



North Ayrshire Council  
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

Proud to be **apse** Overall Council of the Year 2017

# Democratic Services

## Q2 Performance Review

2018/19

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**Focus. Passion. Inspiration.**





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## 1. Update on actions from last meeting in May 2018

	Action	Progress
1.	Revise report	Completed after last meeting
2.	Extend Reach of Vlogs	There has been on-going promotional activity to encourage staff to actively view more vlogs. Most recently a presentation and Q &A session was given to head teachers to promote vlogs and the uptake of the Staff News app - specifically targeting probationer teachers, given they are new to the Council and may be unaware of this internal communication channel.
3.	Reflect best value preparation in next performance report	Completed

## 2. Our Priorities

# Council Plan 2015-18

Growing our economy, increasing employment and regenerating towns

Working together to develop strong communities

Ensuring people have the right skills for learning, life and work

Supporting all of our people to stay safe, healthy and active

Protecting and enhancing the environment for future generations

## Democratic Services Priorities 2015-18

### 1. Supporting the Council and its Partners to Make it Happen

- Lead corporate performance initiatives e.g. Council Plan, Best Value Review, Public Performance Reporting
- Support Fair for All, the CPP's Strategy to promote equity
- Support the Council to develop evidence based policy
- Work with staff to improve engagement and wellbeing
- Support delivery of Locality Action Plans and use these, with participatory budgeting and the Community Investment Fund to engage communities and enhance partnership working
- Support equality mainstreaming across the Council
- Successfully deliver elections, particularly the Largs Bid election
- Support the democratic process and outside body appointments

### 2. Provide a comprehensive and responsive Legal Service

- Provide comprehensive support for major Council initiatives e.g. Pan-Ayrshire Economic Partnership, the developing Ayrshire Growth deal, new housing initiatives, GDPR, and municipalisation activities
- Finalise and implement an evidence based Licensing Policy Statement and Overprovision Assessment for the Licensing Board
- Re-licence all Personal Licences under the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005
- Review the Council's governance arrangements
- Through the Monitoring Officer ensure that the Council complies with all legal requirements

### 3. Effective delivery of Communications

- Implement the commitments and standards outlined in the Communications Strategy and review progress
- Transform the service to better reflect the increasingly digital nature of communications
- Embed improved internal communications channels to drive and support council priorities
- Enhance and promote North Ayrshire Council to local, regional and national audiences



### 3. Directorate Priorities

#### Priority 1. Supporting the Council and its Partners to Make it Happen

##### Key Highlights

- **The team** have been heavily involved in planning for the next Best Value Audit. The Performance Management Forum supported by Policy and Performance Staff have been reviewing BV toolkits produced by Audit Scotland to assess our current performance in a range of areas against a set of criteria. These toolkits have established definitions of basic, better and advance practice in a wide range of areas. Evidence has been provided to support staff judgement on how we are performing. All published best value audits to date have been analysed and best practice and areas for improvement in each of the published audits have been identified. The work to date will support a Chief Officer Workshop in November to develop a BV Improvement Plan.
- Development of the Annual Performance Report 2017/18 as a visually accessible document.
- Support for the development of a new Council Plan including the creation of the plan on a page and a narrative for staff and the public.
- The development and production of a revised Performance Management Framework including an e-learning performance management module for all staff.
- Analysis and reporting of the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) 2016/17 supported Directorates to review and prioritise their improvements in relation to the LGBF.
- Elections- highlights include planning for the current review of Polling Districts and Places in the North Ayrshire voting area, and the renewal of the Pan Ayrshire Electoral Services Framework contract. .
- The Ayrshire Area Support Team, on behalf of all three Ayrshire authorities, carried out an extensive annual Children's Panel recruitment exercise.
- Our Fair for All Advisory Panel and Steering Group has continued to support the delivery of the Fair for All Strategy. Significant progress has been made in relation to areas of work such as the Fair for All Commission, delivery of the food pledges and the development of a mapping tool that illustrates where grants and benefits are paid. A flash report template has been developed to capture progress across the pledges in a consistent way. It has been agreed that a "one year on" report will be created so that our progress can be shared publically. There will also be a Community Planning Board focused on Fair for All so that we can raise awareness at a senior level across the CPP.
- Our Locality Partnerships and their supporting working groups have continued to meet and are tackling the local priorities. A number of Community Investment Fund (CIF) applications have been developed in conjunction with the Locality Partnerships, approved by them and then been signed off at Cabinet. These wide ranging initiatives present creative ways to address the local priorities. The pilot for the participatory budgeting approach for a mainstream budget, i.e. grounds maintenance is being extended across all localities. Locality Partnerships are also linking into their local PB events, with applications aligned to CPP and locality priorities.
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- The Equality and Health Policy Officer supported the development and consultation of the Ayrshire Shared British Sign Language (BSL) Local Plan which aims to strengthen infrastructure, employee engagement and governance across public bodies, resulting in an improved person-centred, safe service for BSL users.
- For the fifth year in succession the Council obtained the Healthy Working Lives Gold Award.

### **Key Areas of Focus for the next six months**

- Continue the preparation for the Best Value Audit
- Support the process of finalising the Council Plan 2019-24
- Develop a new Directorate Planning approach aligned to the new Council Plan
- Analyse and coordinate LGBF 17/18
- Administer the induction process following completion of this year's children's panel member recruitment campaign.
- The November Community Planning Board will have a focus on Fair for All. An impact report will also be created to publically share our progress.
- Over coming months further CIF applications will be developed across the localities. We will also work with Locality Partnerships on their membership, engagement with the wider community and addressing local inequalities.



## Priority 2. Provide a comprehensive and responsive Legal Service

### Key Highlights

- Support for major Council projects including affordable housing projects and initiatives, the Quarry Road development, including completion of the necessary land purchases to complete site assembly, Ardrossan Harbour, Irvine Harbour/Ardeer, and the winding up of the Municipal Bank.
- The team also completed a number of council house buy-backs to address social housing need in pressured areas.
- An amendment to the Planning Bill has been promoted to address the status of the Special Development Order at Ardeer which remains an impediment to development.
- Legal Work has been done for North Ayrshire Ventures Trust Ltd including sales and leases.
- The Garnock Flood Prevention Scheme was confirmed on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2018 and agreement has been reached with all owners
- The Council's reviewed Governance arrangements were approved by Council in June 2018
- Pan Ayrshire governance for the Ayrshire Economic Strategy and Ayrshire Growth Deal has been developed
- Once again, in the last six months there have been no successful court challenges of Council decisions.
- The Licensing Section has ingathered data, undertaken consultation and analysis to inform the Licensing Board's Policy Statement and Overprovision Policy, to be adopted in November.
- The Licensing team have implemented the process of Minimum Unit Pricing, engaged with licensees and provided advice and assistance by carrying out a programme of visits to licensed premises
- The Licensing team, working with Communications and the Chair of the Licensing Board, has raised the national profile of issues relating to the renewal of personal licences. These have the potential to seriously impact on licensees.
- The cost of the in-house team for 2017/18, as opposed to external solicitors, continues to deliver benefits in terms of cost and organisational knowledge (in-house team are £54 per hour compared to 3 times that cost when outsourced).

### Key Areas of Focus for the next six months

- Support for the Council's capital programme including the Quarry Road Development, Irvine Harbourside, Ardrossan Harbour and new housing projects and initiatives
- Support for municipalisation projects as they come forward
- Support for the Ayrshire Growth Deal as the projects develop



- Legal support for GDPR to continue
- Progress the Compulsory Purchase Orders approved by Council
- Complete the winding up of the CCTV Company
- Legal Support for the Millport Flood Prevention Scheme as required once the consultation period has concluded



## Priority 3. Effective delivery of Communications

### Key Highlights

- In terms of keeping our workforce up-to-date, highlights include producing **25** weekly **News in Briefs** and vlogs (video logs) and two editions of **Staff Talk** magazine. The team also launched a new '**Staff News**' website, allowing both office and remote workers to access the Council's main corporate communications channels. Since its launch in June 2017 the web app now has over **6,000** 'users' accessing staff news from their desktop mobile phone or tablet and more than **180,000** unique page views. The **Staff News 'web app'** recently won the Silver Award for Best Internal Communications Campaign in the CIPR Awards.
- The team successfully co-ordinated a major visit by the Scottish Government Cabinet to Arran as part of their 'Rolling Cabinet' programme. Two ministerial visits were also co-ordinated: the official opening of Largs Campus by the First Minister and the Scottish Government launch of their Period Poverty funding programme by Aileen Campbell MSP, at Ardrossan Academy.
- The team delivers a highly effective proactive and reactive media service. We responded to **234** press inquiries, issued **179** proactive press releases, managed **21** photocalls and were on-call 24/7 to provide an emergency out-of-hours media service. This work has helped us secure **479** individual pieces of media coverage. We secured substantial national print, TV, radio and online coverage of the expansion of our period poverty programme.
- Online activity has seen us build the corporate **Twitter** account to a followership of over **19,618**. Seven new social media accounts have been created with training delivered to council teams. News items continue to be uploaded regularly to the Council's external website and Staff News.
- Working across all Directorates, the team has delivered **87** marketing projects and assisted in the delivery of **21** Council events. Key projects include Foster Care Fortnight marketing campaign, GDPR Animations, Watt Court and Glencairn House Opening Events, '13 Ways to support your friend if they are struggling' suicide prevention campaign and the Annual Performance Report.
- By the end of Quarter Two, **21** proactive press releases were issued to promote North Ayrshire as a leading location for business and a great place to live, work, visit and invest. National/sectorial coverage was secured in Commercial Property magazine for a focus on Hunterston and an Inward Investment advert.
- The **Bitesize Business** e-bulletin was refreshed and three editions have been issued to our database of over 500 local businesses. **North Ayrshire for Business** now has over **910** followers on Twitter and the **North Ayrshire Council Linked In** page has over **3,489** followers.
- Key business events this quarter include the Modern Apprentice recruitment and induction events and the re-location and opening of Ardrossan Employability Hub.

### Key Areas of Focus for the next six months

- Support the development of the new Council Plan and create a new narrative
- Support the following projects –
  - Household waste and recycling changes
  - Hunterston oil rig decommissioning site plans



- Ardrossan Harbour plans
- Strategic Housing Investment Plan – including the High Flats project
- The Council's 'winter ready' approach
- Ayrshire Growth Deal, pathfinder project and Basic Income pilot
- Irvine Town Centre regeneration works
- Develop the International Investment offer for North Ayrshire and deliver an integrated marketing campaign to promote this
- Quarry Road Development branding and communication plan
- Provost's Civic Pride Awards and Charity Dinner