

**THE INVERCLYDE COUNCIL – 2 DECEMBER 2021**

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**The Inverclyde Council**

**Thursday 2 December 2021 at 2pm**

**Present:** Provost Brennan, Councillors Ahlfeld, Brooks, Clocherty, Crowther, Curley, Dorrian, Jackson, MacLeod, McCabe, McCormick, C McEleny, J McEleny, McKenzie, McVey, Moran, Nelson, Quinn, Rebecchi, Robertson and Wilson.

**Chair:** Provost Brennan presided.

**In attendance:** Chief Executive, Interim Corporate Director (Chief Officer), Inverclyde Health & Social Care Partnership, Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development, Interim Director Finance & Corporate Governance, Interim Director Environment & Regeneration, Interim Head of Legal & Democratic Services, Interim Head Public Protection & Recovery, Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications, Ms D Sweeney and Mr C MacDonald (Legal Services), ICT Services Manager and Service Manager, Communications, Tourism and Health & Safety.

The meeting was held at the Municipal Buildings, Greenock with Councillors Ahlfeld, Clocherty, Crowther, Curley, Dorrian, Jackson, MacLeod, McCabe, McCormick, J McEleny, McKenzie, McVey, Moran, Quinn, Rebecchi and Robertson attending by video-conference.

**503      Apologies and Declarations of Interest      503**

An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor Murphy.

No declarations of interest were intimated.

**Minutes of Meetings of  
The Inverclyde Council, Committees, Sub-Committees and Boards**

**504      Grants Sub-Committee – 22 September 2021      504**

**Approved** on the motion of Councillor Brooks.

**505      Inverclyde Council – 23 September 2021      505**

**Approved** on the motion of Provost Brennan.

**506      Local Review Body – 6 October 2021      506**

**Approved** on the motion of Councillor Wilson.

**507      Audit Committee – 19 October 2021      507**

**Approved** on the motion of Councillor Rebecchi.

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<b>508</b>	<b>Health &amp; Social Care Committee – 21 October 2021</b>	<b>508</b>
	<b>Approved</b> on the motion of Councillor Moran.	
<b>509</b>	<b>Inverclyde Council (Special) – 28 October 2021</b>	<b>509</b>
	<b>Approved</b> on the motion of Provost Brennan.	
<b>510</b>	<b>Environment &amp; Regeneration Committee – 28 October 2021</b>	<b>510</b>
	<b>Approved</b> on the motion of Councillor McCormick.	
<b>511</b>	<b>Education &amp; Communities Committee – 2 November 2021</b>	<b>511</b>
	<b>Approved</b> on the motion of Councillor Clocherty.	
<b>512</b>	<b>Planning Board – 3 November 2021</b>	<b>512</b>
	<b>Approved</b> on the motion of Councillor Wilson.	
<b>513</b>	<b>Human Resources Appeals Board – 12 November 2021</b>	<b>513</b>
	<b>Approved</b> on the motion of Councillor Clocherty.	
<b>514</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee – 16 November 2021</b>	<b>514</b>
	<b>Approved</b> on the motion of Councillor McCabe.	
<b>515</b>	<b>Inverclyde Council (Special) – 18 November 2021</b>	<b>515</b>
	<b>Approved</b> on the motion of Provost Brennan.	
<b>516</b>	<b>Local Police &amp; Fire Scrutiny Committee – 18 November 2021</b>	<b>516</b>
	<b>Approved</b> on the motion of Councillor McVey.	
<b>517</b>	<b>Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report 2020/21</b>	<b>517</b>

There was submitted a report by the Interim Corporate Director (Chief Officer) Inverclyde Health & Social Care Partnership on the content of The Inverclyde Chief Social Work Officer report for 2020/2021.

Prior to commencement of discussion on this item, the Provost referred to the dedication of the report to Kate Christmas, Children and Families Services Manager, who passed away on 14 July 2021 after a short illness. The Provost paid tribute to Ms Christmas, acknowledging her kindness and compassion and that Ms Christmas was an excellent Social Worker, regarded as both mentor and friend by her colleagues.

During consideration of this item, Councillor C McEleny requested that Councillor Clocherty be suspended from the meeting due to a typed comment made earlier within the Chat function of the Web-Ex platform at the time of consideration of the Education & Communities Committee minute of 2 November 2021.

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Following a roll call vote 2 Members, Councillors C McEleny and Councillor J McEleny voted that Councillor Clocherty be suspended from the meeting, and 13 Members, Provost Brennan, Councillors Ahlfeld, Clocherty, Curley, Dorrian, Jackson, McCabe, McCormick, McKenzie, McVey, Moran, Quinn and Robertson voted that Councillor Clocherty not be suspended from the meeting, which was declared carried. Councillors Brooks, Crowther, MacLeod, Nelson, Rebecchi and Wilson abstained from voting.

**Decided:** that the content of the Inverclyde Chief Social Work Officer report be noted and endorsed.

**518      2023 Review of UK Parliament Constituencies – Publication of Initial Proposals**

**518**

There was submitted a report by the Interim Head of Legal & Democratic Services (1) informing the Council of the initial proposals received from the Boundary Commission for Scotland for the 2023 Review of UK Parliament Constituencies and (2) advising that consultation responses are invited by 8 December 2021.

Following discussion, Councillor J McEleny seconded by Councillor C McEleny, moved that due to the Scottish Government's intention to have an independence referendum in 2023, Inverclyde Council will not submit a response to the consultation.

As an amendment, Councillor McCabe seconded by Councillor Clocherty, moved that it would be considered appropriate for the Council to submit a response outlining the responses from the individual political groups.

Following a roll call vote 2 Members, Councillors C McEleny and J McEleny, voted in favour of the motion and 16 Members, Provost Brennan, Councillors Clocherty, Crowther, Curley, Dorrian, Jackson, MacLeod, McCabe, McCormick, McKenzie, McVey, Moran, Nelson, Quinn, Rebecchi and Robertson voted in favour of the amendment which was declared carried. Councillors Ahlfeld, Brooks and Wilson abstained from voting.

**Decided:** that it be remitted to the Interim Head of Legal & Democratic Services to submit a response to the consultation outlining the responses from the individual political groups.

**519      Update Report Regarding the Shared Services Joint Committee**

**519**

There was submitted a report by the Interim Head of Legal & Democratic Services (1) providing the Council with an update in relation to the Shared Services Joint Committee, and (2) advising that East Dunbartonshire Council approved a report agreeing to withdraw from the Shared Services Joint Committee at their Council meeting on 23 September 2021.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the content of the report be noted;
- (2) that the request of East Dunbartonshire Council be agreed and the 18 month notice period for withdrawal as stipulated in the Minute of Agreement be waived;
- (3) that the Interim Head of Legal & Democratic Services be authorised to liaise with West Dunbartonshire Council, and East Dunbartonshire Council if necessary, regarding any variation of the relevant Minute of Agreement and Standing Orders in advance of the next meeting of the Shared Services Joint Committee on 19 January 2022, or on such other date as shall be agreed; and
- (4) that it be remitted to officers to submit a report to the appropriate Committee after the Local Government Elections in May 2022 outlining the progress and potential opportunities of Shared Services, including information on further opportunities to develop Shared Services with other public bodies and the third sector.

**520 2022/23 Budget Update**

520

There was submitted a report by the Interim Director of Finance & Corporate Governance (1) seeking decisions in order to progress the development of the 2022/23 Revenue Budget, and (2) seeking decisions in relation to the recently announced Winter Hardship Support Funding from the Scottish Government.

During the course of discussion on this item, the Interim Director of Finance & Corporate Governance advised the Council that the SJC side of the pay award referred to in paragraph 5.1 of the report has now been agreed, confirming the financial implications as detailed, and noted that the teachers' pay award is still to be agreed.

**Decided:**

- (1) that the latest update relating to development of the 2022/23 Revenue Budget be noted;
- (2) that in order to support the development of savings proposals as part of the 2022/23 Budget savings exercise (a) delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive to progress relevant Voluntary Severance Trawls, and (b) the timescales, as detailed in appendix 1 to the report, be noted;
- (3) that the savings as detailed in appendix 2 to the report be agreed;
- (4) that the approach to Budget Consultation for the 2022/23 Budget as detailed in section 6 of the report be approved;
- (5) that (a) the proposals totalling £400,000 for the use of the Winter Hardship Support Funding, as detailed at paragraph 7.3 of the report, be approved, and (b) it be agreed that in the event the funding provided by the Scottish Government is less than that approved by the Council, the balance will come from the Anti-Poverty ear-marked reserve;
- (6) that the New Ways of Working project and the associated funding, as detailed in section 8 of the report, be approved;
- (7) that it be agreed that up to £300,000 is allocated from the Covid Fund contingency to meet any time limited continued demands for extra cleaning and hygiene materials throughout the Council estate;
- (8) that it be agreed that the remaining unused sum of approximately £1.55million from the Jobs Refresh project be returned to the General Fund Reserves for inclusion in the overall 2022/23 Budget proposals; and
- (9) that it be remitted to the Chief Executive to write to the First Minister of Scotland reiterating the requests made to the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Economy around the Local Government settlement to be announced on 9 December 2021 as part of the Scottish Government draft budget, and the specific asks for Inverclyde detailed in the briefing document submitted to the Cabinet Secretary.

**521 Financial Strategy 2021/31 - Update**

521

There was submitted a report by the Interim Director Finance & Corporate Governance presenting an updated financial strategy to the Council for review and approval.

**Decided:**

- (1) that it be agreed that the expected grant top slice relating to the Council's contribution to the Historical Child Abuse Redress Scheme be met from the Insurance Fund over 2022-2031;
- (2) that it be agreed that £1.5million from the Loans Charges earmarked reserve be transferred to the General Fund Reserves in 2021/22;
- (3) that it be agreed that £1million from the Capital Fund be used to free up a similar

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sum to be transferred to the General Fund Reserves in 2021/22;

(4) that it be agreed that £1.4million be transferred from the City Deal Funding Model to the 2022/25 Capital Programme in 2023/24 and that a recurring sum of £80,000 be added to the Funding Model from 2024/25;

(5) that it be agreed that £2million be provisionally allocated from the General Fund Reserves to partially mitigate the significant projected funding gap in 2023/24; and

(6) that it be agreed that the projected deficit on the School Estate Funding Model be addressed by virement of £300,000 from the Loans Charges Model with effect from 2028/29.

**522 Treasury Management – Mid Year Report 2020/21: Remit from Policy & Resources Committee 522**

There was submitted a report by the Interim Head of Legal & Democratic Services requesting the Council to consider a remit from the Policy & Resources Committee of 16 November 2021 requesting approval of the Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2021/22.

**Decided:** that the Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2021/22 be approved.

**523 Watt Institution Collections Policies – Remit from Education & Communities Committee 523**

There was submitted a report by the Interim Head of Legal & Democratic Services requesting the Council as Trustees of the Watt Institution to note the decision made by the Education & Communities Committee on 2 November 2021 relative to the approval of the McLean Museum Collections Policies.

**Decided:** that the Council as Trustees note the decision of the Education & Communities Committee relative to the Watt Institution Collections Policies.

**524 Trust Funds Annual Accounts 2020-21 524**

There was submitted a report by the Honorary Treasurer requesting the Council as Trustees to adopt the examined Annual Accounts of the Birkmyre Trust and the Watt Institution Trust Fund for 2020/21.

**Decided:** that the Council as Trustees -

(1) that the Annual Accounts for the Birkmyre Trust and Watt Institution Trust Fund for the year ended 31 March 2021 be approved; and

(2) that at Birkmyre Park, Kilmacolm (a) approval be given to the allocation of £27,700 towards the upgrading of the MUGA, and (b) the spend of £12,300 on previously carried out improvements be homologated.

**The Provost being of the opinion that the undernoted report by the Interim Head of Legal & Democratic Services appending a request by Councillor C McEleny was relevant, competent and urgent, moved its consideration in terms of the relevant Standing Order to allow the Council to consider at the earliest opportunity the matter referred to by Councillor C McEleny prior to the Scottish Government draft Budget for 2022/23 being announced on 9 December 2021. This was agreed unanimously.**

**525 Cut to Inverclyde’s Challenge Authority Education Funding – Request by Councillor C McEleny**

525

There was submitted a report by the Interim Head of Legal & Democratic Services on a request received from Councillor C McEleny in the following terms:

‘Council notes and welcomes the positive impact that attainment challenge funding has had to Inverclyde since its introduction.

Council further notes that members have received repeated reports of the impact the funding has made with Education Scotland Inspectors praising Inverclyde Council’s approach to closing the attainment gap in schools as life-changing and sector-leading.

Council notes that £43Million of “Challenge Funding” has in recent years been allocated to nine Challenge Authorities based on level of deprivation.

Council notes that in Inverclyde this funding of circa £3Million has made a positive impact to support welcome additional initiatives which make active difference in reducing the poverty related educational attainment gap in Inverclyde.

Council notes and condemns the Scottish Government’s decision to redesign the allocation of £43Million to be distributed amongst all 32 of Scotland’s Local Authorities instead of targeted at the 9 Challenge Authorities with the highest levels of deprivation.

Council notes that the impact of this decision will result in over £2Million in funding reduction to Inverclyde aimed at reduction the Educational Attainment Gap and that further will negatively impact on the Council’s ability to plan going forward.

Council instructs the Chief Executive of the Council to write directly to the First Minister of Scotland to highlight the negative impact this decision will have on Inverclyde’s ability to close the educational attainment gap and to request that the Scottish Government’s budget of 2022/23 ensures that the current level of educational attainment challenge funding Inverclyde receives is subject to no funding cut; a commitment is made to the funding for the rest of the life of the current Scottish Parliament; and that the continued levels of deprivation in Inverclyde are recognised by the Scottish Government in the form of specific additional funding awarded in the Scottish Government budget.’

Following discussion, Councillor C McEleny moved that the Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to the First Minister of Scotland in the terms of his request.

As an amendment, Councillor Robertson moved that Councillor C McEleny’s request be noted and that no further action be taken.

Following a roll call vote, 10 Members, Councillors Ahlfeld, Provost Brennan, Councillors Brooks, Jackson, C McEleny, J McEleny, McVey, Quinn, Rebecchi and Wilson voted for the motion and 10 Members, Councillors Clocherty, Crowther, Curley, MacLeod, McCabe, McCormick, McKenzie, Moran, Nelson and Robertson voted for the amendment. There being equality in voting, the Provost exercised his casting vote in favour of the amendment which was declared carried. Councillor Dorrian could not be contacted to vote.

Councillor Wilson left the meeting after voting on this item.

**Decided:** that Councillor C McEleny’s request be noted and no further action be taken.

**It was agreed in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended, that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item (Business in the Appendix) on the grounds that the business involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the respective paragraphs of Part I of Schedule 7(A) of the Act, as detailed in the relevant minute.**

**Appendices to Minutes**

<b>526</b>	<b>Health &amp; Social Care Committee – 21 October 2021</b>	<b>526</b>
	<b>Approved</b> on the motion of Councillor Moran.	
<b>527</b>	<b>Inverclyde Council (Special) – 28 October 2021</b>	<b>527</b>
	<b>Approved</b> on the motion of Provost Brennan.	
<b>528</b>	<b>Environment &amp; Regeneration Committee – 28 October 2021</b>	<b>528</b>
	<b>Approved</b> on the motion of Councillor McCormick.	
<b>529</b>	<b>Education &amp; Communities Committee – 2 November 2021</b>	<b>529</b>
	<b>Approved</b> on the motion of Councillor Clocherty.	
<b>530</b>	<b>Human Resources Appeals Board – 12 November 2021</b>	<b>530</b>
	<b>Approved</b> on the motion of Councillor Clocherty.	
<b>531</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee – 16 November 2021</b>	<b>531</b>
	<b>Approved</b> on the motion of Councillor McCabe.	