

SOUTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL.

Minutes of a hybrid webcast meeting
on 25 June 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, Chris Cullen, William Grant, Wullie Hogg, Hugh Hunter, Martin Kilbride, Mary Kilpatrick, Craig Mackay, Brian McGinley, Bob Pollock, Cameron Ramsay, Philip Saxton, Gavin Scott, Bob Shields, Duncan Townson and George Weir.

Present Remotely: Councillors Kenneth Bell, Stephen Ferry and Lee Lyons.

Apologies: Councillors Ian Cochrane, Martin Dowey and Alan Lamont.

Attending in County Buildings: S. Penman, Chief Executive; J. Bradley, Director of Communities and Transformation; S. Mulholland, Director of Education. C. Caves, Chief Governance Officer; T. Baulk, Chief Financial Officer; Services; W. Wesson, Chief HR Officer; C. McMenamin, Service Lead – Legal and Licensing; C. Neillie, Solicitor; J. McClure, Committee Services Lead Officer; K. Hancox, Committee Services Officer; and C. McCallum, Clerical Assistant.

Also in Attendance: J. Corrie, Head of Roads, D. Manson, Special Projects Officer, and A. Kamau, Special Projects Engineer, Ayrshire Roads Alliance.

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 Cochrane, Dowey and Lamont; 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 Birthday Honours List:
 - (i) Marilyn de Blicke of Prestwick who received a British Empire Medal for services to music and the community in Ayrshire; and
 - (ii) Alex Kelly of Maybole who received a British Empire Medal for services to voluntary work in Maybole and his lifelong mission of service; and
 - (iii) Dr William Mackie of Ayr, Chair of CentreStage, Kilmarnock, who received the CBE for his services to Scotland's economy, skills and education.

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

The Chief Executive called the Sederunt for the meeting and having called the roll, 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.

3. **Urgent Business**

Provost advised that, in terms of Standing Order No. 18.7, Councillor Craig Mackay had submitted a Notice of Motion which, due to the urgency of this Motion, he had agreed to accept.

Having heard Councillor Mackay confirm that he wished his urgent Motion to be considered, which had been seconded by Councillor Weir, the Chief Governance Officer then outlined the process for this matter; and that this item would be considered following Item 9 on the agenda. The Notice of Motion was subsequently distributed.

4. **Minutes of previous meetings**

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

- (a) Provost Iain Campbell, seconded by Councillor Mary Kilpatrick, moved the [Minutes](#) of South Ayrshire Council of 14 May 2026 as a correct record.

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

As Councillors McGinley, Shields and Townson left during the meeting, they were also not eligible to vote.

The Council

Decided: to approve the Minutes of 14 May 2026 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: -

The minutes (copies previously issued) of the undernoted meetings are for noting:-

- (i) Audit and Governance Panel of [6 May 2026](#).
- (ii) Cabinet of [28 April 2026](#) and [26 May 2026](#).
- (iii) Chief Officers Appointments/Appraisal Panel of [16 December 2025](#) and [18 December 2025](#).
- (iv) Local Review Body of [2 December 2025](#) and [5 May 2026](#).
- (v) Regulatory Panel – Licensing of [30 April 2026](#).
- (vi) Regulatory Panel – Planning of [2 April 2026](#) and [13 May 2026](#).
- (vii) Service and Partnerships Performance Panel of [10 March 2026](#) and [19 May 2026](#).

5. Implementation of HMRC Mileage Rates

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 10 June 2026 by the Chief HR Officer seeking approval to adopt the updated HMRC Mileage rate for car users, increasing the current rate of 45 pence per mile to 55 pence per mile.

The Chief HR Officer introduced the report.

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

Questions were raised by Members in relation to:

- (1) whether agreeing this revised mileage rate would be breaching Standing Order No. 22.1 by agreeing to a Revenue Budget spend within six months of the Council's budget being set; and the Chief Financial Officer advised that decisions on small matters could be taken once the budget had been set and this was a small matter; that the costs involved in this decision were not material in nature and this was not a major matter for consideration, therefore, he did not believe this breached Standing Orders;
- (2) why this matter did not require a two thirds majority of Members present to agree to vote on this matter when a previous matter in May 2026 had required this to make a budget decision; and the Chief Executive advised that the matter in May 2026 was part of an active budget decision to remove a provision and this decision was a minor in-year matter which would be met from existing service budgets which were not subject to any savings decisions; and
- (3) why this matter was being decided retrospectively; and the Chief HR Officer advised that this was due to the update on the mileage rates being received after 1 April 2026 and that, due to these being advisory rates, they were then discussed nationally at the Heads of HR meetings and all Councils had reviewed these and were now considering the new rates at the various Council meetings.

The Council

Decided:

- (a) to approve the implementation of the revised HMRC mileage rate of 55 pence per mile, with retrospective effect from 1 April 2026; and
- (b) to authorise the Chief HR Officer to apply any future HMRC mileage rate changes automatically.

6. Schedule of Meetings

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 26 May 2026 by the Chief Governance Officer seeking approval of an amended timetable of meetings for April 2027.

The Chief Governance Officer introduced the report.

Councillor Brian Connolly, seconded by Councillor Alec Clark, moved the recommendations as outlined in the report.

The Council

Decided: to approve the amended timetable of Council and Panel meetings for April 2027 as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

7. South Ayrshire Charitable Trust 2026/27

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 13 May 2026 by the Chief Governance Officer providing an update to trustees on the donations and grants made by South Ayrshire Charitable Trust in the financial year 2025-2026; and to consider a business plan for the financial year 2026-2027.

The Service Lead – Legal and Licensing introduced the report.

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

Comments were made and questions raised by Members in relation to:

- (1) limitation of value of funding where it stated “the limitation on a single grant for the year 2026-2027 will be £1000 from the initial trust fund and for the sums contributed by South Ayrshire Council for each Committee” and whether the sum outlined in the report for each Committee was the actual amount or with a further £1,000 added; and the Solicitor advised that these were funds that remained from the original trust and the £1,000 limit solely related to these; and that the other amounts remaining were the amounts donated by the Council on a recurring basis; and that for Prestwick there were no funds remaining, therefore, the amount was the £1,000; and
- (2) welcoming the signposting to the Information and Advice Hub for residents to obtain financial advice.

The Council, having thanked the officers involved for their work on this matter,

Decided:

- (a) to note the grants and donations made by the South Ayrshire Charitable Trust in the financial year 2025-2026 as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report; and
- (b) to approve the Business Plan for the operation of South Ayrshire Charitable Trust for the year 2026-2027 as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report.

8. Audit and Governance Panel – 2025/26 Annual Report

There was submitted a joint [report](#) (issued) of 27 May 2026 by the Chief Financial Officer and the Chief Governance Officer providing the Council with the Audit and Governance Panel annual report for 2025/26.

The Chief Financial Officer introduced the report.

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

Councillor Dettbarn, as Chair of the Audit and Governance Panel advised that it was very important for the Panel, as the Council's main scrutiny panel, to hold itself accountable to the wider Council Members; that the reduction in attendance at meetings was due to a number of changes in membership and that next year the attendance records should rise; and that the Panel undertook a breadth of work and looked forward each year to the annual self-assessment in September which allowed members of the Panel to identify areas for improvement and any training needs.

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

- (1) feedback from those Members not on the Panel being welcomed on whether the Panel was doing its job effectively; that the Internal Audit section was very proactive and offered support and advice to services; that the financial support was also very good, especially around treasury management and financial arrangements which were very complicated in the current financial climate; that some work was still required around risk management and some recommendations had been made by the Panel at its last meeting around how this could be integrated more fully into the reporting arrangements for different activities across the Council which the Chief Governance Officer had agreed to consider; that, in terms of good governance, the Council should be continually looking for ways to make improvements; that there had not been many call-ins from Cabinet and it was worthwhile considering why this was; and thanking the officers facilitating this Panel for their hard work;
- (2) thanking the Audit and Governance Panel for the work carried out throughout the year; being disappointed with attendance at Members' briefings and training sessions and suggesting that attendance records for these be submitted to Council or Cabinet for information; and noting that it would be interesting to know the feedback that officers had received on the training sessions; and the Chief Executive advised that attendance at briefings, training sessions and Panel meetings was a matter for Members; that there were some functions that members discharged which required mandatory training to be undertaken before these functions could be discharged; and that he was actively looking for ways in which members' training could be further developed and he would be liaising with members in terms of their feedback about current training arrangements and potential for future training for present Members and with a view to members' induction for the next term of Council. The Member then thanked the Chief Executive and advised that any way to improve members' knowledge of the workings of the council and the important areas that it covered was welcomed; and
- (3) that the importance of the Audit and Governance Panel was appreciated by Members and thanking the Members of the Panel for their work and also the officers who supported the Panel.

The Council

Decided: to consider and approve the Audit and Governance Panel annual report for 2025/26 (attached as Appendix 1 to the report).

9. Ayrshire Roads Alliance Service Plan 2026/27 and Performance Report 2025/26

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 28 May 2026 by the Depute Chief Executive and Director of Housing, Operations and Development presenting the Ayrshire Roads Alliance (ARA) Service Plan for 2026/27 and the Performance Report for 2025/26.

The Head of Roads, Ayrshire Roads Alliance introduced the report and advised that paragraph 2.1.1 of the report should read “that the Council note the Service Plan” and not to “approve the Service Plan”; and that there had been an adjustment to the East Ayrshire Council Revenue Budget since the Service Plan had been lodged.

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

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

- (1) this report allowing members to see the scope of the work carried out by ARA; that ARA was established to share services more efficiently and to make savings for each Council which had been successful; that there had been challenges as Council budgets were tight and inflation had increased the price of raw materials, however, a good job had been done in managing the roads network; and congratulating ARA for being successful at the APSE Awards;
- (2) page 14 of the Plan which stated “there will be an effort to improve outcomes for children and older people particularly in the Ayr North and Girvan Glendoune areas”; and the Head of Roads advised that this was included in the local outcomes improvement plan in the local place plan for South Ayrshire; and that, rather than being an ARA target itself, it had been included in the overall place and local plans for the whole Council;
- (3) as most of the works carried out were sub-contracted, could any of the works be carried out in-house; and the Head of Roads advised that a review had been carried out to understand what was best value to keep in-house and what should be outsourced; and that day-to-day business was kept in-house but it was recognised that there were efficiencies to be gained by outsourcing some projects;
- (4) that the agreement the Council had with ARA should be subject to review to ensure the Council was being represented well and seeking assurances that the Committees involved in approving the Service Plan had the means to keep this under review to ensure best value was being achieved; that there were elements within the Plan where performance was better in East Ayrshire and also elements where performance was better in South Ayrshire; the standard of repairs by ARA not being to the standard of repairs made by utilities companies; and also repairs not being carried out on potholes; and the Chief Executive advised that all governance matters were kept under regular review and that would continue to be the case; and that there were long standing governance arrangements in place and the Council was fully represented on all Committees. The Head of Roads further advised that regularly when a repair was being carried out the whole surface could be needing replaced, however, she was working within budget restrictions and her staff had on occasion to carry out repairs rather than replace the whole surface; that there was a list of roads requiring resurfacing; that staff were advised to carry out a first time permanent repair where possible but if the circumstances and condition of the road did not allow for this, a short-term temporary repair was carried out; that when safety inspections were carried out, it was a risk-based approach as there was not an infinite budget to repair every defect, that repairs were assessed and those that qualified as a larger risk and hazard would be repaired and others may have to wait for a repair further down the line if it was assessed and found not to be a safety issue; and
- (5) the appendices to the report being difficult to read and could the Head of Roads produce further reports in a more user-friendly way.

Twenty Three Members voted for the Motion and two Members against and the Council

Decided:

- (a) to note the Ayrshire Roads Alliance Service Plan for 2026/27 (Appendix 1);
- (b) to note that regular progress updates were provided to the Ayrshire Shared Service Joint Committee
- (c) to consider the performance scorecard for 2025/26 (Appendix 2); and
- (d) otherwise to note the content of this report.

10. Ayrshire Roads Alliance 10 Year Review

There was submitted a [report](#) (issued) of 28 May 2026 by the Depute Chief Executive and Director of Housing, Operations and Development presenting the findings and recommendations of the 10-Year Review of the Ayrshire Roads Alliance (ARA), with the Review reflecting on progress since the establishment of ARA in 2014 and making recommendations for future advancement of the service.

The Head of Roads, Ayrshire Roads Alliance introduced the report.

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

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

- (1) should colleagues in North Ayrshire join Ayrshire Roads Alliance, this would only strengthen the service; that the problems with recruitment were being addressed through the apprenticeship programme; that, as the ARA was working with a finite budget, roads were maintained as best as they could be; and that South Ayrshire sat very respectably on the list of Scottish Council roads; and
- (2) what effect climate change would have on roads; and the Head of Roads advised that the drainage systems were not designed to cope with the short intense rainfall events and this was not an easy fix, however, works had been carried out with Scottish Water to look at the potential to store the water and release it slower into the drainage system and also to provide rain gardens.

Twenty one Members voted for the Motion, three Against and one Member abstained and the Council

Decided:

- (a) to note the completion of the Ayrshire Roads Alliance 10 Year Review, as attached at Appendix 1 to the report;
- (b) to note the findings and recommendations arising from the Review, together with the Recommendations and Next Steps action plan attached as Appendix 2 to the report;
- (c) to endorse recommendations 8, 9 and 25 of the review (adopting the revised strategic/delivery split as approved by both Councils in 2021, allocation of income to each respective authority area and making the existing temporary Strategic Manager post permanent);

- (d) to note that implementation of recommendations would be progressed within existing governance arrangements, with further reports brought forward where required, and;
- (e) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

Adjournment

The time being 10.55 a.m., the meeting adjourned.

Resumption of Meeting

The Council resumed at 11.15 a.m.

11. Notice of Motion

In accordance with Council Standing Order No. 18.7, an urgent Notice of Motion was submitted by Councillor Craig Mackay and seconded by Councillor George Weir, as follows:

"Council notes with regret that two existing school breakfast clubs are scheduled to close next week – a commercially operated facility at Struthers Primary, and a short-term funded initiative at Ayr Grammar Primary.

Council recognises the important role of breakfast clubs, in enabling children – some of whom would otherwise arrive at school with an empty stomach – to have a proper breakfast; and also, in supporting parents who need to travel to work in the morning.

Council further notes the expectation of the Scottish Government delivering universal provision of breakfast clubs, extending the Bright Start programme to all primary and special schools from August 2027.

Council believes it would be a step backwards if these two local schools were to lose out on breakfast club provision for a year, before having it reinstated; and therefore resolves to make available breakfast club provision to the children attending these breakfast clubs which will prevent the loss of the provision where it currently exists from as soon as practicable after the start of the 2026 Autumn Term for a period of one year.

Consequently, it is agreed that estimated costs of £40,000 be made available for draw down from uncommitted reserves, should alternative arrangements (including an alternative commercial provider at Struthers and additional Bright Start funding for Ayr Grammar) reduce or preclude the need for additional direct spend. Funds would be able to cover operation of these breakfast clubs on a one-off basis for a maximum of one year."

Provost asked if any Member had an interest to declare.

Councillor Laura Brennan-Whitefield advised that she had a connection to this item, however, she was satisfied that it did not impact on her ability to consider the Motion and it did not prevent her from being involved in the debate or the vote.

Councillor Craig Mackay advised that he had no interest to declare, however, for transparency, he had a family connection regarding Struthers Primary School, although not with the breakfast club.

A full debate took place regarding the terms of the Motion and questions were raised which were responded to by the Director of Education.

The Council

Decided: to agree the Notice of Motion as outlined above.

12. **Formal Question**

In terms of Council Standing Order No. 26.2, there was submitted a **Formal Question** from Councillor Wullie Hogg and the response to this question was circulated.

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

13. **Ayrshire Growth Deal Transport Improvement Scheme - Project Update**

There was submitted a report (Members Only) of 13 May 2026 by the Depute Chief Executive and Director of Housing, Operations and Development providing an update on progress with the Ayrshire Growth Deal (AGD) Transport Improvement Scheme and the development of the Outline Business Case (OBC); and seeking approval to undertake public and stakeholder engagement on the emerging transport improvement proposals and associated study areas before a preferred option or package was brought back to Council for consideration.

The Chief Executive introduced the report and advised that the report should state that it was seeking Council approval and not Cabinet approval; and that the timetabling in the "next steps" related to the previous Cabinet meeting.

Councillor Brian Connolly, seconded by Councillor Alec Clark, moved the recommendations as outlined in the report.

A full discussion took place in relation to this report including questions raised and responded to by the Chief Executive.

The Council

Decided:

- (1) to note the progress made on the AGD Transport Improvement Scheme and the development of the OBC;
- (2) to note that the OBC was being developed in accordance with HM Treasury Green Book Five Case Model principles and a Transport Scotland / Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) aligned appraisal process;

- (3) to approve undertaking public and stakeholder engagement with local communities, businesses, landowners, transport operators, statutory consultees, accessibility groups and wider stakeholders to inform option refinement and the development of the OBC;
- (4) to approve consultation on the emerging transport improvement proposals and associated study areas, noting that no preferred option or final design was being approved through this report; and
- (5) to note the associated project management, cost management, concept design, environmental appraisal, and traffic modelling workstreams being progressed where these interfaced with the wider AGD transport programme.

14. Consideration of Above Confidential Report.

Following advice from the Chief Governance Officer, the Council

Decided: to authorise the disclosure of the following report under Standing Order 32.4 subject to redactions for GDPR:-

- Ayrshire Growth Deal Transport Improvement Scheme – Project Update

Provost

Provost thanked everyone in attendance for their contribution.

The meeting ended at 11.50 a.m.