Proposed Purchase of Nursery Site at Auchincruive, Ayr

There was submitted a report (Members only) of 21 January 2026 by the Depute Chief Executive and Director of Housing, Operations and Development seeking approval for the purchase of Site A at Auchincruive, Ayr.

The Cabinet

Decided:

- (1) to grant authority to purchase site A as shown in Appendix 1 attached to the Addendum (Confidential) and the other assets described in the Addendum in accordance with the terms contained within the Addendum (confidential) to this report; and
- (2) to grant authority to the Chief Governance Officer to conclude this purchase on these and any other reasonable terms and conditions that were considered appropriate.

15. Consideration of Disclosure of the above confidential report.

Decided: to exempt the confidential report pursuant to standing order 10 paragraph 9 to allow the conclusion of the agreements to purchase Site A when the report can be released subject to redaction for GDPR.

The meeting ended at 11:40 a.m.