

SOUTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL.

Minutes of a hybrid webcast meeting
on 19 February 2026 at 10.00 a.m.

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

Present Remotely: Councillors Ian Cochrane, Chris Cullen and Lee Lyons.

Apologies: Councillors Kenneth Bell, Martin Dowey, Stephen Ferry and Brian McGinley,

Attending in County Buildings: S. Penman, Chief Executive; K. Braidwood, Depute Chief Executive and Director of Housing, Operations and Development; J. Bradley, Director of Communities and Transformation; S. Mulholland, Director of Education; M. Inglis, Director of Health and Social Care; C. Caves, Chief Governance Officer; T. Baulk, Chief Financial Officer; C. Cox, Assistant Director – Planning, Development and Regulation; J. Tait, Acting Assistant Director – Communities; T. Burns, Service Lead – Asset Management and Community Asset Transfer; A. Mutch, Service Lead – Sport, Leisure and Golf; R. Jamieson, Co-ordinator (Asset Management). C. Robertson, Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies Officer; J. McClure, Committee Services Lead Officer; J. Chapman, Committee Services Officer; and C. McCallum, Clerical Assistant.

Attending Remotely: C. McGhee, Chief Internal Auditor.

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 apologies had been received from Councillors Bell, Dowey, Ferry and McGinley; and
- (3) advised that he had written, on the Council's behalf, to express the Council's warmest congratulations to the following who had received Honours in the King's New Year's Honours List:
 - (a) Wilma Milligan from Prestwick who received the MBE for Services to Charity and Food Poverty; and
 - (b) Dr Kirsty Darwent of Ayr who received the OBE for her work as Chair of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and the Chair of Redress Scotland.

2. **Sederunt and Declarations of Interest.**

The Chief Executive called the roll and confirmed that there were no declarations of interest by Members of the Council in terms of Council Standing Order No. 17 and the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

Councillor Bob Pollock advised that he was named within the report entitled "Final Investigation Report" however, he did not form part of the investigation, therefore, this did not compromise his ability to consider the report.

Councillor Philip Saxton advised that, in relation to the report entitled "2026/27 Budget - Fees and Charges Uplift Proposals", he was a member of a South Ayrshire Golf Club, however, this would not impact on his ability to take a decision on this item.

3. **Minutes of previous meetings**

(1) **Minutes of Previous Meeting of the Council.**

Provost Iain Campbell, seconded by Councillor Mary Kilpatrick, moved the [Minutes](#) of South Ayrshire Council of 11 December 2025 as a correct record.

As Councillor Scott was not present at this meeting, he was not eligible to vote on these Minutes.

The Council

Decided: to approve the Minutes of 11 December 2025 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:-

- (i) Appeals Panel of [3 November 2025](#), [17 November 2025](#) and [17 December 2025](#).
- (ii) Audit and Governance Panel of [3 December 2025](#).
- (iii) Cabinet of [25 November 2025](#).
- (iv) Chief Officers Appointments/Appraisal Panel of [3 September 2025](#), [16 September 2025](#), [24 September 2025](#), [2 October 2025](#), [7 October 2025](#) and [9 October 2025](#).
- (v) Local Review Body of [24 June 2025](#).
- (vi) Regulatory Panel – Licensing of [27 November 2025](#)
- (vii) Regulatory Panel – Planning of [12 November 2025](#) (Site Visit), [13 November 2025](#) and [10 December 2025](#).
- (viii) Service and Partnerships Performance Panel of [18 November 2025](#).

4. **2026/27 Budget - Fees and Charges Uplift Proposals**

Reference was made to the meeting of South Ayrshire Council of 11 December 2025 (Page 4, paragraph 6) when it had been decided to continue consideration of this matter to this meeting; and there was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 27 January 2026 by the Chief Financial Officer seeking agreement on the level of change, either in percentage change or by value, to be applied to a variety of fees and charges levied by the Council for the 2026/27 financial year.

The Chief Financial Officer introduced the report and advised

- (1) that this report was seeking agreement on a variety of fees and charges for 2026/27;
- (2) that the report entitled “2026-27 Budget Strategy and Budget Update” had been approved at the meeting of South Ayrshire Council of 6 November 2025 with the various proposed fees and charges uplifts submitted to Council in December 2025 for consideration and subsequently continued to this meeting for approval; and
- (3) that the Appendix to the report contained twenty four proposals to generate income, with eighteen of these proposals having one option and six of the proposals having a base option and one or two further options with the Council being requested to agree an option.

Councillor Ian Davis, seconded by Councillor Brian Connolly, moved:

“that 2.1.1 and 2.1.3 of the recommendations in the report be removed and replaced with the following recommendations:

- 2.1.1 to implement all Option 1 proposed fees and charges, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report from 1 April 2026 with the exception of:
- 2 – Instructional Lesson Price Increase – Progress instead with Option 2
 - 4 – Golf Season Ticket Price Increase – Progress instead with Option 2
 - 20 – Increase Crematorium prices each year (3% already agreed) – Progress with a 2% further increase (5% total)
 - 21 – Increase brown bin charge from £50 – Reject an increase
- 2.1.3 to note the estimated additional income of £602,904 that this would generate, reducing the anticipated budget gap previously reported to Council in November 2025.”

By way of Amendment, Councillor Julie Dettbarn, seconded by Councillor George Weir, moved

“to delete the existing 2.1.1 and 2.1.3 and substitute the following recommendations in their place:

- 2.1.1 to implement all Option 1 proposed fees and charges, as detailed in Appendix 1 from 1 April 2026, with the exception of:
- Item 2 – Instructional Lesson Price- Increase price by £1/month instead of the proposed £2/month, reducing income generated by £30,000;
 - Item 13 – Walker hall – 4% increase instead of the proposed 3%, increasing income generated by £433;

Item 20 – Crematorium Pricing – increase prices by a further 1% instead of the proposed 4%, reducing income generated by £32,400;

Item 21 – Brown Bin Charge – increases charge by 5% instead of the proposed 10%, reducing income generated by £55,870

Item 23 – Burial Fees - increase of 4% (inclusive of the previously agreed 3%) instead of the proposed 9% (inclusive of the previously agreed 3%), reducing income generated by £36,400

- 2.1.3 to note the estimated additional income of £542,007 that this would generate reducing the anticipated budget gap previously reported to Council in November 2025.”

By way of Counter Amendment, Councillor Duncan Townson, seconded by Councillor Cameron Ramsay, moved

- “(1) to implement all Option 1 proposed fees and charges, as detailed in Appendix 1 from 1 April 2026, with the exception of:

- 2 – Instructional Lesson Price Increase – Progress with Option 2 instead;
- 15 - Dolphin House – reject any increases;
- 7 – ARA Temporary Traffic Signal pricing changed to:

- 1 week permit £200;
- 1 week extension £350;
- 2 week extension £475;
- 3 week extension £1,000;

ARA to confirm amounts with these changes. Circa expected additional income of £30,000.

- 18 - Increase Harbour Fees and Road Traffic permits – Reject any increase;
- 19 - Standardise Allotment fees to £1 per square meter – Reject any increases;
- 21 – Increase brown bin charge from £50 – Reject any increase;
- 22 - Increase special uplift fee – Reject any increase;
- 24 - Introduce new charging structure for the collection of Persistent Organic Pollution items – Reject new charge; and

- (2) to note the estimated additional income of £483,387 that this will generate, prior to the inclusion of the further income generated through item 17 to be confirmed by ARA, reducing the anticipated budget gap previously reported to Council in November 2025.”

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

- (a) the next few items on the agenda all being related to the overall budget position; that 80% of the Council’s budget was from the Scottish Government settlement and 20% from fees and charges, including Council Tax; that the budget settlement for Scottish local authorities was very poor and not adequate to maintain general services and placed additional pressures on health and social care services; that the position was unlikely to improve and that there were few options available to balance service costs other than increasing fees, reducing services or increasing Council Tax; and that an increase in fees was not taken lightly, however, budget pressures required to be acknowledged to produce a sustainable budget going forward;

- (b) that there were no easy options for Members when setting this budget, however it was important not to place additional burdens on members of the public if avoidable; and that the golf pricing structure should be reviewed to examine the potential of raising the cost of visitor passes to generate more income;
- (c) that the funding from the Scottish Government was not sufficient, however, Members had to produce a budget to make the monies work for the people of South Ayrshire;
- (d) whether the visitors' fees for golf courses were included in the "green fees" within the budget; and the Service Lead – Sport, Leisure and Golf confirmed that they were; and
- (e) asking Councillor Davis, as Mover of the Motion, if it was reasonable to increase the golf season ticket price by 10% whilst removing the increase in brown bin charges; and Councillor Davis advised that there had been a significant investment in the Council's golf estate and increasing the golf season ticket cost was a way of maintaining the golf courses; and that difficult choices had required to be made, however, all three of the proposed budgets were very similar.

A Member requested a roll-call vote.

In accordance with the terms of the Council's Standing Orders, the Council then firstly proceeded to vote on the terms of the Counter-Amendment moved by Councillor Townson and seconded by Councillor Ramsay and the Amendment moved by Councillor Dettbarn and seconded by Councillor Weir.

The Chief Governance Officer took the vote by calling the roll as follows:-

Iain Campbell	Abstain
Mary Kilpatrick	Abstain
Laura Brennan-Whitefield	Amendment
Ian Cavana	Counter Amendment
Alec Clark	Abstain
Ian Cochrane	Amendment
Brian Connolly	Abstain
Chris Cullen	Abstain
Ian Davis	Abstain
Julie Dettbarn	Amendment
William Grant	Abstain
Wullie Hogg	Abstain
Hugh Hunter	Abstain
Martin Kilbride	Abstain
Alan Lamont	Abstain
Lee Lyons	Abstain
Craig Mackay	Amendment
Bob Pollock	Amendment
Cameron Ramsay	Counter Amendment
Philip Saxton	Counter Amendment
Gavin Scott	Abstain
Bob Shields	Abstain
Duncan Townson	Counter Amendment
George Weir	Amendment

Four Members voted for the Counter-Amendment and six Members voted for the Amendment with fourteen Members abstaining. The Amendment was accordingly declared to be carried and became the substantive Amendment.

The Council then proceeded to vote on the terms of the Motion moved by Councillor Davis and seconded by Councillor Connolly and the substantive Amendment moved by Councillor Dettbarn and seconded by Councillor Weir.

The Chief Governance Officer then took the vote by calling the roll as follows:-

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

Six Members voted for the Amendment, fourteen voted for the Motion with four Members abstaining; and the Council, having thanked all officers involved in this matter,

Decided:

- (i) to agree to implement all Option 1 proposed fees and charges, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report from 1 April 2026 with the exception of:
 - 2 – Instructional Lesson Price Increase – Progress instead with Option 2
 - 4 – Golf Season Ticket Price Increase – Progress instead with Option 2
 - 20 – Increase Crematorium prices each year (3% already agreed) – Progress with a 2% further increase (5% total)
 - 21 – Increase brown bin charge from £50 – Reject an increase
- (ii) to note the concession arrangements that were available to assist in mitigating the impact of the proposed price increases, as detailed in Appendix 2; and
- (iii) to note the estimated additional income of £602,904 that this would generate, reducing the anticipated budget gap previously reported to Council in November 2025.

5. General Services Capital Investment Programme 2026/27 to 2037/38

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 3 February 2026 by the Depute Chief Executive and Director of Housing, Operations and Development seeking approval for the proposed Capital Investment Programme for 2026/27 to 2037/38; and to note the associated debt charge implications.

The Depute Chief Executive and Director of Housing, Operations and Development introduced the report.

Councillor Ian Davis, seconded by Councillor Brian Connolly, moved the recommendations as outlined in the report.

By way of Amendment, Councillor Craig Mackay, seconded by Councillor Laura Brennan-Whitefield, moved

“that recommendation 2.1.1 be amended as follows :-

approves the proposed Capital Investment Programme for the twelve -year period 2026/27 to 2037/38 as detailed in Appendix 2 with the exception of:-

Delete Dunure Heritage Project (£2,500,000 less any sums spent to today’s date.)

Delete Prestwick Steeple Works (£750,000 less any sums spent to today’s date)

Insert instead:-

Additional capital investment – Roads Reconstruction & Improvement £800,000 (2026/27); £1,700,000 less any sums spent to today’s date on Dunure (2027/28); £750,000 (less any sums spent to today’s date on Prestwick Steeple Works) (2028/29).”

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

- (1) being supportive of the additional items added to the Programme, with most of these items added to the 2037/38 year of the Plan; that there were less changes than previous years of the Capital Programme due to pressures on the market, the costs of borrowing and interest rates; that two Capital reviews had been carried out over this financial year which had substantially benefited the overall General Services budget by reducing debt charges, however this should not diminish the ambitious items within the Capital Plan such as investment into the school estate, regeneration works in towns and communities and investment into many leisure facilities across South Ayrshire;
- (2) budgets being increasingly about making difficult choices and working to achieve the public’s priorities; that the Dunure Heritage Priority was not, in the SNP Group’s opinion, an immediate priority and could await other funding, possibly from external sources; that replacing the Prestwick Steeple had failed to secure public support and the fact that this item continued to have a budget line was a matter for the Administration, however, in in these tight financial times the SNP Group also did not see this as a priority; that roads maintenance and the significant backlog on resurfacing works was a priority and that failure to address this would only increase costs at a later date; and that the £3.5m proposed in the SNP amendment to divert from the Dunure and Prestwick projects could start to address the situation with the roads;

- (3) the Heritage Centre in Dunure and replacement of the steeple in Prestwick and these being of benefit if the budget allowed, however, in the current climate there were concerns should these projects go ahead; and was there a business case for each of these projects; and the Depute Chief Executive and Director of Housing, Operations and Development advised that the local community in Dunure had a business plan in place for the Dynamic Dunure Project which had been supported by the Council during the development of this business case;
- (4) where the monies earmarked for ICT infrastructure would be utilised; and the Chief Financial Officer advised that these monies were to replace and update systems and to invest further in IT security, therefore, would be wisely spent;
- (5) the disrepair of the roads; and whether there was a business case and community consultation for the Prestwick Steeple; and the Assistant Director – Planning, Development and Regulation advised that a report on all Prestwick Regeneration Projects would be submitted to the meeting of South Ayrshire Council of 26 March 2026 for consideration which would set out the outcome of the public consultation and the more in-depth engagement workshop which was held in Autumn 2025; and would include a full options appraisal and business case;
- (6) the outcome of the consultation on the Prestwick Steeple; and the Chief Executive advised that this project and many others had previously been approved by Council, therefore officers were instructed to proceed with those; that a number of further reports would be brought back to Council and inevitably, as matters progressed, these may have an impact on the Capital Programme, however, as they had been approved by Council they were being progressed appropriately by officers; and that he could provide further information on this in writing to members;
- (7) projects utilising regeneration monies requiring all Ward Councillors to be in agreement of the proposal and should not proceed if only one Ward Member was in favour of the project and had this happened with the Prestwick Steeple Project; and the Chief Governance Officer advised that regeneration monies were different from Ward Capital monies and had a different process; and that a report would be submitted in due course in relation to the projects utilising regeneration monies;
- (8) that £40m was being spend on education over the next three years and a huge amount of money being spent on leisure facilities throughout South Ayrshire; and that the disrepair of roads was a national problem and should not take away from this achievement;
- (9) that this report outlined the successes of the Council with investment in schools, libraries, leisure facilities, golf, the Council's residential estate, heritage, regeneration and energy and that Ward Capital monies had benefited every town and village in South Ayrshire; and that, due to the lack of monies from the Government for roads, the Council could only maintain the roads and improve them when able to;
- (10) that this report was a good news story for the Council, however, the SNP Group considered it was important to protect frontline services such as roads, therefore had submitted an amendment to the proposals outlined in the report;
- (11) that the opposition members were merely seeking to source means of saving money for the Council in ways that benefited the wider public in South Ayrshire and that the two projects referred to in the SNP amendment did not demonstrate best value at this time;

- (12) that this was an excellent report which outlined the efforts the Council was putting into its education facilities;
- (13) that, whilst this was a good budget in terms of proposals and overall spend, savings should not be dismissed wherever they could be found; and the replacement of the Prestwick Steeple brought no economic benefit and this money could be better spent on improving the roads of South Ayrshire; and
- (14) that there was a lot of positive work within this report and in the report entitled "[General Services Capital Programme 2025/26: Monitoring Report as at 31 December 2025](#)" which had been presented to Cabinet on 17 February 2026.

A Member requested a roll-call vote.

The Council then proceeded to vote on the terms of the Motion moved by Councillor Davis and seconded by Councillor Connolly and the Amendment moved by Councillor Mackay and seconded by Councillor Brennan-Whitefield.

The Chief Governance Officer then took the vote by calling the roll as follows:-

Iain Campbell	Motion
Mary Kilpatrick	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
William Grant	Motion
Wullie Hogg	Motion
Hugh Hunter	Motion
Martin Kilbride	Motion
Alan Lamont	Motion
Lee Lyons	Motion
Craig Mackay	Amendment
Bob Pollock	Amendment
Cameron Ramsay	Amendment
Philip Saxton	Amendment
Gavin Scott	Motion
Bob Shields	Motion
Duncan Townson	Amendment
George Weir	Amendment

Ten Members voted for the Amendment, fourteen voted for the Motion and the Motion was accordingly declared carried; and the Council, having thanked all officers involved in this matter,

Decided:

- (a) to approve the proposed Capital Investment Programme for the twelve-year period 2026/27 to 2037/38 as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report; and
- (b) to note the associated debt charge implications as detailed in Appendix 3.

6. **2026-27 Budget Update and Medium-Term Financial Plan**

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 27 January 2026 by the Chief Financial Officer providing a final update on the anticipated 2026-27 budget gap; and seeking approval of the Council's updated Medium Term Financial Plan 2026-27 to 2030-31.

The Chief Financial Officer introduced the report; provided background to the various recommendations in paragraphs 2.1.1 to 2.1.5; and advised that, following approval of the previous two reports on the agenda, the revised anticipated budget gap as referred to in paragraph 2.1.1 of the report was now £8.463m.

Councillor Ian Davis, seconded by Councillor Brian Connolly, moved the recommendations as outlined in the report.

Comments were made by a Member in relation to the current settlement not being sustainable and the implications for the Council; that local authorities were requiring to take measures to ensure a legal budget could be set and to reduce future shortfalls which would involve difficult decisions; that future years required to be considered when setting the budget as savings could not be pushed into future years; and that the Budget Building consultation had been very successful in giving members of the public an understanding of balancing the budget and highlighting their preference of savings to allow Members to align the budget to the feedback received.

The Council

Decided:

- (1) to note the revised anticipated budget gap for 2026-27 of £8.463m as identified in Table 3 at paragraph 4.5.2, prior to the agreement of any savings or Council Tax uplifts;
- (2) to note the results of the recent 2026-27 'Budget Builder' consultation, attached as Appendix 1 to the report;
- (3) to consider and approves the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), attached as Appendix 2 to the report;
- (4) to note the potential cumulative five-year budget gap ranges from £20.6m to £28.6m based on the various key planning assumptions and two alternative Council Tax uplift scenarios; and
- (5) to agree that the Council's new Workforce Plan, due to be brought for approval in March 2026, include a specific targeted percentage reduction in the Council workforce.

7. **Treasury Management and Investment Strategy Mid-Year Report 2025/26**

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 19 January 2026 by the Chief Financial Officer providing a mid-year treasury management update for the financial year 2025/26.

The Chief Financial Officer introduced the report and advised that the Audit and Governance Panel of 3 December 2025 had considered the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy Mid-Year Report 2025/26 and had agreed to remit it to this meeting of South Ayrshire Council for approval.

Councillor Ian Davis, seconded by Councillor Brian Connolly, moved the recommendations as outlined in the report.

Comments were made by Members in relation to:

- (1) thanking the Members of the Audit and Governance Panel for their scrutiny work; and thanking the officers in the Treasury Management Team for their work on this matter; and
- (2) thanking Councillor Davis for his work in relation to the budget; thanking the Chief Financial Officer and his team for their assistance; and thanking the Cabinet Members for all their work to reach this stage

The Council

Decided: to approve the contents of the report.

8. Community Councils – Scheme for Establishment of Community Councils

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 30 January 2026 by the Director of Communities and Transformation seeking approval of changes and updates to the Scheme for Establishment of Community Councils following the consultation period.

The Acting Assistant Director – Communities introduced the report and outlined the background to this matter; and provided an update in relation to there being no Community Council in North Ayr advising that, since the last Council meeting a Community Association had been established with representation from local ward members and officers who would support this moving forward; and that a report would be submitted to a future meeting of South Ayrshire Council as Fort, Seafield and Wallacetown were seeking approval to extend their boundary to include the whole of Wallacetown which was a positive move for North Ayr.

Councillor Brian Connolly, seconded by Councillor Chris Cullen, moved the recommendations as outlined in the report.

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

- (1) thanking the Acting Assistant Director – Communities and his team for their work on this project; and outlining that this document covered areas which previously were not covered and would give assurances and guidance to Community Councils;
- (2) thanking the members of all Community Councils who did a fantastic job as volunteers carrying out work in their community; outlining that Dundonald Community Council were concerned they would not have adequate members to maintain their Community Council following the elections in Spring 2026; and requesting that an officer meet with these members to discuss their objections to areas within the Scheme; and the Acting Assistant Director – Communities advised that a Steering Group had been established at the start of the process and Dundonald Community Council had been represented on this Group; that the document was clear and consistent with other Schemes, however, he had taken the comments on board and responded to the members of the Community Council and was happy to meet with the members to discuss their objections; and

- (3) concerns regarding a reduction in Community Council members; and noting that the consultation had taken place over the festive season when Community Councils did not meet and were therefore unable to discuss the amendments to the Scheme which may be reflected in the responses received; and the Acting Assistant Director – Communities advised that the timing of the third stage of the consultation had been discussed at the meeting of South Ayrshire Council on 11 December 2025 when he had made a commitment to extend the date for responses should there be significant concerns regarding the timing of the consultation, however, having consulted with colleagues in Legal Services, they had advised that he had exceeded the expectation of a consultation; that Barr Community had made a late submission which had been accepted; and that Dundonald Community Council had submitted a response as outlined in Appendix 1 to the report, which was the most detailed response of any Community Council;
- (4) it being pleasing to note that there was now a Community Association in North Ayr and encouraging residents of Wallacetown to join the Association; and that, as Wallacetown had one of the highest rates of deprivation in the country, it was pleasing to have an Association for local people to bring forward any issues;
- (5) that consultation was very important to seek the views of Community Councils, however, it was also important that Community Councils demonstrate how they had undertaken their consultation and how they had come to their views;
- (6) Ayr North Local Members and officers had attempted to recruit members to Ayr North Community Council, however, there had been very little response;
- (7) whether guidelines could be established on when consultations were carried out to ensure that Community Councils were active during the term of the consultation; commending the responses from Community Councils; and referring to the administration grant which had not risen in seventeen years; and the Acting Assistant Director – Communities advised that the consultation over the festive period was the third consultation which had taken place since March 2025, therefore, giving Community Councils sufficient time to submit responses; and that the administration grant was regularly raised by Community Councils, however, this was a fee which would require to be considered during the Council's budget setting process;
- (8) thanking Dundonald Community Council for their submission, having called a special meeting on 17 January 2026 to consider the Scheme for Establishment of Community Councils; and
- (9) the report reflecting the thorough consultation process which had been carried out; that the work undertaken by the Acting Assistant Director – Communities and his officers ensured that there was a clear, concise and legally robust Scheme for Establishment of Community Councils; outlining that Community Councils played an important role in democracy; and that this updated Scheme provided clarity around governance, finance, meetings and responsibilities; and that this process had been comprehensive and proportionate.

The Council

Decided:

- (a) to note the findings from stage 3 of the consultation, as outlined in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (b) to approve the draft Scheme for Establishment of Community Councils following stage 3 of the consultation, as outlined in Appendix 2 to the report; and

- (c) to request that officers publish the new updated draft Scheme for Establishment of Community Councils following approval at this meeting.

Adjournment

The time being 11.25 a.m., the Council adjourned.

Resumption of Meeting

The Council resumed at 11.40 a.m.

9. Asset Management Plan (Land and Buildings) 2026

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 30 January 2026 by the Depute Chief Executive and Director of Housing, Operations and Development seeking approval of the Council's revised Asset Management Plan (Land and Buildings) and proposing the development of a Corporate Asset Management Strategy for South Ayrshire Council.

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

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

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

- (1) criticism from interested parties regarding timescales for dealing with Community Asset Transfers and duplication of work in dealing with several Council departments; and the Service Lead – Asset Management and Community Asset Transfer advised that the timescales were as set out within the Act and could not be changed by the Council; advised of the process for dealing with a Community Asset Transfer application; and outlined that, if any member of the public had to communicate with other Departments on a Community Asset Transfer he would liaise with them. The Co-ordinator (Asset Management) further advised that the Community Asset Transfer Team Leader liaised with Groups to identify tight timescales, resolve any issues and expedite these matters where possible;
- (2) properties being revalued every five years and how was this managed and changes recorded; and the Chief Financial Officer advised that a new methodology had been introduced for 2025/26 year end from the CIPFA Code of Practice which introduced an indexation process whereby assets were revalued every five years, however, in the intervening period the indexation was also used to ensure there were no surprises when year five was reached;
- (3) how the six workstreams were managed; and the Chief Executive advised that linking Asset Management with the future capital investment proposals and plans was critical to delivering the Council plan; that these linkages would be governed by the Corporate Management Team and that various proposals would require Council approval throughout the next year aimed at marrying up the overall Council Plan with the various strategies; and it would be expected that there would be fewer strategies as a result; and
- (4) referring to the large Council estate and the vast workload of the Asset Management Section

The Council, having thanked the Service Lead – Asset Management and Community Asset Transfer and the Co-ordinator (Asset Management) for their excellent work on this matter,

Decided:

- (a) to approve the 2026 South Ayrshire Council Asset Management Plan (Land and Buildings) attached as Appendix 1 to the report;
- (b) to agree that officers continue work with services to develop the prioritisation and challenge of property assets with a view to increase efficiency, reduce costs, improve service delivery and enhance the alignment of capital resource allocation to achieve these ends; and
- (c) to agree that officers work to develop a single consolidated South Ayrshire Council ‘Corporate Asset Management Strategy’ (CAMS) which would: encompass property, roads and structures, open spaces, ICT, and fleet; align these strategic objectives with the process of capital resource allocation for all asset classes and categories thus driving forward a best value agenda.

10. Formal Questions.

In terms of Council Standing Order No. 26.2, there were submitted [Formal Questions and Responses](#) from Councillors George Weir and Craig Mackay.

Councillor Weir thanked the Assistant Director – Planning, Development and Regulation and the Service Lead – Corporate Accounting for the very detailed response.

Councillor Mackay raised a supplementary question as follows: “can I ask the Policy Lead whether he agrees with the figures quoted by Ayrshire Roads Alliance that every £1 spent on active travel yields £13 of local economic benefit; and Councillor Clark, as Policy Lead – Depute Council Leader, Commercial/Operational Services responded: “I have discussions with officers based on any report and I will continue to do so but need to take into consideration the feedback from consultations and, based on that feedback, I will take forward whatever actions necessary”.

Exclusion of press and public.

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 1, 8 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

11. Solar Farm Update 2026

There was submitted a report (Members only) of 30 January 2026 by the Depute Chief Executive and Director of Housing, Operations and Development providing an update on progress for potential development of solar farms in South Ayrshire.

The Depute Chief Executive and Director of Housing, Operations and Development introduced the report.

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

Following a full discussion and questions, the Council

Decided:

- (1) to note the progress to date on the three potential solar sites;
- (2) to approve the prioritisation of sites in the following order: Auchincruive Bing; Cockhill; and placing Greenan Grazing on hold for the time being;
- (3) to approve £8.32m of Capital to progress the Auchincruive Bing Site to operational completion;
- (4) to request that officers progress the sequence of work set out in Appendix 1; and
- (5) to agree that a report be brought back to Council in February 2027 in order to update Council on the progress of the project.

12. Prestwick Proposition-Commercial Build

There was submitted a report (Members only) of 11 February 2026 by the Depute Chief Executive and Director of Housing, Operations and Development seeking approval of the Conditional Full Business Case (FBC) for the commercial build phase of the Prestwick Proposition. This followed its recent conditional endorsement by both UK and Scottish Governments.

The Depute Chief Executive and Director of Housing, Operations and Development introduced the report.

Councillor Brian Connolly, seconded by Councillor Chris Cullen, moved the recommendations as outlined in the report.

Following a full discussion and questions, the Council

Decided:

- (1) to approve the conditional FBC for the commercial build to enable the team to progress with pre-construction design work and purify Government conditions (Appendix 1); and
- (2) to otherwise note the contents of the report.

13. Final Investigation Report

There was submitted a report (Members only) of 27 January 2026 by the Chief Executive advising of the findings of an investigation report commissioned from an independent consultant ('the consultant'); and seeking approval of the response to the consultant's recommendations.

The Chief Executive introduced the report.

Councillor Julie Dettbarn, seconded by Councillor Alec Clark, moved the recommendations as outlined in the report. Councillor Dettbarn, as Chair of Audit and Governance Panel outlined why this report was remitted by Audit and Governance Panel to this meeting of South Ayrshire Council.

Following a full discussion and questions, a Member requested a roll-call vote.

The Chief Governance Officer then took the vote by calling the roll For or Against the Motion as follows:

Iain Campbell	For
Mary Kilpatrick	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
William Grant	For
Wullie Hogg	For
Hugh Hunter	For
Martin Kilbride	For
Alan Lamont	For
Lee Lyons	For
Craig Mackay	For
Bob Pollock	Abstain
Cameron Ramsay	For
Philip Saxton	Abstain
Gavin Scott	For
Bob Shields	For
Duncan Townson	Abstain
George Weir	For

Twenty one Members voted for the Motion and three Members Abstained and the Council

Decided:

- (1) to note the consultant's report, attached as Appendix 1 to the report; and
- (2) to agree the proposed Council response to the consultant's recommendations (attached as Appendix 2 to the report).

14. Consideration of Disclosure of the above Confidential Reports.

Following advice from the Chief Governance Officer, the Council

Decided:

- (1) to authorise the disclosure of the following report under Standing Order 32.4 subject to redaction and GDPR:
 - Solar Farm Update 2026
- (2) not to authorise the disclosure of the following report under Standing Order 32.4 as negotiations were ongoing
 - Prestwick Proposition Commercial Build
- (3) not to authorise the disclosure of the following report under Standing Order 32.4:
 - Final Investigation Report

Provost

Provost thanked everyone in attendance for their contribution.

The meeting ended at 12.55 p.m.