

Argyll and Bute Council
Comhairle Earra Ghaidheal agus Bhoid

Corporate Services
Director: Nigel Stewart



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7 April 2009

NOTICE OF MEETING

A meeting of the **EXECUTIVE** will be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER, KILMORY, LOCHGILPHEAD** on **THURSDAY, 16 APRIL 2009** at **10:00 AM**, which you are requested to attend.

Nigel Stewart
Director of Corporate Services

BUSINESS

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (IF ANY)**
3. **MINUTES**
 - (a) Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership 28 November 2008 (Pages 1 - 6)
 - (b) Executive 19 March 2009 (Pages 7 - 14)
4. **PRESENTATION TO MEMBERS ON THE BENEFITS OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNCILLORS IN SCOTLAND (NAC)**
Presentation by Councillor Eddie Phillips, East Renfrewshire Council – Assistant General Secretary of NAC
5. **LEADER'S REPORT**
Report by Leader of the Council (Pages 15 - 20)
- # 6. **EARLY YEARS FRAMEWORK**
Extract from Minutes of Social Affairs Policy and Performance Group 9 March 2009 and Report by Director of Community Services (Pages 21 - 26)
- # 7. **ARGYLL COLLEGE**
Report by Director of Community Services (Pages 27 - 30)

- # 8. **SCHOOL TRANSPORT TENDERING**
Extract from Minutes of Social Affairs Policy and Performance Group 9 March 2009 and Joint Report by Director of Community Services and Director of Development Services (Pages 31 - 36)
9. **LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY – STRATEGIC HOUSING FUND – APPLICATION FOR CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE ARGYLL COMMUNITY HOUSING ASSOCIATION AND WEST HIGHLAND HOUSING ASSOCIATION**
Report by Director of Community Services (Pages 37 - 40)
10. **IMPLEMENTATION OF SECTION 11 HOMELESSNESS ETC (SCOTLAND) ACT 2003**
Report by Director of Community Services (Pages 41 - 42)
11. **ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL AFFAIRS**
Report by Spokesperson (Pages 43 - 44)
12. **CONSULTATION BY SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT ON REVISION OF CIRCULAR 12/1996: PLANNING AGREEMENTS**
Report by Director of Development Services (Pages 45 - 50)
13. **CAMPBELTOWN TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION PROJECT (THI)**
Extract from Minutes of CHORD Programme Management Board 20 March 2009 and Report by Director of Development Services (Pages 51 - 56)
14. **ISLAND ISSUES**
Report by Spokesperson (Pages 57 - 60)
15. **PROCESS FOR CHANGE**
Extract from Minutes of Organisational Development Policy and Performance Group 23 March 2009 and Report by Director of Corporate Services (Pages 61 - 80)
- # E1 16. **NPDO SCHOOLS PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT**
Report by Director of Community Services (Pages 81 - 90)

Items marked with # denote matters to be considered as part of the Council's function as Education Authority.

The Committee will be asked to pass a resolution in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the public for items of business with an "E" on the grounds that it is likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in the appropriate paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 7a to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

The appropriate paragraph is:-

- E1 **Paragraph 6** Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (other than the authority).

EXECUTIVE

Maureen Arthur
Councillor Robin Currie
Fiona Fisher
Councillor Alison Hay
Councillor Robert Macintyre
David McEwan
Councillor Ellen Morton
Councillor Douglas Philand
Councillor Elaine Robertson
Councillor Isobel Strong

Jane Brown
Councillor Vivien Dance
Councillor George Freeman
Councillor Donald Macdonald
Councillor Duncan MacIntyre
Councillor Donald McIntosh
Alison Palmer
Councillor James Robb
Councillor Len Scoullar
Councillor Dick Walsh

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ARGYLL AND BUTE COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP**MINUTES of FULL PARTNERSHIP MEETING held in the COUNCIL
CHAMBERS, KILMORY, LOCHGILPHEAD
on 28 NOVEMBER 2008****Present:-**

Andrew Nisbet	Argyll & Bute Councillor
Isobel Strong	Argyll and Bute Councillor
Douglas Cowan	H.I.E.
Alan Morrison	Argyll and Bute Council Legal & Protective Services
Neil Francis	Scottish Enterprise
Sandy MacTaggart	Argyll and Bute Council Operational Services
Malcolm MacFadyen	Argyll and Bute Council Community Services
Janet Crook	
Ann Horn	Argyll and Bute Councillor
John Walls	Strathclyde Partnership for Transport
Jan Brown	Argyll and Bute Council
Sonya Thomas	Argyll and Bute Council
Bill Dundas	SERPID
Brian Barker	Argyll and Bute Council
Raymond Park	Strathclyde Police
Dick Walsh	Argyll and Bute Councillor
Sally Reid	Argyll and Bute Council
Peter Russell	Scottish Government
Nigel Stewart	Argyll and Bute Council
Jim McCrossan	Argyll and Bute Council
E MacKinnon	Argyll & Bute Volunteer Service
G. Hermitage	ABVC + ACVS
Frances Webster	Skills Development Scotland (Highlands and Islands)
Shona Strachan	A.B.C.
Dave Duthie	HITRANS
George Freeman	Argyll and Bute Councillor
Moria Paton	NHSH
Roger Cribbins	NHS Highland
Michael Breslin	Argyll College
Wendy Bruce	Argyll and Bute Council
Keith Miller	Forestry Commission Scotland
John Thomson	Strathclyde Police
Derek Allan	Strathclyde Police
Gordon Anderson	Strathclyde Police
Derek Leslie	A & B CHP
Paul Connelly	Strathclyde Fire & Rescue
Geoff Calvert	Strathclyde Fire & Rescue

1. WELCOME

Councillor Walsh welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Peter Russell, Rural Director, Scottish Government. He went on to give some background to the Single Outcome Agreement and the steps that had already been taken to reach the stage we were at. It was very much a work in progress and how to make it happen was the next step. The aim of today's seminar was to discuss and to agree what and how measures to implement. The SOA had given us the framework within to work and now we had to

- a) identify barriers to implementation
- b) identify issues for the 2009 Single Outcome Agreement

He said that it was very important to develop community partnerships. A full report would be presented on 21st January 09

2. THE WAY AHEAD

Sally Reid gave a presentation on - The Way Forward for Community Planning. Sally had met with employees, councillors and community planning partners and was grateful for all the help she had received from everyone.

Key points of the Presentation were:

- The partners must all work together.
- There should be a structured business approach – we have to know what we have done and where we are going.
- The way forward should be at a national level and getting there at a strategic level should be about impact and involving Public Partners. It is important that at all levels there is clear understanding as to what the Community Planning Partnership is.
- Good joint working between partners and community involvement was key to progress.
- Performance Scorecards would be indicators as to whether implementation of the plan was deliverable or not.
- The Community Planning Partnership must clearly and jointly agree what the key risks are and then follow this all the way to produce a deliverable outcome. We have to have a Risk Register for Community Planning.

- We want to engage communities to assist in shaping the services the Council provides. It is important to have a community engagement strategy which is created not as a duty but one that is in place because we want to do it.
- Agreeing on joint priorities is partnership working.
- Structure – needs to be reviewed

Action Plan

- Develop a Strategic Risk Register for CP
 - Develop a new Community Plan
 - Develop the Planning and performance management structure for the CPP
 - Update the structure
 - Produce the Community Engagement Strategy
 - Improve our communications
 - Produce the 2009 SOA
- The end result is a common purpose through a focused, measurable and costed plan. By focusing on key issues and joint priorities we will be in a position to deliver improvement through structure and performance management.
 - Measuring using a performance scorecard gives us the tool to measure impact.
 - Community Engagement strategy through the development of CPP was the way forward.

3. SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT

Councillor Walsh welcomed Peter Russell, Rural Director, Scottish Government, who gave a presentation on the Scottish Government's perspective on the SOA.

Mr Russell said that £400million from the EU goes to rural connections through the Community Planning partnership. The government purpose, and the guiding principle throughout, was to ensure that the CPP was fit for purpose. The purpose of the SOA would be the means by which the CPP agreed on strategic priorities. He outlined what had been learned from the SOA 1 and what to expect from the coming year's SOA which has a final deadline date of June 2009. Argyll and Bute are well ahead of other councils in the work for next year. The timetables are in place for work on this year's SOA. The key messages throughout are of departments working together and through the CPP, resulting in both acting together to form one.

4. SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT FOR 2009

Brian Barker spoke about what happens next. The relationship with government has changed significantly since last year. The response for Argyll and Bute Council has been very positive. There is a need to keep up the motivation and the involvement from the partners which had been very good for last year's SOA. The feedback across the partners has been good and was an excellent foundation to work on. For this year's plans we are looking for a stronger contribution from all services and partners in Argyll and Bute with the Third Sector being an important part of the picture.

Peter Russell said that we were looking to a February 09 finish and a final report on September 09 for this SOA. Brian asked for contributions, assistance and information to be submitted early to allow time to be able to discuss and reflect on partners' ideas. This will allow for a true reflection when we enter into discussions with the Government. There is a need to start reporting progress in April 09 followed in September 09 by a comprehensive report consisting of SOA and CPP Performance Planning.

Argyll and Bute Council should take the lead and be clear about how the partnerships fit in this picture. A key part of our priorities should focus on what are our successes within the SOA. We should be highlighting links to local outcomes and monitoring progress – everyone has to be clear as to what and where. It is important to share the measurable successes between the partners. How we do this will be discussed at the January Management Committee.

5. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Sally summarised the meeting and sought agreement from the Partnership on the following motions:

- Develop Strategic Risk Assessment - Partnership agreed
- Review Community Plan and make more measurable – Partnership agreed
- Develop the Planning and Performance Management Framework plan – Partnership agreed
- Update and formalise structure – Partnership agreed.

There was further discussion about how far to go and how much involvement the members would have. There would be more talking to members regarding a framework to measure the work being done. There are 92,000 people in Argyll and Bute and it was important to have involvement from the partners as to where we go from here. It is important to develop a Community Engagement Strategy which will not take away what is working and good but which will enhance what is already there. Progress will be made by going back to the

community and developing a Community Engagement Strategy. We should also improve communication with public groups and forums.

6. CLOSURE

Councillor Walsh brought the meeting to an end by stating that what we are doing within CPP is because we want to improve it and not because we have to.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next Management Committee meeting was agreed for 21st. January 2009.

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**MINUTES of MEETING of EXECUTIVE held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER, KILMORY,
LOCHGILPHEAD
on THURSDAY, 19 MARCH 2009**

Present: Councillor Dick Walsh (Chair)

Councillor Robin Currie	Councillor Ellen Morton
Councillor Vivien Dance	Councillor Douglas Philand
Councillor George Freeman	Councillor James Robb
Councillor Alison Hay	Councillor Isobel Strong
Councillor Duncan MacIntyre	Alison Palmer
Councillor Robert Macintyre	

Also Present:

Councillor Rory Colville	Councillor James McQueen
Councillor Daniel Kelly	Councillor Andrew Nisbet
Councillor Alister MacAlister	Councillor Al Reay
Councillor Neil Mackay	Councillor John Semple
Councillor Donald MacMillan	Councillor Ron Simon
Councillor Alex McNaughton	

Attending:

Sally Reid, Chief Executive
 Charles Reppke, Head of Democratic Services and Governance
 Douglas Hendry, Director of Community Services
 Andy Law, Director of Operational Services
 Malcolm MacFadyen, Head of Community Regeneration
 Angus Gilmour, Head of Planning Services
 Sandy Mactaggart, Head of Facility Services
 Robert Pollock, Head of Economic Development & Strategic
 Transportation
 Neil McKay, Planning Manager
 Fergus Murray, Development Policy Manager
 Moya Ingram, Transportation Manager
 Douglas Blades, Public Transport Officer

Apologies:

Councillor Donald Macdonald	Maureen Arthur, Religious Rep
Councillor Donald McIntosh	Fiona Fisher, Religious Rep
Councillor Elaine Robertson	David McEwan, Religious Rep
Councillor Len Scoullar	Jane Brown, Teacher Rep

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Douglas Philand declared a financial interest in relation to the report on Mental Health Services in Argyll and Bute – Redesign and Modernisation as he is a paid employee of NHS Highland. He left the room and took no part in the discussion of the report which is dealt with at item 7 of this Minute.

2. MINUTES

(a) EXECUTIVE 19 FEBRUARY 2009

The Minutes of the Executive 19 February 2009 were approved as a correct record.

**(b) SPECIAL COMMITTEE FOR OLDER PEOPLE'S SERVICES 26
FEBRUARY 2009**

The Minutes of the Special Committee for Older People's Services of 26 February 2009 were noted.

3. LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader of the Council submitted a report which highlighted issues he had recently been involved with including:-

The launch of National Books of Scottish Connection at Kilmartin Museum on 6 February 2009; his attendance at the Process for Change Update Seminar for the High Level Design phase on 24 February 2009; his attendance at the Argyll and Bute 2009 Economic Summit on 25 February 2009; his attendance at a meeting between Argyll and Bute Council, Inverclyde Council and the Scottish Government on 20 February 2009 regarding the Dunoon – Gourock Ferry Crossing; his attendance at the Older People and Learning Disability Project Board on 26 February 2009; his attendance at the Demonstration Project Board meeting on 26 February 2009; and he reported on Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates collection figures to end of February 2009.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

(Reference: Report by Leader of the Council dated 12 March 2009, submitted)

4. EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

The Spokesperson for Education and Lifelong learning submitted a report which highlighted issues she had recently been involved with including:-

Toward Primary School's reward of solar panels from Scottish Gas for their exemplary green behaviour as part of the nationwide schools programme, Generation Green; a visit to Tiree High School on 1 December 2008; the launch by Dunoon Grammar School pupils of their own TV station on 16 January 2009; her attendance at the official launch of Cashless Catering at Oban High School on 4 February 2009; and her attendance at the Argyll and Bute Schools Concert Band concert at Rothesay Joint Campus on 16 February 2009. She also reported on the recently published 2008 Examination Results for Argyll and Bute.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

(Reference: Report by Spokesperson for Education and Lifelong Learning dated March 2009, submitted)

5. SOCIAL SERVICES

The Executive considered a report by the Spokesperson for Social Services which highlighted issues he had recently been involved with including:-

His attendance at the Into the Spotlight Housing, Homecare and Community Health Services Event on 2 December 2008; his attendance at the Argyll and Bute Alcohol and Drugs Action Team Leader Officers Group meeting on 12 December 2008; his attendance at the Argyll and Bute Health and Care Strategic Partnership Committee on 19 December 2008; his interview with SWIA as part of their follow up inspection on 6 January 2009; his attendance at the COSLA Health and Wellbeing Executive Group meeting on 26 January 2009; and he reported on a meeting attended by Councillors Horn and Currie with IDEA, Islay on 23 February 2009 to discuss the current financial and management position of IDEA and the way forward.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

(Reference: Report by Spokesperson for Social Services dated March 2009, submitted)

6. INVESTMENT IN AFFORDABLE HOUSING

A report proposing a response to the Scottish Government's consultation paper "Investing in Affordable Housing" was before the Executive for consideration. The deadline for responses was 17 March 2009 and a copy of the draft response attached to the report was submitted to the Scottish Government on the strict understanding that it was still the subject of approval.

Decision

To approve the draft response for formal submission.

(Reference: Report by Director of Community Services dated February 2009, submitted)

Having previously declared an interest Councillor Philand left the room and took no part in discussion of the following item.

7. MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN ARGYLL AND BUTE - REDESIGN AND MODERNISATION

An extensive Service Review and work on developing options for the future of Mental Health Services has been in progress in Argyll and Bute since 2007. A draft response to a consultation issued by NHS Highland entitled "Mental Health Services in Argyll and Bute – Redesign and Modernisation" which had previously been considered and amended by the Social Affairs Policy and Performance Group at its meeting on 9 March 2009 was before the Executive for consideration.

Decision

To agree the draft response to the consultation and to support Option 3 whilst noting that further refinement of this option will be explored in relation to the detail of Community Mental Health and the associated management framework.

(Reference: Report by Director Community Services dated 27 February 2009, Extract from Minutes of Social Affairs Policy and Performance Group 9 March 2009, and NHS Highland Consultation Document, submitted)

Councillor Philand returned to the meeting.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY SCHEME: DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

A report outlining a revised approach to meeting the Council's equality duties and recommending that a new Draft Scheme, attached to the report, is circulated for consultation was considered. The new approach includes some actions to be undertaken corporately when previously they were undertaken by individual services.

Decision

1. To agree that the draft Equality and Diversity Scheme detailed at Appendix 1 of the report is issued for consultation;
2. To agree the proposed corporate approach with the addition of a further objective – celebrate our diversity;
3. To agree to monitor the Equality and Diversity Scheme via a scorecard and, where appropriate, refer elements to the Social Affairs or Organisational Development PPG; and
4. To note the advice from the Equality and Human Rights Commission regarding Equality Impact Assessments as detailed at Appendix 2 of the report.

(Reference: Report by Chief Executive, submitted)

9. REPORT ON PLANNING ON THE CONSULTATION BY THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT ON HOUSEHOLD PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

A report detailing a proposed response to the Scottish Government's consultation on Household Permitted Development Rights was before the Executive for consideration.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report; and
2. To forward the comments on each of the questions contained within the consultation document as detailed at Appendix A to the report subject to adjustments, which the Head of Planning Services agreed to make, in relation to the responses regarding A9 - Flagpoles and to Question 22 in respect of "principal elevation".

(Reference: Report by Head of Planning Services, submitted)

10. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PLAN SCHEME

The Council is required to produce, publish and submit to the Scottish Government by 31 March 2009, a Development Plan Scheme and associated Participation Statement by the Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006. A report detailing the proposed Development Plan Scheme for Argyll and Bute Council was before the Executive for consideration.

Decision

To approve the Development Plan Scheme as detailed at Appendix A to the report for publication and submission to the Scottish Government.

(Reference: Report by Director of Development Services, submitted)

11. TWINNING VISIT TO KORCULA

A report setting out proposed arrangements for a twinning visit to Korcula was considered.

Motion

To agree the terms of the report.

Moved by Councillor Walsh, seconded by Councillor Robert Macintyre.

Amendment

1. To support the visit by Councillor Strong and Councillor Marshall on the basis that they would meet the cost of their own travel and accommodation as is standard practice in the Council;
2. To note that Sir Charles MacLean is unable to accept the invitation to visit;
3. To agree that any Officer support required did not necessitate an Officer travelling to Korcula; and
4. That any future visits could be looked at once the outcome of this preliminary visit had been assessed.

Moved by Councillor Morton, seconded by Councillor Hay.

Decision

The Motion was carried by 6 votes to 4 and the Executive resolved accordingly.

(Reference: Report by Head of Democratic Services and Governance dated 3 March 2009, submitted)

12. PORT ASKAIG REDEVELOPMENT

The Executive considered a recommendation from the Organisational Development Policy and Performance Group requesting that, in view of the

degree of overspend incurred by the Port Askaig Redevelopment Project, that this project be the subject of a financial audit.

Decision

To agree that this project be the subject of a financial audit and to refer the report to the Audit Committee for attention with a request that they report back to the Executive with their findings.

(Reference: Extract from Minutes of Organisational Development Policy and Performance Group of 11 February 2009 and Report by Head of Roads and Amenity Services dated 30 January 2009, submitted)

The Committee resolved in terms of Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude the public for the following 2 items of business on the grounds that they were likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 8 and 9; and 8 and 9 respectively of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

13. HELENSBURGH OFFICE RATIONALISATION - REVISED OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE

Following consideration of the original Outline Business Case in December 2007, the Council approved the Helensburgh Office Rationalisation Project within the Council's Capital Plan 2009 – 2012 with an allocation of £2.5m of capital funding. The Clyde Community Education Centre was marketed in 2008 following the determination of the Local Plan Public Inquiry and an Options Appraisal process was completed in January 2009. This resulted in a revised Outline Business Case for the Project which was before the Executive for consideration.

Decision

To agree the recommendations as detailed at paragraphs 1.2.1 and 1.2.2 of the report.

(Reference: Report by Head of Facility Services dated 4 March 2009 and Outline Business Case for Proposed Helensburgh Office Rationalisation dated February 2009, submitted)

14. JOINT CONTRACTS INVOLVING SCHOOL TRANSPORT AND LOCAL BUS SERVICES - BUTE AND COWAL

Tenders have been received for the main school transport and local bus service contracts in Bute and Cowal and, in terms of the agreed procedure, are presented to the Executive to determine the way forward.

Decision

1. To agree the recommendation as detailed as paragraph 2 (iii) (c) of the report; and

2. To agree to consider this again at the conclusion of the Review of Support for Public Transport provision.

(Reference: Report by Director of Development Services dated 13 February 2009, submitted)

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LEADER'S REPORT: 28 February- 31 March

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL EXECUTIVE MEETING: 16 April 2009**1. Council tax collections to end of March for 2008/9**

Council Tax collections to end of March for 2008/9 are provisionally 95.32% - now exactly the same as last year, just as at the end of February. However we are currently investigating 3 correction transactions posted on 23 March from the new cash receipting system which are reflected in the overall statistics but do not appear in the related individual accounts. These could increase collections by £207,018 – equivalent to 0.4%. Overpaid accounts are still lower than the previous year's so we actually have a slight increase in performance irrespective of the outcome of the investigation into these 3 transactions. Current year Sheriff Officer payments are still up on last year's now equating to c 0.2% on collections.

Collections for the 2007/08 year are now 96.94%, down 0.06% on last year's at this time.

Collections of Non-Domestic Rates to the end of March for 2008/9 are 101.44% - reduced from last month reflecting the repayment in respect of Faslane. We still have overpayments of just under £1m in respect of NBC Clyde Properties as previously reported and also some late running roll changes. Adjusting for these overpayments would give a corrected collection rate of 97.52%, virtually identical to last year's. Collections for 2007/8 are 101.60%, again overstated by overpayments majority of which also relates to NBC Clyde Properties. Adjusted for overpayments, the true collection rate is 98.77%, well on track to a cumulative collection rate of 99%.

These figures are not final year end figures as they do not allow for any cash in transit and accounting accruals. The final figures are likely to be slightly higher.

The 3 largest firms of Sheriff Officers have all responded to the Sheriff Officer tender issued and these responses are being evaluated

2. 4th march 2009, Argyll and Bute Community Planning Full Partnership Meeting

On 4th March, I chaired the above meeting.

Raymond Park gave up-dates to the meeting on; Previous Management Committee Meetings, the involvement of all partners in the writing of the SOA, my letter to all partners in relation to core funding and finance issues and our correspondence with Cabinet secretary regarding CPP funding. He also thanked all those who had contributed both financially and in-kind, he confirmed that funding had been committed by Strathclyde Police and Strathclyde Fire and Rescue.

The meeting was up-dated on the progress of the Community Planning Action Plan, including the constitution, Action Plan and framework for reporting. The Management Committee would be updated further on the Action Plan at the meeting on 18 March.

Eileen Wilson updated the meeting on the Constitution. Carron Tobin has asked the National Park legal department to review the agreement. It was confirmed that Mike Breslin from Argyll College would be added to the list of partners.

Raymond Park updated the meeting on ABADAT (Argyll and Bute Alcohol and Drugs Advisory Team), also the development of the ABADP (for which a co-ordinator has been appointed taking up the post in April). This work is closely linked with work on community safety and the Community Safety Partnership. It was also confirmed that Joyce Cameron would obtain an electronic copy of Strathclyde Fire & Rescue Assessment for Argyll and Bute and send it out to all partners.

SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT

Brian Barker thanked contributors to the SOA. It was noted that the Council was due to agree to support submission of the SOA at its meeting on 5 March. Partners would be expected to sign up in full to the SOA (as per Scottish Government guidance).

Peter Russell broadly welcomed the SOA from a Government perspective and made some comments on aspects of the content that would be picked up in the dialogue between the CPP and Government in the period between submission and final sign off of the SOA (before the end of May).

The meeting approved the draft Single Outcome Agreement for submission to the Government.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Nigel Stewart updated the group on progress with the Community Engagement Strategy. The need to ensure inclusivity and effective co-ordination of the Community Engagement action plan was discussed. It was agreed that the Community Engagement Strategy would be put forward to Management Committee on 18 March 2009.

ARGYLL AND BUTE MENTAL HEALTH RE-DESIGN UPDATE

Derek Leslie gave a presentation on Mental Health Services redesign and the challenges faced by the NHS. There was some discussion around the slides and partners were encouraged to attend the remaining consultation meetings in March. Engagement with Young People was raised as an issue and Roanna Taylor suggested that Young Scot could be used to help engage younger people in the consultation.

The next meeting will take place on 17 April

3. Video Conference on 10th March with Dennis Malone form Highlands and Islands European Partnership

At the most recent meeting of the Highlands and Islands European Programme Monitoring Committee, the European Commission made it very clear that there is a significant underspend in ERDF monies. In direct response to this, I convened a meeting with the Scottish Government (Jim Millard), Highlands and Islands Enterprise (Douglas Cowan), Highlands and Islands European Partnership (Dennis Malone) and senior officers of the Council.

This was a very positive meeting at which I secured a commitment from the Scottish Government and European Partnership to work with the Council to deliver a multi million pound grant from Europe to the Council's proposed investment in the South Kintyre renewable energy plant development. I also secured a commitment to maximise the European funding input into the Council's CHORD projects through ERDF and INTERREG.

Our Council, having made bold capital investment decisions to improve our town centres and waterfronts is now in an excellent position to use this as match funding to lever in external monies. This will further benefit our communities at this difficult time of economic uncertainty. AS a Council we can be proud that we are leading the way in rural Scotland with investment-led regeneration.

4. Meeting Of The CHORD Programme Management Board Held In The Members Room, Kilmory, Lochgilphead On Friday, 20th March.

I chaired the above meeting at which five papers covered the main agenda items; Chord Programme Governance Arrangements, The Project Initiation Document Template, Draft Programme Plan and Indicative EU Funding for the CHORD Programme. The meeting concluded with a report by the Head of Economic Development and Strategic Transportation

Chord Programme Governance Arrangements

This paper described how the CHORD programme of projects will give effect to the decisions taken by the Council on 27 November 2008 and by the Executive on 18 December 2008. They would provide the basis in principle for committing £30m of capital expenditure to significant public realm works in communities throughout Argyll and Bute. The governance arrangements were described as key to taking these projects forward on a planned, transparent and accountable a basis and the process would enable Members, officers, stakeholders, communities and key partner organisations to take forward the programme in a way which is compatible with these principles.

Capital and revenue resources are available and the process outlined here will develop financial information which will be required by the Council to remain informed and agree to actions to enable the decisions of 27 November to be given effect.

There will be legal, regulatory, risk management, design, procurement and

sustainability considerations associated with taking forward such an extensive and complex programme. The full paper on Governance Arrangements can be found in the Leaders Report Pack.

The Project Initiation Document Template

The template (which was included in the papers for this meeting, and can be found within the Leader's Report Pack) for the Project Initiation Document adheres to the Council's preferred, tried and tested Project Management methodology of Prince 2 which will undergo some adaptation to ensure that it recognises, at all stages, the political environment in which the project will develop.

Draft Programme Plan

This paper described the CHORD Programme as a portfolio of projects selected, planned and managed in a coordinated way. The Programme Plan will track the projects within the programme as well as the key milestones and will identify when they will be delivered and at what cost. The Programme Plan will be populated as information regarding the projects becomes available through the PIDs. It will be revised as information on actual progress appears. The Plan is a major control document for the Programme Board to measure actual progress against expectations. More specifically, the plan will include (some as annexes): identification of management structures, roles and resources for programme management and key milestones for the governance and management of the Programme.

Indicative EU Funding For the CHORD Programme

This report presented a summary of potential European funding options for the CHORD projects. The figures contained within the report were indicative only and therefore subject to due process in assessing eligible costs following detailed consideration of the Full Business Cases, once developed. The Board noted the contents of this report.

In addition to the above information, Fergus Murray, Development Policy Manager gave an up-date on the development and the funding situation relating to the Campbeltown Town Centre Regeneration Project. Discussion followed on how this existing project can be dovetailed to the CHORD project for Campbeltown.

By Head Of Economic Development And Strategic Transportation.

5. Convention of the Highlands and Islands held on Arran, 23 March

The Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Sustainable Growth gave the welcome to participants of the Convention; This was followed by the Keynote address by David O'Neill, Leader of North Ayrshire Council.

Paper 1. The Benefits and Challenges Of Community Planning In A Period Of Economic Recession

The first item on the agenda was about the benefits and challenges of community planning in a period of economic recession, the main paper for this discussion had

been prepared by Highland Council with input from Argyll and Bute and other participating Councils. The purpose of the report was to enable productive discussion at the Convention on the benefits and challenges of community planning in a period of economic recession. This paper can be found within the Leader's Report Pack.

Paper 2. The Role of the Strategic Transport Projects Review in Supporting the Highlands and Islands

The second item on the agenda related to the role of the Strategic Transport Projects Review in supporting the Highlands and Islands. This subject was introduced by Stewart Stevenson, Minister for Transport, Infrastructure & Climate Change. The Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR) sets out the future investment programme for transport in Scotland over the next 20 years. It provides the basis on which Ministers can make informed decisions about future transport spending beyond the current programme. The STPR identified national strategic land-based transport priorities that will contribute to Government's purpose of increased sustainable economic growth over medium to long term. It is the biggest and most ambitious Scottish transport plan ever published. Please see the Leader's Report Pack for further information.

Paper 3. A Vision for Renewables in the Highlands and Islands - Working Together to Develop Scotland's Renewables Action Plan

In the early afternoon, the First Minister held a Question and Answer Session which was followed by discussion of the Convention's third paper "A Vision for Renewables in the Highlands and Islands – Working Together to Develop Scotland's Renewables Action Plan. This paper was introduced by The Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Sustainable Growth, John Swinney, and described the Scottish Government's ambitions for Scotland as a global leader in Renewable Energy. Achieving a greener Scotland is part of the Government's purpose of delivering increased sustainable economic growth. The delivery of a greener Scotland runs through almost all of the social and economic strategic objectives to which the Scottish Government aspires. Full details of this paper are available in the Leader's Report Pack

The next Convention of the Highlands and Islands will be hosted here in Argyll and Bute at a date and venue to be advised.

6. Vestas/Skycon Handover

On Thursday 26th March I was delighted to be able to attend the Official handover of Vestas to Skycon. The event took place at the transitional site, Skycon Towers, and was attended by a broad delegation of employees, stakeholders and Scottish and Local Government. Presentations and speeches were made by; the First Minister, Alex Salmond, Knud Bjarne Hansen (President Vestas Towers), Jesper Øhlenschlæger (CEO Skycon) and me.

After learning of the threat of closure of the Vesta's site in August last year, this event was an especially happy one, heralding huge optimism for the Campbeltown

and Kintyre area, giving the area an opportunity to not only weather the recession but indeed place the area at the leading edge of environmental technology which is the future hope for Scotland.

Full details of the event and my speech can be seen in the Leaders Report Pack.

ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE
16 April 2009****CORPORATE SERVICES**

**EXTRACT OF MINUTE OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS POLICY AND PERFORMANCE
GROUP 9 MARCH 2009**

4. EARLY YEARS FRAMEWORK

The Government, in partnership with COSLA, have developed a new national Early Years Framework for children from pre-birth to eight years of age. The framework is in two parts. The first establishes the case for change in Early Years provision and identified elements of change and priorities for action. The second part examines the change elements in greater detail. A report summarising the analysis and key recommendations contained within the Government's newly published Early Years Framework was considered.

Decision

1. To note the content of the new national Early Years Framework;
2. To note that local implementation of this should be taken forward by Community Planning Partners as part of the development of the local Integrated Children's Services Plan (ICSP) for 2009-2012;
3. To refer the report to the Executive for further consideration at its meeting in April 2009; and
4. To note that a report on a Review of the Council's Early Years Service will be brought to the PPG in May 2009.

(Reference: Report by Director of Community Services dated January 2009, submitted)

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Early Years Framework

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report summarises the analysis and key recommendations contained within the Government's newly published Early Years Framework.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To note the content of the new national Early Years Framework.
- 2.2 To note that local implementation of this should be taken forward by Community Planning Partners as part of the development of the local Integrated Children's Service Plan (ICSP) for 2009 – 2012.
- 2.3 To refer report to the Executive for further consideration, with any comments or recommendations the PPG may care to make.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Government, in partnership with COSLA, has developed a new national Early Years Framework for children from pre-birth to eight years of age. The framework is in two parts. The first establishes the case for change in Early Years provision and identifies elements of change and priorities for action. The second part examines the change elements in greater detail.
- 3.2 The introduction to the report describes the changes envisaged as radical and ambitious especially as it notes that these changes will have to be delivered without any new resources. Instead it is calling for a major reshaping of how services, particularly in the universal setting of Health and Education are delivered.
- 3.3 The Case for Action:
The report lays out the importance of Early Years services, and highlights the value of early intervention in promoting future well-being, physical and mental health and educational attainment.
- 3.4 Principles of early intervention have been identified, these are that:
- all have the same outcomes and the same opportunities;
 - those at risk of not achieving those outcomes are identified and steps are taken to prevent that risk materialising;
 - where the risk has materialised effective action is taken;

- parents, families and communities are helped to develop their own solutions, using accessible, high quality public services as required.

4 Putting the vision into action

4.1 The report identifies what it called **10 elements of transformational change** as being central to the success of the framework. It recognises that change of the scale envisaged will need a long term commitment and has set a 10 year timeframe for the elements to be delivered. The 10 elements are:

- a coherent approach;
- helping children, families and communities to secure outcomes for themselves;
- breaking cycles of poverty, inequality and poor outcomes in and through Early Years;
- a focus on engagement and empowerment of children, families and communities;
- using the strength of universal services to deliver prevention and early intervention;
- putting quality at the heart of service delivery;
- services that meet the needs of children and families;
- improving outcomes and children's quality of life through play;
- simplifying and streamlining service delivery;
- more effective collaborations.

The report notes that the power of universal services in Health and Education are the key to the success of the framework. It emphasises that universal services need to build capacity to meet a wider range of needs of children and families within a mainstream setting.

4.2.1 Priorities for Action

The framework identifies a set of priorities for action in the short, medium and long term against each of the elements of transformational change. These priorities for action are not described as being prescriptive but as steps which are most likely to lead to successful outcomes.

The actions include:

- inclusion of the framework within the SOA for 2009/10;
- local agencies beginning the process of aligning resources to the actions;
- local agencies developing the capacity of Health and Education services to meet the wider needs of children and families;
- Community planning partners commissioning a local plan to ensure that a co-ordinated set of supports are in place

for children and families that build on integrated children's services planning.

4.3 **Moving Forward**

This section lays out how the framework will move forward and places it within the context of the SOA and continued partnership between local agencies and the Government. It outlines that progress in relation to the implementation of the framework should be monitored by a local set of indicators developed in line with the national outcomes contained with the Concordat.

4.4 **Resources**

The report concludes by returning to the issue of resources and reiterates that there is unlikely to be any significant new money to support the implementation of the framework. It gives an estimated figure of £1.5bn of current spend on Early Years services and calls for realignment of this resource along with a transfer of resources into prevention and early intervention. The report emphasises that this cannot be at the expense of families who currently receive crisis intervention and intensive support. It states that the key issue is a reorientation in the philosophy and design of services, and emphasises that the first priority is to use the expenditure within Health and in Argyll and Bute's case, Community Services more effectively in supporting early intervention.

5. **CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 The new framework makes a strong case for the development of early intervention and support services for early years children and identifies a number of key areas for change to assist in achieving this goal. This report indicates that these should be achieved by the reshaping of existing provision with universal services. The report discusses in some detail how this might be approached without any additional resources.

The report sees the framework being taken forward by local partners under the framework of Community Planning and the SOA with an alignment to the local ICSP.

6. **IMPLICATIONS**

Policy:	Production of local implementation plan
Financial:	Reshape Health and Community Service budgets to support effective early intervention
Legal:	None

Personnel: None

Equal Opportunities: None

**Director of Community Services
January 2009**

For further information contact:

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Lochgilphead, Argyll PA31 8RT.
Telephone: 01546 604526

Carol Walker, Head of Service – Pre School and Primary Education, Oban
Education Office, Dalintart Drive, Oban, PA34 4EF.
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ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE****COMMUNITY SERVICES****THURSDAY 16 APRIL 2009**

ARGYLL COLLEGE

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 Argyll College proposes to merge with Lochaber and Skye & Wester Ross colleges with a view to becoming what the Scottish Funding Council refers to as a “fundable body”. The current Argyll College company has Argyll & Bute Council as a member of the company and, in addition, nominates 2 elected members to the board.
- 1.2 The advice the college has received is that continued membership of the company by the council, following a merger, would be an impediment to becoming a fundable body and possibly an impediment to its charitable status.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
 - (a) Note the terms of the paper and in particular the arrangements that will be necessary for future nominations to the Board in order to permit the new college to attain fundable status.

3. DETAIL

- 3.1 Argyll College has been operating in the Argyll & Islands area since late 1999. The company was formed in 1997 as a partnership between Argyll & Bute Council and the then Argyll & Islands Enterprise Company. This was the first attempt to provide a comprehensive further and higher education service in the area.
- 3.2 The college has grown each year and from no students at the start of 1999, the college now enrolls around 3,000 students each academic year. In this academic year, the college expects to deliver further education to the equivalent of some 360 full time equivalent students. There are also around 125 students studying higher education where Argyll College hosts the students but where teaching comes from other academic partners in the UHI Millennium Institute. Argyll College also directly teaches at HE level to some 155 students this academic year.

- 3.3 As a business, Argyll College will have a turnover of around £2.6m this year and the college has made a trading profit in every year of its existence. The profits have been reinvested in new facilities and the college now operates from 14 separate sites throughout Argyll & the islands. 80% of college turnover is on staffing costs and the college is now a major contributor to the local economy.
- 3.4 The revenue funding the college receives from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) is channelled via the North Highland College (NHC), with which Argyll College has a contractual relationship, now in its 7th year. This arrangement was reached because at the time there seemed little chance of any new fundable bodies ever being created. In June 2008 Argyll College formally asked SFC to become a fundable body. SFC had recently agreed on a 4 year allocation of growth to Argyll as well as to the colleges serving Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross. Each of these has a similar contractual relationship with NHC. SFC decided in late summer 2008 to consider the Argyll College request but within the context of the delivery arrangements for the whole of the west coast of Scotland.
- 3.5 In December 2008 SFC agreed in principle to a new fundable body. This new fundable body had to be formed by a merger of the existing Argyll, Lochaber and Skye & Wester Ross colleges. The boards of all 3 have agreed in principle to merge and the due diligence process prior to merger has begun. It has also been agreed that the simplest way of merging the 3 entities is to use the existing Argyll College company and to change its memorandum and articles to reflect the wider purpose. This has resulted in advice to the effect that one of the changes is to remove Argyll & Bute Council and the former Argyll & Island Enterprise as members of the company. This would leave the board members as the sole members of the company.
- 3.6 Most colleges invite someone from the local authority to be on the college board. A new West Highland College would need to invite both Argyll and Highland councils to nominate someone from each council. There will be a recommendation to the shadow board of the new college to issue such invites. If Argyll & Bute Council agrees to nominate in response to the invite, board membership would take effect from the date of the formal merger. Meanwhile, councillors Strong and Dance will remain as council nominees on the existing Argyll College board. Councillor Strong is currently one of the 3 nominees to the shadow board which will meet for the first time at the beginning of April 2009.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The Scottish Funding Council has agreed in principle to a new West Highland College attaining fundable body status. This, however, will require the merger of Argyll College with Lochaber

and Skye & Wester Ross colleges. This report sets out the steps that are being taken to promote the merger.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Policy: For the future, the Council will require to pursue its policy objectives in partnership with the newly formed college.

Finance: Nil.

Personnel: Nil.

Legal: Future membership arrangements for the college will be determined by the Memorandum and Articles of Association that are eventually developed for the new college.

Equal Opportunities: Nil.

Director of Community Services
23 March 2009

For further information please contact:

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ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE

16 April 2009

CORPORATE SERVICES

**EXTRACT OF MINUTE OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS POLICY AND PERFORMANCE
GROUP 9 MARCH 2009**

16. SCHOOL TRANSPORT - TENDERING OF IN-HOUSE ROUTES

A report advising on the proposal to re-visit the tender evaluation criteria in respect of school transport was considered at the Council's Executive on 18 September 2008 and it was agreed at that meeting that revised tender evaluation criteria should be brought to the Social Affairs PPG in the first instance for consideration. A report advising on the way forward with this matter was considered.

Decision

To agree the revised tender evaluation criteria as set out in the report and to refer the report to the Executive for further consideration at its meeting in April 2009.

(Reference: Joint Report by Director of Community Services and Director of Development Services dated 27 February 2009, submitted)

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**SCHOOL TRANSPORT
TENDERING OF IN-HOUSE ROUTES**

1. SUMMARY

A report advising of a proposal to re-visit the tender evaluation criteria in respect of school transport was considered at the Council's Executive on Thursday 18th September 2008 when members decided

1. To agree the recommendations as detailed in the report; and
2. To agree that revised tender evaluation criteria should be brought to the Social Affairs PPG in the first instance.

The report by the Director of Community Services dated 26 August 2008 refers.

2. RECOMMENDATION

Members are asked to:

- (a) Note that the report was approved by the Social Affairs PPG at its meeting of 9 March 2009.
- (b) Adopt the procedures for tender evaluation outlined within the report.

3. DETAIL

The recommendations agreed by the Council's Executive on 18th September 2008 were as follows :-

Members were asked to:

- (a) Note the outcome of the initial tendering round
- (b) In light of this, agree that the tender evaluation criteria should be revisited and re-drafted to take account of factors such as:
 - (i) The impact on availability of Pupil Transport minibuses for use by schools in delivering curricular/extra curricular activities.
 - (ii) The impact on the availability of Pupil Transport minibuses for community use outwith operational periods.
 - (iii) Incorporating like for like service requirements in tender specifications; and
- (c) Agree a further report on revisions to tender evaluation criteria come to a future meeting

In deciding the best course of action to take when assessing future tenders which involve testing the cost of in-house operations against private sector tenders it will be necessary to ensure that

- (i) competition is not being restricted.
- (ii) the Council is still achieving best value
- (iii) in insisting on like for like between in-house and private sector there is no loss of flexibility which could result in an increase in costs.

The assessment will only apply where a private sector tender price is less than the in-house. It is proposed that the tender be evaluated in the normal manner by taking into account factors in addition to price and of which tenderers will have been made aware in their tender documentation. A suggested breakdown is as follows:-

40%	Price
30%	Quality
30%	Additionality

This latter percentage factor will take into account the following factors.

Whether or not :-

- (i) the Council vehicle is available for curricular, extra curricular and community activities?
- (ii) the Council vehicle is actually used for these purposes and how often.
- (iii) the tenderer will operate to the same route as the Council vehicle.
- (iv) the tenderer has merged more than one journey into one vehicle.
- (v) the tenderer's timings are acceptable.
- (vi) the tenderer's proposed pick-up and set-down points are acceptable.
- (vii) the tenderer has any self drive mini-buses for hire in the area.
- (viii) the tenderer has any mini-buses or coaches for hire in the area, with driver.

4. CONCLUSION

If tenders are evaluated in this manner it should be possible to continue to test the value of in-house work against the private sector while taking into account the social value to the community of the particular Council vehicle wherever it is based.

There is no mention of TUPE although tenderers are pre-warned in the tender letter they receive with their documentation that TUPE may apply and that they should take this into consideration as it is their responsibility, not that of the Council.

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Policy – Complies with Council policy agreed on 18th September 2008.

5.2 Financial – Potential savings depending on the placing of work with the most economically advantageous tender whether in house or external.

5.3 Personnel – Additional staff for the Council if the work is taken in house and possibility of Council moving to external contractors under TUPE.

5.4 Equal Opportunities – None

5.5 Legal – None.

For further information please contact D Blades, Public Transport Officer (01546 604193).

George Harper
Director, Development Services

Douglas Hendry
Director, Community Services

27th February 2009

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ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE****COMMUNITY SERVICES****THURSDAY 16 APRIL 2009**

**LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY – STRATEGIC HOUSING FUND – APPLICATION
FOR CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE ARGYLL COMMUNITY HOUSING
ASSOCIATION AND WEST HIGHLAND HOUSING ASSOCIATION**

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This paper outlines the requests for contributions from the Council's Strategic Housing Fund that have been received from the Argyll Community Housing Association and West Highland Housing Association in respect of their proposed projects at Croft Avenue, Oban and the Mull Progressive Care Centre, Craignure.
- 1.2 Both projects have been developed to reflect priorities outlined within the Council's Local Housing Strategy.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to:

(a) Agree in principle to the allocation of:

- £130,000 in support of the Argyll Community Housing Association project which has an approved cost plan value of £1.218m.
- £360,000 in support of the West Highland Housing Association project which has an overall cost plan value of £2.837m.

(b) Note that the recommended allocations will be conditional on the projects falling within the cost plans indicated and being delivered by both housing associations.

3. DETAIL

- 3.1 **Background:** Members are reminded that the Council established a Strategic Housing Fund to support the development of affordable housing. A set of procedures for its operation were also agreed by the Executive in September 2007.
- 3.2 Discussions have been ongoing with the Argyll Community Housing Association and West Highland Housing Association

regarding their proposed developments at Croft Avenue, Oban and the Mull Progressive Care Centre, Craignure. Both projects have been developed within the context of the Council's Local Housing Strategy and have been subject to cost plan approval by the Government's Housing Investment Division. Arising from this and having taken account of the extent of the Government's commitment to the projects in the form of Housing Association Grant together with private borrowing and other grants, the contributions outlined within the following section have been requested from the Council's Strategic Housing Fund to enable the projects to progress.

- 3.3 These contributions have been requested in principle at this stage as both projects are still subject to tendering.

(a) **Argyll Community Housing Association,
Croft Avenue, Oban**

Shortly after the stock transfer, the Argyll Community Housing Association received circa £50,000 of Early Action Funding to enable the demolition of 4 houses and related site clearance work at Croft Avenue, Oban. The necessity for the demolition had previously been highlighted by the Council in view of the poor ground conditions that had led to failure of the foundations.

The association now plan to re-develop the cleared site and adjacent land, providing 8 much needed family sized houses for social renting. They have obtained cost plan approval from the Government's Housing Investment Division for the project which has been valued at £1.218m. This process has included the application of the Government's New Indicative Costs calculation which takes account of factors such as site location and condition. Arising from this, the Government has indicated that they will be in a position to offer a total of £665,901 in the form of Housing Association Grant in support of the project. This in turn will promote the leverage of £398,824 in the form of private finance together with a solar panel grant of £19,320. The Council is being asked to fund the shortfall of £130,000 in the form of a contribution from its Strategic Housing Fund.

(b) **West Highland Housing Association – Mull Progressive
Care, Craignure**

As Members will be aware, from my report to the Executive of November 2008, the Council is working in collaboration with the Scottish Government, NHS Highland, Mull & Iona Progressive Care Company and West Highland Housing Association to promote the replacement of the existing Health & Care facility at Dunaros.

In overall terms, the project will include a replacement hospital facility with a joint base for Community Health and Social Work staff. It will also have 12 two person housing units built to barrier free and safe design standards with SMART technology. A flexible design has been established for the housing to allow occupation by a range of residents from the frail elderly to dementia sufferers. The housing component will cont...

also have a communal lounge, kitchen and separate dining area together with assisted bathing facilities. Two staff houses and a flat will also be provided.

The overall cost of the housing component is predicted to be around £2.837m. This element has been subject to cost plan approval by the Government's Housing Investment Division who have indicated that they will be in the position to provide a total of £1.905m in the form of Housing Association Grant to support the development. A contribution of £45,000 is envisaged from Scottish Water with a further £527,000 being levered in in the form of private finance. This leaves a shortfall of approximately £360,000 which the Council is being requested to contribute from the Strategic Housing Fund.

- 3.4 Having evaluated the requests received from both associations, including verification of the Government's commitment, I am satisfied that they fulfil the qualifying criteria for the allocation of funding previously set by Members. Specifically, I can also confirm that both projects fit within the context of the Local Housing Strategy and will secure the provision of much needed affordable housing in Oban and Mull. I, therefore, recommend approval of the funding. In making this recommendation, I have taken account of the fact that the Council's contribution across both projects of £490,000 will help to secure leverage of a total funding package of £4.055m.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The Argyll Community Housing Association has developed proposals for the development of 8 much needed family sized houses for affordable renting at Croft Avenue in Oban. West Highland Housing Association similarly propose to provide 12 two person houses and 3 staff units as their contribution towards the multi agency project that will ultimately lead to the development of the Mull Progressive Care Project.
- 4.2 The Scottish Government's Housing Investment Division has granted cost plan approval to both projects and has agreed to provide £2.570m of Housing Association Grant in support of them.

After taking account of the private finance and other grant contributions, the Council is being asked to provide a total contribution of £490,000 from its Strategic Housing Fund to enable the projects to proceed.

5. IMPLICATIONS

- Policy:* The proposed projects fully comply with Local Housing Strategy priorities.
- Finance:* The recommended contribution of £490,000 from the Strategic Housing Fund would help to secure leverage of a total funding package of £4.055m.
- Personnel:* Nil.
- Legal:* The recommendations are subject to both associations obtaining all statutory and regulatory permissions for the projects to proceed.
- Equal Opportunities:* Nil.

Director of Community Services
17 March 2009

For further information please contact:

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Head of Community Regeneration

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ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE****COMMUNITY SERVICES****THURSDAY 16 APRIL 2009**

IMPLEMENTATION OF SECTION 11 HOMELESSNESS ETC.(SCOTLAND) ACT 2003

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003 has been phased in gradually since 2003 and the latest Section to come into force is Section 11 – ‘Notice to local authorities of proceedings for possession and enforcement of standard securities’.
- 1.2 The Act states that ‘Where a landlord raises proceedings for possession of a dwellinghouse, the landlord must give notice of the raising of the proceedings to the local authority in whose area the dwellinghouse is situated, unless the landlord – (a) is the local authority, or (b) is required to give such notice to the local authority under any other enactment.

Section 11 is due to come into force on 1st April 2009.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are requested to note :
 - a) that the homeless service are currently preparing procedures to deal with Section 11 referrals to the local authority
 - b) Argyll & Bute Council have agreed to be a pilot authority for the Scottish Government for the monitoring of Section 11 referrals

3. DETAIL

- 3.1 The Scottish Government has produced guidelines on the implementation of the Section 11. They have issued a document entitled ‘The Notice to Local Authorities (Scotland) Regulations 2008 (SSI 2008/324)’. This details the information which is required to be sent to local authorities under Section 11. The homeless service has set up an e-mail address (section11enquiries@argyll-bute.gov.uk) and amendments have been sent to the AVD computing system team in order that we can effectively record Section 11 referrals in the advice and assistance section of AVD (this is the Council’s Homeless Case Management system).

- 3.2 A standard letter is being developed which will be sent to the owners or tenants who are getting the repossession action taken against them. The homeless service has an agreement with the 4 RSL's that they send us notification of any tenants whom they are taking court action against. The letters currently being used by the area homeless teams are being collated and standardised.
- 3.3 A meeting is to be set up between Welfare Rights and Money Advice and the Homeless Service in order to put procedures in place which will see a co-ordinated corporate response to Section 11 enquiries.
- 3.4 Training is to be arranged on the Mortgage to Rent Scheme which will become an important area of advice when the homeless service start to get early notification of repossession proceedings.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The procedures will be finalised once discussions have taken place with the other services within the Council as mentioned above.
- 4.2 There will be a robust monitoring system put in place within AVD which will give Argyll & Bute Council detailed information on the effectiveness of Section 11. This monitoring system will inform feedback to the Scottish Government.

5. IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 **Legal.** Section 11 places a legal obligation on landlords to inform the Local Authority when they are taking repossession action. This will help to fulfil the legal obligation of the Local Authority to prevent homelessness
- 5.2 **Financial:** None. The extra work will be carried out by existing staff. The extra work generated will be evaluated in October 2009, six months after the implementation of Section 11
- 5.3 **Personnel:** None
- 5.4 **Equal Opportunities:** None
- 5.5 **Policy:** None

Director of Community Services
18 March 2009

For further information please contact:

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ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL AFFAIRS**REPORT BY SPOKESPERSON**

- (a) On 19 January 2009 I was a member of the Panel at the Royal Society of Edinburgh's Final Report on the enquiry they carried out into the current condition of agriculture in the Highlands and Islands area of Scotland.

The meeting was very well attended by a wide range of farmers, rural agencies and some of our Argyll and Bute Councillors.

- (b) On 4 February 2009 I met Richard Lochhead, Minister for Rural Affairs in Edinburgh, to discuss the situation regarding the dramatic fall in milk production in the ring fenced area of Arran, Bute, Cowal and Kintyre. We now have only 60 dairy farms in total in these four areas. In May 1987 there were more than 140.
- (c) Saturday 7 February 2009 saw Stuart Stevenson, Minister for Transportation, open the new Linkspan and Inner Harbour Development in Rothesay. The new facility will be of great benefit to the Island's tourism industry after 30 months of prolonged work at the Harbour area.
- (d) On 25 February 2009 the Council Chamber hosted an Economic Seminar which was organised by Mid Argyll Chamber of Commerce. The speakers for the day were David Sutherland, Liz Cameron, David Douglas and our Council Leader, Dick Walsh. They were all introduced very capably by Jane MacLeod.
- (e) As has been reported in the Leader's report, the change over from Vestas to Skycon at the factory site near Machrihanish took place on Thursday 26 March 2009. This momentous occasion was attended by the First Minister, Alex Salmond, who paid tribute to the Danish Company, Skycon, Scottish Development International, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Argyll and Bute Council, who all worked extremely hard to deliver what will be a new chapter in the Kintyre area. Eventually it is hoped that 400 people will be employed at the Company, plus of course, the ancillary industries that will be required for the works. The boost to Argyll and Bute will be far reaching and it was a privilege to be at the launch.
- (f) Development Services held a Development Management User Forum Seminar on 25 March 2009 which was well attended by around 50 architects, agents, Community Councils and local builders. Everyone present received an update on the Planning Reform Agenda and how the Council were going to deliver on this.

On 3 August 2009 new Planning Regulations come into force. Planning Services have been preparing for this with colleagues in Corporate Services and have drawn up new governance arrangements (ie, single planning committee/local review panel), are preparing a new scheme of

delegation, have produced an annual improvement plan and a new local development plan scheme. Planning Services are also working on new application forms and guidance notes and considering options for Community Council and elected Member training.

Councillor Robert Macintyre
Spokesperson for Economy, Environment and Rural Affairs
30 March 2009

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL**Executive****DEVELOPMENT SERVICES****16 April 2009**

CONSULTATION BY THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT**REVISION OF CIRCULAR 12/1996: PLANNING AGREEMENTS****REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Following the announcement by the First Minister on 19 August 2008 that the planned review of Planning Obligations under the Planning etc (Scotland) Act would be postponed in order to avoid additional burdens on the development industry during the current period of economic uncertainty, the Scottish Government decided to focus on how to make the current system of planning agreements under s.75 Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 operate more effectively in order that agreements can be taken forward in a more transparent and consistent manner.
- 1.2 Advice on the use of s.75 Agreements is currently given in Circular 12/1996: Planning Agreements. Research findings suggest that conflicts can still arise between planning authorities and developers during the negotiation of an agreement. The Scottish Government is seeking comments by 10 April 2009 on a proposed revised Circular, developed with input from key stakeholders from both the public and private sectors.
- 1.3 The full consultation paper can be viewed at the Department of Development Services or on the Government's web site at www.scotland.gov.uk.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that:
- (i) Members note the contents of this report.
 - (ii) Forward the Council's comments as detailed in Appendix A.

3.0 SUMMARY OF THE MAIN CHANGES

- 3.1 The Draft Circular reiterates the familiar tests that planning agreements should meet
- *Necessary to make the proposed development acceptable in planning terms*

- *Serve a planning purpose and be relevant to the published development plan*
- *Directly relate to the proposed development*
- *Fairly and reasonably relate in scale and kind to the proposed development, and*
- *Be reasonable in all other respects*

These criteria are helpfully amplified.

3.2 The Draft Circular suggests that, where planning permission cannot be granted without restriction, the planning authority should *with the developer*, consider the following options *in sequence*

- *Use of a planning condition following the guidance in Circular 4/98;*
- *Use of a legal agreement under different statutes where, for example, the obligations of a developer can be met by a one-off payment;*
- *Use of a Section 75 Agreement only where successors in title must be bound by an obligation*

3.3 The proposed changes to current guidance place more emphasis on certain aspects of the process, particularly on the early identification of requirements for planning agreements in development plans and supplementary guidance, including

- A fair and transparent process for setting policy for planning agreements and negotiating them
- Development of codes of practice for negotiating agreements
- The adoption of formal policies in the development plan on the use of agreements
- Items for which contributions will be sought should be set out in the development plan and be subject to scrutiny
- Supplementary guidance should not be applied to development proposals until it has been formally agreed by the planning authority following consideration of representations

4.0 KEY ISSUES RAISED BY THE CONSULTATION PAPER

4.1 While the Draft Circular represents an evolution of current guidance which is largely followed by the Council, it would, if finalised, require the Council to

- *Formally adopt more detailed guidance on the use of planning agreements in development plans and supplementary guidance*
- *Develop codes of practice for negotiating agreements*

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

5.1 The draft Circular is in general a modest updating of existing guidance. However, its focus is perhaps unduly restricted to planning agreements which require contributions (planning gain) towards infrastructure etc from developers whereas s.75 Agreements are commonly used for a wide variety of other purposes, such as binding restrictions on the use or disposal of land or the securing of bonds for the restoration of sites.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

Policy: The changes have no direct impact on Council Planning Policy.

Financial: None.

Personnel: The earlier identification of the need for an agreement and the adoption of model agreements or clauses might create some efficiency in drafting agreements with potential savings in staff time.

Equal Opportunity: None.

George Harper

Director of Development services

26 March 2009

Author: David Eaglesham, tel: 01369 708608.

Reviewing Officer: Angus Gilmour, tel: 01546 604288

APPENDIX A – SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

1. Does the revised Circular help users to identify clearly the various implementation stages of the Planning Agreements process and does the Circular follow a logical and transparent process?

Yes

2. Will the revised circular help streamline the process of negotiating and concluding planning agreements?

Yes. However, it would be helpful if the Circular included model forms of agreements.

3. Does the revised Circular set out clear guidance on how to determine when a planning agreement, as opposed to a condition or other legal agreement is required?

No. Advice as to the utility of suspensive conditions could be expanded. However, in view of the developing body of case law, it would perhaps be more appropriate to revise Circular 4/1998: Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions

4. To what extent do you consider the policy tests in the revised Circular sufficiently explicit to ensure enable consistent interpretation by all who use the Circular?

The explanation of the policy tests in the Draft Circular represents only a limited expansion of the tests in Circular 12/1996.

5. To what extent do you consider that planning agreements may be negotiated at pre-application stage in order to reduce unnecessary delay and cost?

There may be instances, particularly for proposals identified in the development plan, where the heads of terms for infrastructure contributions etc can be established in advance, especially if the revised Circular's recommendations regarding the development plan and supplementary guidance are put into practice

6. Does the revised Circular offer adequate guidance on access to Planning Agreements by the public?

No. It should advise that concluded planning agreements should be attached to the planning register.

7. Are there other changes the system of mitigating impacts of development that would be effective in supporting sustainable economic growth in Scotland? If so what are these and how would they function?

Infrastructure provision can be achieved through the use of suspensive conditions and there has been developing case law on this (including decisions of Scottish Reporters). Updated guidance in a review of Circular 4/1998 might give authorities more comfort in avoiding the use of Agreements.

8. The Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006 when commenced makes new provisions on the use of unilateral obligations and variation of planning agreements. Do you consider that these will alter the process of negotiating and concluding a planning agreement as set out in this circular?

No.

9. Are there particular costs or benefits not addressed in the partial RIA? What are they?

While the revised Circular's recommendations regarding the development plan and supplementary guidance should put planning obligations on a fairer and more consistent basis, the RIA perhaps underestimates the time and resources required to take these potentially detailed provisions through fair and open scrutiny to approval by planning authorities.

10. Will particular groups not identified by the partial RIA be affected by the revised Circular?

None identified

11. How might the **revised** Circular impact positively or negatively on equalities groups?

Equalities groups may have more opportunity for input to planning agreements.

12. Will any groups not identified already in the partial EqIA be affected by the revised Circular?

None identified

Further comment

The draft Circular is in general a modest updating of existing guidance. However, its focus is perhaps unduly geared towards planning agreements which require developer contributions (planning gain) towards infrastructure etc.

Section 75 Agreements are commonly used for a wide variety of other purposes, such as binding restrictions on the use or disposal of land or the securing of bonds for the restoration of sites. Further guidance on these matters would be helpful.

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ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE****16 April 2009****CORPORATE SERVICES**

**EXTRACT OF MINUTE OF CHORD PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT BOARD 20
MARCH 2009**

6. CAMPBELTOWN TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION PROJECT (THI)

The Campbeltown THI project was at a stage where the Council needed to commit support and funding in order to secure major external funding. Work had progressed on this simultaneously with the OBC process because of external funding drivers.

Because of External timescales, and the advanced stage of the bid process, in particular a LEADER bid for determination on 27 March 2009, it had not been possible to prepare a PID and FBC within the Programme Governance arrangements approved at item 2 above. A Stage 2 THI submission had been prepared which incorporated a Full Business Case and a health check PID had been completed.

The FBC set out a funding requirement from the £300,000 allocated to the Campbeltown Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) via the outline business case developed through CHORD. The funding package in the FBC comprised substantial contributions from Historic Scotland, HIE, HLF and LEADER, as well as CHORD. A further £100k was included in the package from the Council, out with the CHORD programme, although the availability of that funding needed to be confirmed. The project would be considered by the Campbeltown Project Board on 7 April 2009.

Decision

Having regard to the Stage 2 Townscape Heritage Initiative Submission and FBC, the PMB recommended to the Executive on 16 April that –

1. The £300,000 allocated to the Campbeltown THI via the outline business case developed through CHORD is committed to the Campbeltown THI project over the next 5 years; and
2. In the event that the further £100,000 is not available that the project will be scaled down accordingly;

[Note: with reference to decision 2 it was confirmed following the meeting that the further £100, 000 has been committed to this project]

(Reference: Report by Director of Development Services and Stage 2 Townscape Heritage Initiative Submission dated 5 March 2009, submitted)

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ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

Executive

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
Development Policy Service

16 April 2009

Campbeltown Town Centre Regeneration Project (THI)

1. SUMMARY

Campbeltown has been successful in attracting grant assistance from two separate heritage schemes in recent years.

- The first, which is already active, is part-funded by Historic Scotland and is one of the first of their **Conservation Area Regeneration Schemes (CARS)**. We are in the third year of the five-year programme and we have a part-time Project Officer in post in the town.
- The other project is a **Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI)** part-funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). We have passed Stage 1 of the bidding process and are due to submit Stage 2 in March 2008. It is hoped that both the CARS and the THI will run in tandem, with the THI covering a slightly larger area than the CARS.

The THI is now entering a critical phase and the Council now needs to fully commit the £300 K funding that was approved through the C.H.O.R.D outline business case in November 2008.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:-

1. The Programme Management Board recommend to the Executive Committee that the £300,000 allocated to the Campbeltown THI via the outline business case developed through C.H.O.R.D be released to the Campbeltown Project Board for allocation to the Campbeltown THI over the next 5 years.

3. DETAIL

Campbeltown has been subject to a number of Council funded studies (Yellow Book and most recently CHORD) that have both identified an urgent and compelling need to invest in the fabric of the historic town centre.

Following on from the successful and ongoing implementation of the CARS scheme the Council was successful with a THI stage 1 bid in October 2007.

The Council's Development Policy Service have now prepared a THI stage 2 bid that will be formally submitted to the HLF in March 2009 following positive feedback from the HLF Monitor. This submission is comprehensive and contains a full business case, together with numerous appendixes that provide the necessary information for the HLF. In total the submission to the HLF is over 1,000 pages in length – a copy of which is available to view in the Members Room.

Given the late stage of this project a Project Implementation Document (PID) has not yet been undertaken due to the lack of an agreed template being made available. As an alternative the Policy Development Manager has prepared a health check PID which is also available to view in the Members Room.

The required funding of the project is set out in the table below this includes the funding already committed for the CARS project which is being used as part of the match funding required under the THI bid. The Council is required to commit further matching funding to the THI to secure the full grant award. It is therefore essential for the THI to progress further that the Council agree to release the £300K identified within the C.H.O.R.D Outline Business Case to the project following confirmation from the HLF that our stage 2 bid has been successful in late March. A further bid to LEADER has also been made and this will be determined on the 27th of March 2009.

Public Funding Packages	£000's	
CARS		
Historic Scotland	385	Already identified out with the current CHORD programme and approved by Council.
Argyll and Bute Council	300	
HIE	100	
CARS Total	785	
THI		
Heritage Lottery Fund	700	(Plus £25k Development Costs)
C.H.O.R.D.	300	
LEADER	140	
THI Total	1,140	
Combined Total	1,925	

The key objectives of both projects are:

- To preserve and enhance the special architectural, historic and cultural value of Campbeltown town centre by preventing further decay and repairing the built fabric of the town centre

- To help to tackle Campbeltown's socio-economic problems by making the town centre a more attractive place to live and work in and a place well worth visiting
- To ensure that the demand for grant-aided work can be met locally and bring new skills into the area, providing well-paid and rewarding jobs
- To support parallel projects aimed at raising local awareness of and pride in the town's historic past, reinforcing a sense of place and sharing this with an increasing number of visitors

The key activities are:

- New uses for old buildings
- General repairs grant scheme (includes roofs, gutters, windows etc)
- Shop-front repair/reinstatement scheme
- Encouraging planned maintenance and factoring
- Traditional skills training programme
- Enhancing streets, spaces & the waterfront
- Celebrating local history and sense of place through arts and other community projects

Benefits:

- An enhanced built environment
- Increased sense of local identity & pride of place
- An enhanced tourism and retail offer
- Improved skills in construction
- New and improved jobs

The THI is scheduled to start in September 2009 following recruitment of the part time THI Project Officer, admin and finance assistant and the fitting out of a new office. It is intended that the Campbeltown THI be in existence for a maximum period of five years.

4. CONCLUSION

Campbeltown has been identified in the Yellow Book Study and CHORD outline business case as in urgent need for further investment in the historic town centre. The THI Stage 2 bid has been identified as being excellent value for money as it promises an investment of £725,000 in the fabric of the historic town centre from the HLF and £140,133 from LEADER. In order to secure this investment however the Council will need to release the identified figure of £300K as match funding for the THI which is now scheduled to commence in September 2009.

IMPLICATIONS

PERSONNEL This will require the recruitment of a part time THI project officer and full time admin and finance assistant who will be line managed by the Development Policy Manager

FINANCIAL	A request for the release of £300K over five years for the Campbeltown THI
EQUALITY	None
LEGAL	None

For further information, please contact:

Fergus Murray, Development Policy Manager on 01546 604277

**Background Papers: Stage 2 Townscape Heritage Initiative Submission
– copy available to view in the Members Room, Kilmory.**

SPOKESPERSONS REPORT

Councillor Len Scoullar – Spokesperson for Islands

April 2009

CPMR

The debate on Territorial Cohesion was one of the principal agenda items at the Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions of Europe's 2008 General Assembly.

As the Council delegate to this event, I raised the highly important issue of electricity interconnector cables to remote and island areas which are necessary to allow the export of renewable energy. This issue has now been incorporated in the CPMR response to the European Commission.

This is particularly important for Argyll given the current representations by the Council on the inclusion of an Argyll interconnector in the national planning framework and the recent announcement by the Crown Estate Commissioners on the suitability of the sea beds west of Argyll for offshore wind development.

Atlantique Arc of the CPMR have declared a position on Territorial Cohesion including support for underwater grid connectors. As this is a very complicated document I have passed it to Prof. Laurence Mee of SAMS for his views.

Scottish Ferries Review

Scotland's National Transport Strategy published in 2006 made a commitment to undertake a comprehensive review of the nation's lifeline ferry services. The Scottish Government announced on 28 August 2008 that this review would commence with an anticipated conclusion date of October 2009. The review is led by the Scottish Government and will include input from CMAL, COSLA, the Regional Transport Partnerships, Freight Transport Association, Caledonian MacBrayne, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and the various Local Authorities affected by ferry services in Scotland.

As part of the consultation process in this Review, I attended an inter-agency meeting on 23 February with the Head of Roads & Amenity Services, which was held in Greenock Town Hall in Inverclyde. There were presentations by CMAL, Caledonian MacBrayne and the various consultants involved in the review process, prior to group workshops being undertaken in the afternoon. This meeting allowed Argyll and Bute Council appropriate input to this process and, taking into account the meetings at Oban and Inveraray, this will give us adequate opportunity for our voice to be heard from an islands perspective.

Public consultation on the ferries review will be undertaken between June and August this year to allow the results to be analysed and a further report to be prepared with their initial strategy being prepared for the approval of the Scottish Ministers in September 2009.

West of Scotland European Forum Meeting 24/02/09 – North Ayrshire Council Introduction

There was a West of Scotland European Forum (WOSEF) meeting held in North Ayrshire Council on Tuesday 24 February. WOSEF is a partnership organisation which brings together the 12 local authorities in the West of Scotland and a number of other important organisations including the Police and Fire services, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, the college's network and a range of third sector and local regeneration initiatives to represent the interest of the partners in European affairs. In an Argyll and Bute context WOSEF represents the interest of the Helensburgh and Lomond Area.

My apologies were tendered for the meeting because of the Process for Change meeting held in Kilmory on the same day. Argyll and Bute Council was represented at the meeting by Shona Strachan, the Council's European and Policy Assistant.

The key issues that arose at the meeting for Argyll and Bute are summarised below:

European Parliamentary Elections

In light of the European elections to be held on 4 June in the UK, Bill Millar drafted a short paper for WOSEF members to highlight the forthcoming elections which will see 6 Scottish MEPs elected (reduction in 1 seat) and to recommend that the Forum considers how to develop an effective working relationship with the Scottish MEPs elected for the 2009-2014 period.

In order to highlight the aims, objectives and any pertinent issues for WOSEF, the Forum has agreed to draft a report to be sent to all newly elected MEPs to act as an initial briefing. It was also agreed to invite the MEPs to a Forum meeting early on in their tenure to build on the initial report and also to start to develop the effective working relationship between the Forum and the MEPs.

European Economic Recovery Plan

The Economic Recovery Plan was launched in 2008 and is focused on Member States. However, Bill Millar raised the following points which may be of interest to local authorities:-

- The European Commission is proposing to simplify criteria for European Social Fund support.
- Infrastructure and Energy projects are specifically highlighted as important during this time.
- Improvement in energy efficient buildings is a priority and Member States are being asked to re-programme their Structural Funds to devote a greater share to energy-efficiency investments, including opportunities for social housing.

In highlighting the above points Bill Millar noted that in order to take advantage of any relaxations it is important to work with the Scottish Government to ensure they enact any recommended simplifications or relaxations.

Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion

Following the agreement at the last WOSEF meeting (held in October 2008) to draft a WOSEF Response to the Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion, the draft WOSEF Response was duly approved by the Forum. Its approval follows ongoing officer level consultation and included the addition requested by Argyll and Bute Council to note the

‘ . . . strong case for rigorous territorial impact assessments — both ex ante and ex post — to be made of sectoral policies and programmes.’

Given the importance of the debate on Territorial Cohesion to an area like Argyll and Bute; the Council submitted our own response to the Green Paper (agreed at the Executive Committee on 19 February) as well as feeding into the WOSEF and Highlands and Islands European Partnership responses.

Further, in concluding the discussion Malcolm Leitch noted that the Territorial Cohesion debate will be a long standing one which will require WOSEF to engage in dialogue at various levels i.e. with the Scottish Government as the Managing Authority for Programmes, with Department for Business and Enterprise and Westminster due to the reserved nature of Structural Funds Policy as well as engaging in the debate at a European level.

Structural Funds Programmes - Progress Report

The discussion was centred on concerns about the management and administration of the Lowlands and Uplands Scotland Programme (LUPS) which is administered by ESEP Ltd on behalf of the Scottish Government. In essence WOSEF is concerned about the following points:

- Lack of an ‘operational bridge’ between the ESEP, the Scottish Government and WOSEF (and ESEC East of Scotland European Consortium). This is because unlike the Highlands and Islands Programme there is no Programme Review Group which fulfils the function of operational bridge.
- Concerns over lack of consistency in advice and need for clear guidance for applicants.
- It is perceived that the Scottish Government and ESEP are struggling with the compliance regime.
- Pressures on European Social Fund Priority I and concerns about the ‘front loading’ of this priority, especially in the current recession.

These operational concerns will be discussed further at the next WOSEF Officer Group Meeting on 10 March 2009.

Note on COSLA Climate Change Bill Task Group

On 6th February I attended the COSLA Climate Change Bill Task Group. Among the issues discussed were

- A Climate Change issues update
- The Climate Change Bill (with a Scottish Government presentation) during which I raised the issue of grid connections for our remote islands wishing to use renewable sources of energy. I was invited to write to Fiona Page with these comments for her to take them to Scottish Government.
- A Strategic Overview Project presentation again from the Scottish Government looking at how the 2050, 80% emissions reduction target can be achieved.

- Members went through the draft COSLA response to the Bill, during which some comments were made including a need to talk up the work that local authorities are already doing.
- Climate Change Approaches/indicators for SOAs. A draft working paper on a shared approach to Climate Change in this regard was discussed.

**KIMO PRESS RELEASE FOR NOTING
(KOMMUNENES INTERNASJONALEMILJØORGANISASJON) LOCAL
AUTHORITIES INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANISATION**

Biggest Plutonium Transport in History Threatens Marine Environment

Two British based ships are currently being loaded with deadly cargoes of MOX nuclear fuel in France for transportation to Japan, the Pacific Pintail and Pacific Heron are expected to leave Cherbourg on Friday. The ships, which will carry a combined cargo of 1.8 tonnes of MOX, will most probably travel to Japan via the Cape of Good Hope and the Tasman Sea.

While the ships are more robust than the single hull, single engined Atlantic Osprey used to transport nuclear waste around Europe KIMO is very concerned about the threats to security, safety and the environment of all countries en route to Japan. The vessels will be unescorted for most of the voyage and should the relatively unprotected shipments fall into terrorist hands the consequences are unimaginable.

A KIMO spokesperson stated: “As an organisation KIMO is against all shipments of highly radioactive material by sea as they pose an unnecessary threat to the marine environment and to the coastal communities they pass. They are also vulnerable to terrorism as highlighted by the boarding of the Atlantic Osprey by Greenpeace activists last year. We can’t stress enough that if an attack by terrorists succeeded in causing an incident involving a severe long-term fire, breaching shipping casks and/or sinking a nuclear transport vessel, the consequences would be severe.”

For more information contact: Tom Piper, KIMO UK Co-ordinator, c/o Planning Policy and Environment, Woodhill House, Westburn Road, Aberdeen AB16 5GB
Email: tom.piper@kimo.shetland.org Tel: 01224 664725 Mob: 07789790775.

ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE
16 April 2009****CORPORATE SERVICES**

**EXTRACT OF MINUTE OF ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND
PERFORMANCE GROUP 23 MARCH 2009**

2. PROCESS FOR CHANGE

Following completion of the High Level Design stage of Process for Change the Council, at its meeting on 5 March 2009, considered recommendations in respect of the 7 Opportunity Themes and agreed to refer these, with the exception of the recommendation relating to the Property Theme, to the Organisational Development PPG for further consideration and to report back to the Council Executive on 16 April 2009.

A further report which included a summary of all the questions raised and answers given at the Council Business Day on 24 February and the Council meeting on 5 March 2009 was also considered.

Decision

Following clarification on a number of issues the PPG agreed:-

1. To refer recommendations 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.7 and 2.8, contained within the report, which was before the Council on 5 March 2009, to the Executive for approval, noting that recommendation 2.8 would be reworded to make it clear that the "scope for further co-operation" referred to cooperation with Highland, Dumfries and Galloway and Moray Councils which may be undertaken during the Detailed Design stage of the project and did not refer to cooperation with these Councils in respect of shared services in the future;
2. To hold a workshop on 1 April 2009 to draw up a list of Recognition Events that the PPG would refer to for monitoring the Change Management Theme; and
3. To advise the Executive that the PPG would continue to monitor progress with the Detailed Design stage of Process for Change through a series of meetings up until December 2009.

(Reference: Reports by Director of Corporate Services dated 24 February 2009 and 20 March 2009, submitted)

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PROCESS FOR CHANGE – HIGH LEVEL DESIGN

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 Further to consideration of the outputs from completion of the High Level Design for Process for Change at the Council Business Day of 24 February and the Council Meeting of 5 March, Councillors were given a further opportunity to raise any issues before 14 March. No further issues have been raised by Councillors since the Council Meeting. A summary of all questions raised to date and answers given is attached for further consideration by the PPG. The PPG is requested to consider whether it requires any further information prior to remitting this matter to the Executive for consideration on 16 April 2009.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The attached questions and answers at Appendix 1 are noted.
- 2.2 Members are requested to consider whether they now have all the requisite information or whether there are additional areas which they would like further information on before remitting this back to the Executive.

3 DETAIL

- 3.1 Members already have the full reports from the completion of the high level design which were presented to the Council Meeting of 5 March 2009, and attended the presentations given by each of the project managers to the Council Business Day on 24 February 2009. A number of questions were raised at each of these meetings as well as some questions having been raised directly with project team members. These questions, along with the answers given, have been written up and are attached at Appendix 1 in order to further inform Members about Process for Change.
- 3.2 The recent press release issued by John Swinney on 2 March 2009 on "Upping the pace of public sector reform" should be noted. In particular he highlights the need for further efficiencies, and greater innovation within and between councils:

"Our efficiency programme has an increasing two per cent target to deliver savings of £1.6 billion in 2010-11 which will be reinvested to improve public services. But efficiency must go hand in hand with a more enterprising and empowering culture.

"We have stepped back from micromanagement of councils and are letting them get on with the job. Now greater innovation is required - within and between councils, Government and all parts of the public sector - to share services and get best value for the public pound. That is already happening and there must and will be more.

"For instance, eProcurement Scotland, one of the most comprehensive and successful eGovernment initiatives in the world, delivers cost savings and the most efficient use of resources. Last year, £2.47 billion was spent through eProcurement Scotland, around 25 per cent of the total spend in the public sector procurement bill.

- 3.3 The themes from Process for Change reflect these aspirations and provide plans for achieving these in a practical manner.

4 IMPLICATIONS

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------|--|
| 4.1 | Policy | In line with Council's Improvement plan |
| 4.2 | Financial | Additional non-budgeted costs of Detailed Design for which approval is now being sought are £216,000 – to be funded from the Council's General Fund Reserve. With potential further draw of £559,000 for year 1 costs depending upon the outcome of detailed design. |
| 4.3 | Personnel | 6 secondments are required to assist with the high level design phase. Overall the requirement is estimated as 13 FTE each for a 5 to 7 month period. |
| 4.4 | Legal | Not yet identified |
| 4.5 | Equal Opportunities | Not yet identified |

Judy Orr
Head of ICT and Financial Services

20 March 2009

Appendices:

- 1 Process for Change – High level design – questions raised and answers given

Background reports:

Shared Services Diagnostic Project - Final Report to Council on 2 October 2008
Process for Change – High level design – report to Council 5 March 2009

Process for Change – Questions raised and answers given at Council Business Day 24 February 2009 and Council meeting 5 March 2009 and via emails

QUESTIONS		ANSWERS
<p>1) Programme - general</p> <p>1.1 Financial</p>		
<p>Q 1.1.1 Is the £216K for consultants and additional staff included in the figure of circa £560K for year zero costs?</p>	<p>A 1.1.1 No, this is additional to year 0 costs. We assumed year 0 is 2009/10, but this may slip if the decision to progress is deferred. Some of the year 0 costs are capital and there may be scope for some of this to come from existing budgets. Further work is required on this aspect during detailed design.</p>	
<p>Q 1.1.2 So on the finance side we are being asked to commit to the £226K from reserves to identify (clarify) what “year 0” costs will be and how they would be funded.</p>	<p>A 1.1.2 Yes, the commitment being asked at the moment is for £216K from reserves so we can carry out the detailed design. This is much more than just clarifying the costs – it’s about drawing up the process maps for the new ways of working, identifying the precise job roles affected and the impact on them and on premises requirements, identifying the technology requirements in detail; as well as refining the business case.</p>	
<p>Q 1.1.3 The consultancy budgeted cost seems to average at a fee rate of £1,400 per day? What is the range and what level of staff are we getting?</p>	<p>A 1.1.3 The fee rate varies according to grade of consultant. The budget allows for expenses. We have had consultants at two levels mainly – Managing Consultant and Director. Their fees range from Junior Consultant up to Director. We have a 9% volume discount on standard catalyst rates because of placing a single order along with Moray and Dumfries and Galloway Council, and a special discount on the programme support consultant and 2 free familiarisation days.</p>	

<p>Q 1.1.4 Is the contract with our consultants on a risk/reward basis?</p>	<p>A 1.1.4 No this was not possible as the contract just extends to a commitment covering high level design. A risk/reward contract would only be possible if it covered implementation.</p>
<p>Q 1.1.5 £4.9M - £5.3M in savings anticipated in the overall business case; however it needs to be monitored that we actually achieve this.</p>	<p>A 1.1.5 The Dimension Four benefits realisation methodology is being adopted to provide the rigour required to monitor achievement and provide transparency of savings generated. The reason the savings have gone from £11M to £5M is that we are no longer counting any savings from property (£1.9M) – saying we will get these anyway through existing programmes; procurement savings have reduced to £2.2M from £3.5M (more realistic target for new contracts to put in place and not double counting any savings from Procurement Scotland or Scotland Excel which would be additional). Finally, we have not assumed any savings from Rules Based Eligibility and Assessment theme. We need to revisit this as part of the Detailed Design phase to identify savings. The project managers have all indicated a significant level of prudence in the estimation of savings and would prefer that the estimates taken to Council are prudent and that there is the potential to achieve more than the figures estimated. It was pointed out that the FTE for 2009/10 is 4,382. In 1998/99 that figure was 3,812 – an increase over the years of 570 (15%) despite over 200 employees going out of the organisation from housing stock transfer and some NPDO posts including, Janitorial posts. Some of the new FTE will undoubtedly be for new initiatives (Pre-5s, Classroom Assistants etc.); We have to take the opportunity to review how people work and what they do. Our processes can improve; it's the only way we can get efficiencies out of the system and improving customer service is a significant driver for that.</p>

<p>Q 1.1.6 Are there any quick wins?</p>	<p>A 1.1.6 Procurement will deliver savings in year 0. The plan is that there is no lengthy design stage for procurement. Instead there is some targeted research for particular commodities and then specifications drawn up and tendered so that benefits are achieved as early as possible. Serco responded that there was no overall “silver bullet” but that the customer management and workforce deployment are excellent themes to progress.</p>
<p>Q 1.1.7 The budget identified a need for efficiencies. It would be possible to decide to take forward the themes we are comfortable with and defer decisions on other themes till a later date.</p> <p>Q 1.1.8 It is noted that the business cases have not allowed for any redundancies – this should not be a problem as there are opportunities to review plans in more detail at the next stage, and good planning should minimise any redundancies</p>	<p>A 1.1.7 This is possible although more benefits will be achieved by taking all the recommended themes forward</p> <p>A 1.1.8 Agreed. It is hoped to minimise any issues for the workforce.</p>
<p>1.2 Governance</p>	
<p>Q 1.2.1 Governance – given there are only two OD PPG meetings scheduled during the detailed design period will additional meetings be required and/or rescheduling to tie in with key points in the process?</p>	<p>A 1.2.1 I would encourage additional meetings to be scheduled as required. Additional meetings will be scheduled – probably on a monthly basis.</p>
<p>Q 1.2.2 Future responsibility is delegated to the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive. How would the Council be kept informed?</p>	<p>A 1.2.2 OD PPG will have a scrutiny role and will meet monthly to review progress during detailed design.</p>
<p>1.3 Member involvement</p>	
<p>Q 1.3.1 (See first risk on page 101) if it is appropriate to include</p>	<p>A 1.3.1 Project boards, being more informal, can be more responsive</p>

<p>trade union reps on the project boards why not Members?</p> <p>Q 1.3.2 Why are Trade Union Representatives needed on the Strategic Boards when they are invited to the PPG.</p>	<p>in dealing with the project environment. There is a real conflict with wanting to provide up-to-date and full information and getting it out early. The Strategic Boards generally worked well during the high level design phase and it is hoped this would continue. If the OD PPG meets more frequently, this would enable Members to be more involved.</p> <p>A 1.3.2 The Trade Union Representatives are expected to have detailed input to give on proposed changes to job roles and so the intention is to engage with them on this as an integral part of the project board working closely with the team – not just in a scrutiny role.</p>
<p>Q 1.3.3 The last paragraph of Section 8 of the Change Management Theme is probably the crucial point that doesn't seem to be built into the rest of that section or the Design Principles in Appendix 2. Whilst I am pleased to see a role identified for the Organisational Development PPG, I think you should see us as more than just being engaged in the process by receiving Committee Reports. I would have thought you could have done with us as champions of the process and, to be that we need to have Awareness, Understanding, Engagement, Acceptance and Commitment. Equally, I would have thought that the penultimate Design Principle should be reworded: "There is good communication, at all stages of the project /programme that delivers awareness; understanding; engagement; acceptance and commitment from all stakeholders."</p> <p>In this way we will mitigate many of the risks that have been identified. These are the stages any organisation needs to go through to achieve cultural change.</p>	<p>A1.3.3 The design principle can be modified during detailed design. We agree that the stakeholders should champion Process for Change effectively.</p>

<p>1.4 Programme - general</p>	
<p>Q 1.4.1 We (the Councillors) want to see really good evidence and detail over how it will be delivered. Nothing clarifies that the assumptions in the business cases are based on strong evidence. There requires to be an intermediate step; we (Councillors) require the comfort that realisation of benefits stated is strong.</p> <p>Serco’s examples mostly were successful ones but Wolverhampton Council outsourced to Axon and that was quickly disbanded after only a few weeks having taken 2 years to set up.</p>	<p>A1.4.1 The business cases have been based on a number of well researched case studies. The details of these have not been included in the high level design reports but they have been considered in detail by the relevant project boards. Detailed Design will further examine this based in the light of the implementation plans as these are developed in detail.</p> <p>Serco responded that they believed change is better generated within and the recommendations from high level design all reflected this.</p>
<p>Q 1.4.2 In the public’s mind – emphasis required is on Shared Services. Overall point of this is ‘Shared Services’ and if that was a better name; why don’t we revert to it?</p>	<p>A1.4.2 The emphasis at this stage is about simplifying and standardising before we then go on to look at further sharing. So far the sharing has been limited to sharing our approach and process with our partner councils. We have made a commitment to examine the potential for sharing detailed design including developing process maps once. We will revert to Council for consideration of further sharing at the end of detailed design.</p>
<p>Q 1.4.3 What is the possible disadvantage of taking forward Customer Management and Workforce Deployment to detailed design?</p>	<p>A 1.4.3 The only potential downside is the cost of doing this, estimated at £216,000. If at the conclusion of detailed design, a decision were to be made not to progress to implementation, then there would be no return on these monies. However, these themes encompass items we should be doing anyway and link closely in to the Council’s Improvement Plan approved in January. The proposals are all for areas where other organisation have shown that real benefits are achievable.</p>

<p>Q 1.4.4 PPG suggested the Council should delay making a decision given the complexity of what is involved.</p>	<p>A 1.4.4 The Council has now decided to refer the papers to the PPG for further consideration and to then remit back to the Executive on 16 April. Two meetings of the OD PPG have been arranged to allow further consideration. The main risk of deferral is that we potentially will miss the target dates set out in the Improvement Plan for completion of first phase detailed design.</p>
<p>Q 1.4.5. Where does Community engagement fit into this?</p>	<p>A 1.4.5 Process for Change business cases deal only with the council and not with potential for sharing with our community planning partners. This is a separate element in the Council's Improvement Plan. The Customer Management workstream recognises the need for further engagement with the community through regular customer satisfaction surveys, as well as focus groups to ensure detailed design reflects the requirements of our customers.</p>
<p>Q 1.4.6 There will be a lot of good stories to tell from progressing with these themes. Will there be regular press releases arranged?</p>	<p>A 1.4.6 Yes, there should be regular communication of successes once we go into implementation</p>
<p>Q 1.4.7 We must be aware of the difference between rural and urban LA's when looking at case studies.</p>	<p>A 1.4.8 Agreed we have more reliance on technology due to our remote rural area. In some urban LA's most customers are within walking distance of council facilities.</p>
<p>Q 1.4.8 Seems on surface that we should be doing this, its not leading edge. Ignore at peril the need for buy in and support from all stakeholders. There may be difficulties in implementation challenges. We need to take this slowly and thoroughly.</p>	<p>A 5.1.6 Serco advice is that we are a people business – have to take staff along but in their experience people are happier when clear about what the direction of travel is and the associated timescales.</p>
<p>2) Workforce Deployment</p>	
<p>Q 2.1.1 Section 8 (page 120) suggests that we identified 474 potential transferees to the type of working and we are</p>	<p>A 2.1.1 You are right that there are difficulties in realising savings given the dispersal of our staff. That's why we are</p>

<p>working on the basis of achieving 50% of these – 237 FTEs. Paragraph 1.2 suggests possible savings of 26 FTEs or just over 10%. How realistic is it to achieve this given the dispersed nature of our staff and the range of disciplines we cover? For instance, if we look at Environmental Health Officers – the telephone directory suggests there are 5 Environmental Health Officers including the Area Manager, and assuming they are all multifunctional this would suggest a target reduction of 0.5 FTE. Savings 26 FTE from a uniform group of 237 is one thing, once that population is subdivided by 4 areas and say 5 or more disciplines it becomes much more difficult to bank the savings.</p>	<p>suggesting only 50% will be realisable. However, it gives the opportunity to think about how we deploy our staff – should the Environmental Health officers work on an area basis? Can they worker closer with other Protective Services Officers or other area based staff? It allows us to ask these questions and see if, through being cleverer, we can actually realise the parts of an FTE into whole FTE savings. We need to look in detail at these groups of Officers, and we will do this in Detailed Design.</p>
<p>Q 2.2.1 Assurance sought that there would be no pressure on Council staff to work from home.</p>	<p>A 2.2.1 Agreement on home working needs to be mutual from both the staff members concerned and from the manager. It does not suit all types of roles – process roles are most suited. That is why the number of potential home workers is fairly modest, and only 50% of those expected to take up the option.</p>
<p>Q 2.3.1 Why does the Day in Life of chart for an Environmental Health officer show some commuting time replaced by admin time? Surely this should all be a saving to the employee rather than the council benefiting from this?</p>	<p>A 2.3.1 This was the result from the pilot and will need to be reviewed during detailed design for each set of job roles. Whilst it is expected that there could be saving in travel time between locations, savings in commuting time generally accrue to the employee.</p>
<p>Q 2.4.1 How can mobile and flexible working be achieved and still allow for contingency of communications failures?</p>	<p>A 2.4.1 The tools provided for mobile and flexible workers are not based on the assumption of continuous communications recognise that we don't have good signal coverage throughout much of Argyll and Bute. They are based on uploaded and refreshing data when communications are established and hosting data locally in between times to provide the necessary resilience.</p>

<p>Q 2.5.1 Home Working depends on a suitable room being available in a person's home. Would Council pay for use of that room? Would home working make it harder to get hold of staff?</p>	<p>A 2.5.1 Yes this is correct where someone is a full-time designated home worker. There is much less dependency where the level of home working is more casual. The Council has not built in provision for paying someone for use of their home. Most organisations don't. HMRC suggests that up to £3 per week could be paid tax free for home working in certain circumstances. This will be investigated further in detailed design. If facilities are set up appropriately, it should not make it harder to get hold of someone – they should be equally contactable whether working from home or in a council office.</p>
<p>Q 2.6.1 The occupancy study for Helensburgh was only over 1 day and for Kilmory was over 2 days. These are too short to draw conclusions from.</p>	<p>A 2.6.1 These will be done in more detail for each location prior to determining exactly how many desks are needed at that location. However they give a good indication of the level of current occupancy which is similar to that found in other local authorities, and highlight the potential for improvement.</p>
<p>Q 2.7.1 Surely the technology issues are not insignificant. Should we also consider how our community planning partners could share our properties where that makes sense.</p>	<p>A 2.7.1 The technology issues were considered in detail during the pilot and a range of equipment was supplied including PDAs, laptops and tablets and also investigated specialist mobile modules of our back office systems, and encryption software. There is some work to be done to ensure that the best products have been selected for a more full scale roll-out but, by and large, the technology issues were overcome satisfactorily. In terms of our Properties, we have not considered any potential for sharing with our community planning partners. That would need to be done on a case by case basis.</p>
<p>Q 2.8.1 Why does the Day in Life of chart for an Environmental Health officer lead to the assumption of a saving of 5%</p>	<p>A 2.8.1 The Mobile solution, when fully implemented, removes need to go back to office on a regular basis. This was not</p>

<p>in miles travelled?</p>	<p>yet in for EH officers and so not reflected in the chart. However other authorities have found this level of saving is easily attainable with a full mobile solution.</p>
<p>Q 2.9.1 The Business Case for workforce deployment shows £2.3m benefits cashable savings on top of Single Status savings and any savings anticipated in the recent budgets. Are these achievable?</p>	<p>A 2.9.1 Yes, these are on top of single status savings already made. These are considered achievable as they result from different methods of working which lead to productivity increases, rather than making cuts in a less planned way.</p>
<p>Q 2.10.1 Would this new thinking (mobile/flexible working) be applicable to members as well?</p>	<p>A 2.10.1 Members have a distinctive role and we have not considered specifically how it would apply to them. Members already have access to council systems from home and are therefore somewhat similar to what is envisaged for home workers. We may be able to consider what can be offered to support more mobile working although we should bear in mind that we should not anticipate any savings from this.</p>
<p>Q 2.11.1 Will individual staff members be given a degree of choice with these proposed new methods of working?</p>	<p>A 2.12.1 Staff will be consulted by their managers who will do their best to take account of geography – where they live, which customer groups they serve etc and come up with the optimum proposals. However if they are a mobile or flexible worker, they will be expected to take advantage of the new tools to support this and achieve the productivity increases – that would not be entirely optional.</p>
<p>3) Customer Management</p>	
<p>3.1 Research</p>	
<p>Q 3.1.1 Concerns expressed that the Customer Management theme proposals were based on research only takes account of a very small percentage of total contacts –</p>	<p>A 3.1.1 The Citizens panel achieved 61% participation. It was a robust survey based on a statistically significant number of responses. The answers are accurate to +/- 3.5%.</p>

<p>first process.</p> <p>Q 3.1.2 An example was given of where a streetlight was out and that the on-line reporting facility worked perfectly well and the street light repair vehicle was dispatched to repair it. Unfortunately, the fault was not simple and the streetlight remains out. We need to make sure that we look and monitor customer requests and follow them through to completion.</p> <p>Q 3.1.3 Are we going to track and monitor responses to customer enquiries? There is a concern that the present systems could be improved upon.</p>	<p>325 respondents indicated an interest in participating in Focus Groups during Detailed Design and this will help ensure that customer requirements are reflected. We also acknowledge that there is indeed a place for doing separate surveys of customer satisfaction following contact with the Council. At the moment, the only set of contacts robustly recorded which could be sampled are those logged on the CRM system by the CSC. That is only a small part of the total contacts with the Council, hence the basis of the Hexagon survey sample was the Citizens panel which is demographically representative of the population of Argyll and Bute. We listen in a variety of ways to feedback from customers however, this needs to be developed fuller and be embedded throughout the organisation.</p> <p>A 3.1.2 Agreed, that whilst fulfilment of the service request is essentially what is important to the customer, the overall service experience should be a positive one.</p> <p>A 3.1.3 Enquiries will be given a tracking number allowing the customer to view or enquire about the progress of their enquiry. During detailed design this will be thoroughly investigated and designed.</p>
<p>3.2 Financial</p>	
<p>Q 3.2.1 Are the savings achievable, should they be more challenging? Will they be worth the significant upheaval required?</p>	<p>A 3.2.1 The Shared Services Diagnostic projected that the Customer Management theme would save £781,887 over 5 years. High Level Design has projected a savings range</p>

	<p>between £715,810 and £1,097,799 which is very comparable. Detailed Design will provide a fully developed business case for Customer Management upon which investment decisions and implementation planning decisions can be made by the Council. The theme is not just about producing financial savings; it is about significantly improving service to our customers which is a good thing in its own right.</p>
<p>4) Administration/EDRM and Records Management</p>	
<p>4.1 General</p>	
<p>Q 4.1.1 Concerns raised that EDRM was not being taken forward and that dropping EDRM as a continuing separate theme did not represent joined up thinking.</p> <p>Q 4.1.2 Examples requested of what type of records a records management system would enable as opposed to the sorts of document management and workflow systems currently in use and potentially being extended?</p>	<p>A 4.1.1 EDRM is continuing as part of a wider thread of ICT related elements during detailed design for all of the 3 continuing themes, but on a service by service deployment with links into the relevant back office system rather than with one single all singing, all dancing EDRM system. There are a number of document management and workflow systems at present within the Council and these will continue and be supported. The EDRM report concluded that a corporate EDRM approach could not demonstrate savings and therefore was not a justifiable option at this time.</p> <p>A 4.1.2 Records management systems deal with unstructured non-case records whereas document management systems typically deal with structured case records. The Council currently uses document management systems within planning (related to planning and building control applications), within creditors (for supplier invoices) and within Revenues and benefits (for council tax, NDR and benefit claims correspondence) all of which have clear case references. The sorts of records which are not being</p>

<p>Q 4.1.3 Examples requested of possible extended uses within the Council for EDRM?</p>	<p>covered include more general records such as daily/ end of day cash receipting records. Also there is no intention to include pupil assessment records as there are plans to include these within GLOW.</p> <p>A.4.1.3 Case files for social work could be scanned and held as part of the Care First system which also includes the electronic assessment records. Also the Lagan CRM system used by the Customer Service Centre could be linked to a document management to hold correspondence against the CRM case records. The workforce deployment and customer management themes will look at both these possibilities.</p>
<p>5) Procurement and Managing Contracts</p> <p>5.1 General</p>	
<p>Q 5.1.1 Has this moved away from the original view of Shared Services? Why are we not looking at term service contracts with some other LAs which would potentially entice contractors into giving better prices?</p>	<p>A 5.1.1 For construction Scotland Excel identified major savings potential of £150M across Scotland and is already working with construction groups to progress this. In the procurement business case, we have not included these potential savings as we did not wish to double count savings via Scotland Excel. However, we will indeed be progressing this when Scotland Excel are ready with proposals. The McClelland Report on Public Procurement Reform identified three levels of contracts. The Council will collaborate with other public sector bodies on Category A contracts – across the whole public sector and Category B contracts – across all local authorities. We will also collaborate with other authorities on some Category C contracts, where the market will support this approach and service needs will be met.</p>

<p>Q 5.1.2 Very sceptical about the benefits that might accrue through centralisation. We need to protect local businesses.</p>	<p>A 5.1.2 The Council has a duty under the Treaty of Rome to engage in “open and fair” trading. Contracts with a value above certain thresholds must be advertised openly across Europe in the Official Journal of the European Union. However it is our aim to package contracts in a manner that gives local businesses a fair opportunity to bid for contracts. This may include a requirement for them to re-tender certain elements to sub-contractors – which may give local contractors an opportunity to bid for more manageable size contracts. It is also Council policy to evaluate tenders on the basis of the MEAT criteria (Most Economically Advantageous Tender) so that quality issues can be scored as well as price.</p>
<p>Q 5.1.3 Savings on e-tendering will be limited as staff will still tend to print returned documents for evaluation purposes.</p>	<p>A 5.1.3 The paper savings from e-tendering do not form a significant portion of the business case and it is accepted that many people will print tender returns for evaluation purposes. However, no paper documents will be sent to bidders, thereby saving paper, postage and copying costs. The bidders also save money by not having copying costs or the expense of couriers to deliver completed tenders to the Council.</p>
<p>Q 5.1.4 Concern raised over the need to recruit more staff into procurement, particularly trainees.</p>	<p>A 5.1.4 The extra staff for procurement is to help put in place more new contracts. At present we have one procurement person who is currently off on maternity leave. The rest of the small team work on eProcurement – supporting Pecos system and the catalogues. There are very few qualified procurement officers around. We haven’t been able to recruit any locally which is why the proposal is to go for trainees and train them. The extra resource will help departments do the market research, prepare the specifications and issue tenders and evaluate responses, and then help manage contract performance.</p>

<p>Q. 5.1.5 Disappointed with the procurement theme. Officers should be doing this anyway. Not enough savings.</p>	<p>A 5.1.5 The Council has a reasonably good record on procurement, despite the paucity of resources dedicated to the function. Operational staff within ICT, Community Services (Care), Roads and Amenity, and Property Services already deliver a large number of procurement contracts for the Council. The Process for Change programme will deliver more specialist skills to those staff and also augment their resources with additional dedicated procurement staff. If the Council was a particularly poor performer at present, more savings would be available.</p>
<p>Q 5.1.6 Are there any quick wins?</p>	<p>A 5.1.6 Procurement will deliver savings in year 0. The plan is that there is no lengthy design stage for procurement. Instead there is some targeted research for particular commodities and then specifications drawn up and tendered so that benefits are achieved as early as possible</p>
<p>6) Property</p>	
<p>Q 6.1.1 We need to explore carefully all office rationalisation business cases. Regarding the Municipal Buildings in Oban we could consider linking into the next door building.</p>	<p>A 6.1.1 A full options appraisal will be undertaken.</p>
<p>7) Change Management</p>	
<p>Q 7.1.1 Change Management theme is probably key to it all. On first reading I found this a bit contradictory. For instance it says on the bottom of page 316 - “Programmes deal with outcomes, project deal with outputs. Programme management and project management are complimentary approaches” then just under the diagram on page 7 it says “The programme integrates the projects so that it can deliver an outcome greater than the sum of its parts” – I would have said that the programme delivers</p>	<p>A 7.1.1 Recognition Events are a key tool to communicate the outcomes of the projects. The programme aims to deliver outcomes which are integrated and greater than the sum of the parts.</p>

outcomes greater than the sum of the project outcomes. Dimension Four describe their Recognition Events as a real life happening that tells people an outcome has been achieved.

Q 7.1.2 A lot of the Recognition Events are outputs and not outcomes. If we don't challenge the Project Managers to see where their project outputs need to lead on, to we run the risk of not being "customer focussed". For example, to return to Recognition Event 19 on page 161 – sending a message to the lighting technician is just the output of the CRM system but if it doesn't result in the light being sorted (the outcome) it is just wasted effort. If we get that outcome, I get an easier life (we all do) and that's what I call an outcome.

A 7.1.2 This is implied within the Recognition Event. These Recognition Events are indicators to what has taken place and should not be seen as the whole of the project.

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