

POLICY AND RESOURCES EXECUTIVE SUB-COMMITTEE – 2 JUNE 2020

Policy and Resources Executive Sub-Committee

Tuesday 2 June 2020 at 3pm

Present: Councillors McCabe, C McEleny, Robertson and Brooks (for Wilson).
Councillors Clocherty and Quinn (for Ahlfeld) (both by video-conference).

Chair: Councillor McCabe presided.

In attendance: Chief Executive, Head of Legal & Property Services, Ms S Lang (Legal & Property Services) and IT Service Manager.
Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources, Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development, Corporate Director (Chief Officer), Inverclyde Health & Social Care Partnership, Chief Financial Officer, Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications, Head of Culture, Communities & Educational Resources, Head of Environmental & Public Protection, Shared Head of Service Roads and Service Manager, Communications, Tourism and Health & Safety (all by video-conference).

The following paragraphs are submitted for information only, having been dealt with under the powers delegated to the Executive Sub-Committee.

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| 239 | Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest | 239 |
| | <p>Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf Councillor Ahlfeld, with Councillor Quinn substituting, and Councillor Wilson, with Councillor Brooks substituting.
Councillors Brooks, Clocherty, Quinn and Robertson declared interests in Agenda Item 3 (COVID-19 Financial Update).</p> | |
| 240 | COVID-19 (Coronavirus): Scrutiny Report | 240 |
| | <p>There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive providing an update on actions taken by officers in order to address and mitigate the risks arising from the COVID-19 emergency.</p> <p>Decided:</p> <p>(1) that the actions taken to date to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 emergency in Inverclyde be noted;</p> <p>(2) that it be noted that further reports will be submitted regularly for Members' scrutiny and review;</p> <p>(3) that approval be given to the extension of the amended Long Term Empty Council Tax Policy for a further period to 31 August 2020;</p> <p>(4) that approval be given to the allocation of £100,000 for necessary property costs to prepare for the phased return to work of employees and that the sums expended for this be included within the Council's accounting for COVID-19 related costs;</p> <p>(5) that approval be given for the time limits on-street and in car parks and charges in car parks to remain suspended until 30 June 2020 at which point these be reviewed again; and</p> <p>(6) that the Chief Executive seek clarity as to how positive results from the mobile testing unit feed into the Test and Protect Protocol.</p> | |

241 COVID-19 Financial Update

241

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer providing an update in respect of various finance matters arising from the COVID-19 emergency.

Councillors Brooks, Clocherty and Quinn declared a non-financial interest in this item as Members of the Board of Inverclyde Leisure and Councillors Clocherty and Robertson declared a non-financial interest as Members of the Board of Greenock Arts Guild Ltd. All 4 Members formed the view that the nature of their interests and of the item of business did not preclude their continued presence at the meeting or their participation in the decision-making process.

Following discussion, Councillor McCabe moved:

- (1) that it be agreed to note the latest short-term financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Council's finances and the intention to submit a further report to the Executive Sub-Committee on how these extra costs are to be funded;
- (2) that it be agreed that the Council's share of the Hardship Fund and UK Government consequentials be placed in a COVID-19 Earmarked Reserve;
- (3) that agreement be given to the proposed payment of 60% of contracted sums to school transport providers for the period 1 April to 30 June 2020;
- (4) that it be noted that a report on the 2019/20 Early Years Specific Grant underspend and delivery of 1140 hours will be submitted to the next meeting of the Executive Sub-Committee;
- (5) that it be noted that further reports will be submitted in the next month in respect of the 2019/20 Unaudited Financial Accounts and the 2020/29 Financial Strategy.
- (6) that a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Executive Sub-Committee on the financial implications of continuing the £25 per fortnight payment to children eligible for free school meals to 31 August 2020; and
- (7) that a report on ways to assist families in poverty be submitted to the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee in August 2020.

As an amendment to (3) above, Councillor Quinn moved that agreement be given to a proposed payment of 80% of contracted sums to school transport providers for the period 1 April to 30 June 2020.

Following a roll call vote, 3 Members, Councillors C McEleny, Quinn and Robertson voted in favour of the amendment and 3 Members, Councillors Brooks, Clocherty and McCabe voted in favour of the motion. There being equality in voting, the Convener exercised his casting vote in favour of the motion which was declared carried.

Decided:

- (1) that it be agreed to note the latest short term financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Council's finances and the intention to submit a further report to the Executive Sub-Committee on how these extra costs are to be funded;
- (2) that it be agreed that the Council's share of the Hardship Fund and UK Government consequentials be placed in a COVID-19 Earmarked Reserve;
- (3) that agreement be given to the proposed payment of 60% of contracted sums to school transport providers for the period 1 April to 30 June 2020;
- (4) that it be noted that a report on the 2019/20 Early Years Specific Grant underspend and delivery of 1140 hours will be submitted to the next meeting of the Executive Sub-Committee; and
- (5) that it be noted that further reports will be submitted in the next month in respect of the 2019/20 Unaudited Financial Accounts and the 2020/29 Financial Strategy.
- (6) that a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Executive Sub-Committee on the financial implications of continuing the £25 per fortnight payment to children eligible for free school meals over the school summer holiday period; and

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(7) that a report on the wider issues affecting families in poverty and suffering food insecurity be submitted to the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee in August.

242 COVID-19 Shielding and Humanitarian Assistance Centre 242

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources advising the Executive Sub-Committee of the work to support the “shielding” and other high risk groups in the course of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Decided: that the report be noted.

243 Emergency Package to Prevent Child Poverty Crisis – Notice of Motion by Councillor Jackson 243

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources on the notice of motion by Councillor Jackson, countersigned by Councillor Clocherty submitted in terms of Standing Order 22 in the following terms:-

“(i) A study by IPPR (Scotland) has reported that nearly half of families with children in Scotland are struggling to make ends meet through the current Covid-19 crisis. The report states that 300,000 households with children in Scotland (49%) are struggling to make ends meet or in serious financial difficulty, that the coronavirus pandemic is having a devastating impact on family finances.

(ii) Over 100 children’s charities, faith groups, academics, think tanks, poverty campaigners and trade unions support a direct financial boost for all families living on low incomes to support them through the coronavirus crisis. Signatories include the STUC, Scottish Women’s Aid, Scottish Association for Mental Health, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, IPPR, Barnardo’s, Poverty Alliance, Child Poverty Action Group in Scotland and One Parent Families Scotland.

(iii) The latest Scottish index of multiple deprivation (SIMD) ranked Greenock town centre and east central the most deprived part of the country and the latest figures from the National Records of Scotland ranked Inverclyde local authority as having the highest Covid-19 death rate in the country.

(iv) Inverclyde families are at a higher risk of falling into financial hardship. Inverclyde Council ask that the Scottish Government support calls to step in to provide new payments to financially starved households, that in addition to support provided by the UK Government, through the powers already available to the Scottish Government, the First Minister fund an emergency package to prevent a child poverty crisis, to provide a new payment of £250 to every child in families in serious financial difficulty.”

Councillor Jackson was present via video-conferencing for this item and spoke in relation to the Notice of Motion.

Following discussion, Councillor Clocherty moved that the Notice of Motion as set out above be agreed.

As an amendment to (iv) above Councillor McEleny moved:

“The Policy and Resources Executive Sub-Committee welcomes the proposed Scottish Government Scottish Child payment of £10 per week; notes that this payment, which received cross party political support in the Scottish Parliament, was welcomed by the Child Poverty Action Group as “An absolute game changer” in ending child poverty; and further that delivery is planned to eligible families with children under 6 by Christmas 2020, with full rollout to eligible families with children under 16 by the end of 2022; and notes eligibility criteria being households with children and in receipt of a qualifying benefit (Universal Credit, Legacy Benefits and/or Pension Credit).

“The Policy and Resources Executive Sub-Committee, as a response to pressures of

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the COVID-19 public health crisis on families and to further tackle child poverty in Inverclyde, resolves that:

- The Council will introduce the Scottish Child payment immediately to all eligible families funded from the fund established in the 2020 Inverclyde Council budget to address poverty and deprivation.

- The Chief Executive will write to the First Minister to highlight the unique circumstances of Inverclyde of being both the most deprived Council area in Scotland and the area with the highest Coronavirus mortality rate in Scotland, and further highlight the action the Council has taken in the form of early introduction of the Scottish Child payment and urge the Scottish Government to fully fund early introduction to allow the Council to further address poverty and deprivation in the Inverclyde Local Authority area.”

Following a roll call vote, 2 Members, Councillors C McEleny and Robertson voted in favour of the amendment and 4 Members, Councillors Brooks, Clocherty, McCabe and Quinn voted in favour of the motion which was declared carried.

Decided: that the terms of the Notice of Motion by Councillor Jackson be agreed.

244 Support to Care Homes – COVID-19 Pandemic

244

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Chief Officer), Inverclyde Health & Social Care Partnership advising of the preparation and actions taken by the HSCP to support care homes in Inverclyde during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Decided:

- (1) that the correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary regarding the arrangements to ensure appropriate clinical support to and oversight of care homes be noted;
- (2) that the continued implementation of the delayed discharge mobilisation plan to address the pressures presented by the COVID-19 emergency be noted;
- (3) that it be noted that the additional 20 care home beds initially planned for are no longer required;
- (4) that the current arrangements to purchase 50 care home beds for 12 weeks to mid-June 2020 under the National Care Home Contract be noted;
- (5) that the current discussions between CoSLA and the Scottish Government to determine how to support care home providers in the post COVID-19 recovery phase be noted; and
- (6) that it be noted that reports on the position in relation to care homes, including an analysis of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, will be submitted to future Committee meetings.

245 Inverclyde Mental Health and Wellbeing Update

245

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Chief Officer), Inverclyde Health & Social Care Partnership providing an update on actions taken to support the mental health and wellbeing of the Inverclyde population during the COVID-19 emergency.

Decided:

- (1) that the actions taken to date to mitigate the effect of COVID-19 on the mental health and wellbeing of the population of Inverclyde be noted;
- (2) that it be noted that the mental health service has continued to be delivered; and
- (3) that it be remitted to the Head of Regeneration & Planning to raise with CoSLA and the Scottish Government apparent gaps in the eligibility criteria for the newly self-employed scheme in relation to those who are not currently eligible as they were claiming Universal Credit at the time of the scheme’s launch or who became self -

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employed during 2018/19.

246 Proposals for the Administrative Arrangements in the light of COVID-19: Cycle of Council, Committee, Sub-Committee and Board Meetings to June 2021 246

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal & Property Services proposing the administrative arrangements and provisional cycle of Council, Committee, Sub-Committee and Board meetings to June 2021 in the light of the COVID-19 emergency arrangements and the Scottish Government Route Map – Through the Crisis.

Decided:

- (1) that approval be given to the principles of the revised administrative arrangements for the Council's Committee Cycle 2020/21 together with the provisional dates set out in the timetable in Appendix 1;
- (2) that it be remitted to the Head of Legal & Property Services to implement the principles of the revised arrangements and to amend the Council's Standing Orders in suitable terms to reflect and support on-line Member participation;
- (3) that approval be given to all meetings of the Council, Committees, Sub-Committees and Boards being held on an on-line only basis for one cycle ending with the meeting of the Inverclyde Council on 24 September 2020 and that a report be submitted to the Council on 24 September, following consultation with Elected Members, reviewing the operation of the on-line only meeting arrangements and setting out options for the convening of future meetings in the light of the COVID-19 public health emergency and the Scottish Government's Route Map – Through the Crisis; and
- (4) that training be provided to Elected Members relative to the new on-line meeting arrangements.

247 Re-opening of Schools, Early Learning and Child Care Provision after COVID-19 247

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development providing an update on the proposed local phasing delivery plan for re-opening schools, early learning and child care provision.

Decided:

- (1) that the contents of the report be noted; and
- (2) that agreement in principle be given to the new holiday dates pending further national advice.

248 Enhanced Cleaning in Establishments: COVID-19 Recovery 248

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development seeking approval to enhance the cleaning regime in all Council offices and educational establishments and to agree the resultant financial implications.

Decided:

- (1) that the report be noted;
- (2) that approval be given to the enhanced cleaning regime set out in the report; and
- (3) that approval be given to the allocation of a £500,000 budget to fund extra cleaning operatives, supervisors and materials.

249 COVID-19 Recovery Update 249

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration &

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Resources (1) providing an update on progress in developing both the internal Council recovery process and the wider community recovery process and (2) seeking approval for the formation of a Recovery Sounding Board – Members as the appropriate forum for Elected Members’ input for the latter process.

Following discussion, Councillor McCabe moved:

- (1) that the progress in both the Council and HSCP and wider community recovery planning process be noted;
- (2) that the Scottish Government publication “Scotland’s Route Map Through and Out of the Crisis” and how that will inform decision-making in the recovery process be noted;
- (3) that approval be given to the formation of a Members’ Sounding Board for the recovery process; and
- (4) that approval be given to the formation of a Members’ Sounding Board for the recovery process on the basis set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

As an amendment to (4) above, Councillor C McEleny moved that the membership of the Sounding Board be as set out in Appendix 1 to the report but that the Chair be chosen by the Sounding Board Members.

Following a roll-call vote, 3 Members, Councillors C McEleny, Quinn and Robertson voted in favour of the amendment and 3 Members, Councillors Brooks, Clocherty and McCabe voted in favour of the motion. There being equality in voting, the Convener exercised his casting vote in favour of the motion which was declared carried.

Decided:

- (1) that the progress in both the Council and HSCP and wider community recovery planning process be noted;
- (2) that the Scottish Government publication “Scotland’s Route Map Through and Out of the Crisis” and how that will inform decision-making in the recovery process be noted; and
- (3) that approval be given to the formation of a Members’ Sounding Board for the recovery process on the basis set out in Appendix 1 to the report and that each political group be asked to provide their nominations to the Head of Legal & Property Services.

250 National Records of Scotland (NRS) Mid-Year Population Estimates (2019) and Population Projections (2018 Based) for Scottish Council Areas 250

There was submitted a report by the Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications providing details of the National Records of Scotland (NRS) mid-year (2019) population estimates published on 30 April 2020 and the new population projections for Scottish areas published on 24 March 2020.

Decided:

- (1) that it be noted that the latest NRS population estimates show a further decrease (-0.4%) in Inverclyde’s population which is now estimated at 77,800 (mid-2019);
- (2) that it be noted that there has been positive net migration in Inverclyde over the period mid-2018 to mid-2019;
- (3) that it be noted that the recent NRS population projections for Scottish areas (2018 based) project a continuing decline in Inverclyde’s population up to 2028;
- (4) that it be remitted to the Corporate Management Team to submit a report showing how actions from previous key research and policy documents relating to depopulation/repopulation have been successfully implemented, or not, prior to any further new work being undertaken in this field:
 - (a) to use this analysis to better form recommendations for action from this point forward to bring about changes in population, multiple deprivations and health

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inequalities and to ensure that the actions are taken forward;

(b) to use this analysis as an evidence base, outlining the need for any emerging resources to enable progress;

(5) that a data set for the area be provided which justifies and shows the long-standing assertion that there is a discrepancy between NRS's projection methodology and the reality of population statistics within Inverclyde, which disproportionately harms Inverclyde both financially and in reputation and that this be done prior to the release of the 2021 census data in 2022/23; and

(6) that it be remitted to the LOIP Population Partnership to consider these latest population statistics and agree any additional actions in connection with these.

251 Proposed Temporary Lay-Up of Cruise Ships – Update

251

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources (1) providing an update on the response from Peel Ports following the meeting with Council representatives held after the Executive Sub-Committee of 19 May 2020 and (2) appending copies of correspondence between the local MP and MSP and relevant Government Ministers for which responses were awaited at the time of writing. There was circulated to the Executive Sub-Committee an email from Stuart McMillan MSP to the First Minister on this issue.

Decided:

(1) that the report be noted; and

(2) that an update report be submitted to the next meeting of the Executive Sub-Committee and that this include any responses received by the local MP and MSP from Government Ministers.