



PROVOST'S REPORT

For the period covering: 5 October -13 December
2017

The attached report gives a summary and brief details to Council, of meetings and events attended by the Provost of North Ayrshire Council, Councillor Ian Clarkson.

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BOBBY RAE

I was extremely saddened to hear the news of former Provost Bobby Rae's passing.

I always found Bobby to be a Councillor who cared deeply about his community, and wanted to make a difference to the lives of those he served.

For a while, we actually worked together – while Bobby was Provost, I served as his Depute Provost so I could see his commitment to public service first hand.

His absence was felt after he stepped down as Provost in 2010 due to ill health, and I would like to pay tribute to the work he did for the people of North Ayrshire over many years.

Since the last meeting of the Council I have attended various events throughout North Ayrshire.

LAUNCH SCOTTISH DIASPORA TAPESTRY, 5 October

I was delighted to officially open the Scottish Diaspora Tapestry Exhibition in the Portal, Irvine. This wonderful exhibition was hosted by North Ayrshire Council, in partnership with Irvine Burns Club and Irvine Lasses Club. The exhibition contained over 300 tapestry panels, and involved communities from around the world who celebrated their Scottish heritage and culture. They brought together their stories and recreated them in the tapestry, hence visually documenting their Scottish connections. This is a heartfelt homage to the achievements of Scottish migrants across the centuries.

WEST SOUND CREAM OF AYRSHIRE, 5 October

The event which was held in the Park Hotel, Kilmarnock celebrated Ayrshire's community heroes. Along with East and South Ayrshire Councils, I was delighted to sponsor and present the prize in the Unsung Hero category.

KIRKIN' OF THE DEACON CONVENER, 8 October

I attended the Kirkin' of the Deacon Convener of Irvine Incorporated Trades which took place in the Old Parish Church, Irvine. It is a pleasure to support such events which celebrate and promote the ancient traditions of Irvine.

PRINCE'S TRUST ENTERPRISE AWARDS, 9 October

It was a pleasure to attend The Prince's Trust Scotland – Ayrshire Enterprise Awards which took place in Saltcoats Town Hall. It was also great to see the good work which the Prince's Trust does, in encouraging our young people to become self-sufficient and successful in business.

GILLIAN'S SALTIRE APPEAL VISIT, 10 October

I met with Les Ward from Gillian's Saltire Appeal in Largs to find out a bit more about the charity. The charity aims to raise sufficient funds to provide and maintain respite accommodation for cancer sufferers, their families and carers in Ayrshire and other parts of Scotland. In the afternoon, I took the opportunity to visit Largs Academy and meet with the head teacher. We had a discussion about the school's imminent move to the new campus next year.

POLICE SCOTLAND AYRSHIRE DIVISIONAL RECOGNITION AWARDS CEREMONY, 11 October

I was delighted to attend Police Scotland Ayrshire Divisional Recognition Awards Ceremony, which was held in Fullarton Connexions in Irvine. The ceremony celebrated those in the community who go that extra mile to help others.

STORYBIRD PROJECT PREMIERE, 12 October

I attended the Storybird Project Premiere which took place in Saltcoats Town Hall. This excellent project involved digital storytellers working within the community, with groups and individuals to support them to film their own stories about personal experiences that are important to them.

GO PURPLE DAY, 13 October

Once again North Ayrshire went purple in support of the Ayrshire Hospice. A huge thanks to our generous staff and elected members who raised almost £1000 in Cunninghame House alone for this worthwhile cause.

SCOTTISH INTERNATIONAL BOCCIA OPEN, 13 October

It was a pleasure to attend the Scottish International Boccia Open which was held at the SportsScotland National Centre in Largs. It is excellent to see events of this calibre taking place in North Ayrshire.

KILWINNING ARCHERS PRESENTATION, 14 October

I had the honour of presenting the Kilwinning Archers with a previously lost medal, which was discovered in a display case in Kilwinning Abbey. The official presentation took place in Kilwinning Library.

CHALLENGE POVERTY WEEK, 16-20 October

I was pleased to be able to support the Leader of the Council and our partners in challenging poverty in North Ayrshire. Various events took place over the week, which I am sure have had a positive impact on many. I must give credit to the Leader for his “better omelette” and superior culinary skills.

FESTIVAL OF JUVENILE SOLO PIPING COMPETITION, 21 October

I attended the Festival of Juvenile Solo Piping Competition in Auchenharvie Academy. Organised by volunteers, the event has now been running for 15 years, and attracts entrants from all over Scotland. This is an excellent example of the voluntary work carried out in our local communities.

ISLE OF ARRAN, 23 October

On the 23 October I attended the funeral of Lady Jane Fforde, former Chair of Irvine Bay Regeneration Company.

I visited Montrose House Care Home and Resource Centre, in Brodick and had a chat with the residents and staff, and enjoyed a tour of the building.

I also got the opportunity to have a tour of the impressive Arran Outdoor Education Centre. This is an excellent facility offering a wide range of activities in the beautiful setting of Arran.

My final stop in Arran was Brodick Hall where we had a celebratory event for the many people on Arran who were involved in the successful campaign to retain the ferry from Brodick to Ardrossan.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH, 24 October

As part of Black History Month, I attended an event in Irvine Town House to hear from Dr. Eric Graham, author of 'Burns and the Sugar Plantocracy'. Dr. Graham, originally from Ayrshire discussed the involvement of Ayrshire families, the connections to the Plantations in Jamaica and the impact of the slave trade locally throughout Ayrshire.

Black History Month in its modern version began in the USA in 1976, as a way of remembering important people and events. It was adopted by the UK in 1987.

In Scotland, Black History month is promoted by the Coalition for Racial Equalities and Rights (based In Glasgow). This is the first time in Ayrshire, which we know of, that an event like this had been organised.

NORTH AYRSHIRE COMMUNITY SPORTS AWARDS, 26 October

I was pleased to be able to welcome the guests and contenders for the North Ayrshire Community Sports Awards at the Waterside Inn, Seamill. The event gave us the opportunity to celebrate the successes, efforts, dedication and sheer hard work of all of North Ayrshire's athletes, coaches and volunteers. At the same time recognising those who are involved in making sport in our local communities such a success.

371st ANNUAL CELEBRATION – BIG PIE, VOLUNTEER ROOMS, IRVINE, 28 October

It was an honour to give the reply to the toast to the Burgh of Irvine at the 371st Annual Celebration (Big Pie) arranged by Irvine Incorporated Trades, in the Volunteer Rooms, Irvine. These type of events celebrate the rich cultural heritage of Irvine and its people, and demonstrate a high degree of civic pride.

ONE WORLD WEEK, 29 October

To coincide with One World Week I attended a service in St John's Church, Stevenston. All churches across North Ayrshire were invited to attend. The event was successfully arranged by the Outreach to the Poor Group and a collection for North Ayrshire Foodbank also took place. I also enjoyed the company of families who had to leave Syria.

NORTH AYRSHIRE ACHIEVES FINALISTS SHOWCASE, 3 November

On 8 December the Economic Development and Regeneration Board met and heard updates on regional partnership collaboration and its industrial strategy. There was also an update on progress of the Ayrshire Growth Deal. While I am hugely disappointed to see that the AGD was not specifically mentioned in the Chancellor's recent budget, I remain in hope this will be given the funding and support that the whole of Ayrshire needs and rightly deserves.

CONSULATE VISITS, 2 November

Along with the Executive Director (Economy & Communities) I met with the US Consulate, Chinese Consulate and the French Consulate in Edinburgh. The purpose of the meetings were to introduce North Ayrshire, build on existing links, and explore any opportunities for co-operation.

NORTH AYRSHIRE ACHIEVES, 3 November

It was a privilege to present the Customer Excellence Awards at this year's North Ayrshire Achieves, which took place in Saltcoats Town Hall. This event showcased the excellent work carried out by staff on a daily basis.

PRINCE'S TRUST, 9 November

I was pleased to present fourteen pupils from Greenwood Academy, and one from Irvine Royal Academy, with certificates of achievement from the Prince's Trust, recognising their invaluable support to the Prince's Trust event recently held in Saltcoats Town Hall.

AYRSHIRE COLLEGE GRADUATION AND AWARDS CEREMONY, 10

November

It was a pleasure to attend the College graduation and awards ceremony in Kilwinning Abbey Church, and celebrate with another generation of students on their academic achievements.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY, 12 November

I attended the Remembrance Sunday Parade and service in Irvine. There was a huge turnout of local organisations who paid their respects to those who made the ultimate sacrifice. The feedback from the other Remembrance Parades in North Ayrshire was very positive.

ROBERT SERVICE COURT OPENING, 14 November

It was a great pleasure to be able to mark the re-opening of the newly refurbished Robert W Service Court – a £2.8m project which was jointly funded by the Council and the Scottish Government.

The Council started work there last September, and now just a year later, we have 23 refurbished high quality sheltered homes, including a two-bedroom home for a wheelchair user.

ELDERBANK PRIMARY SCHOOL, 15 November

At the Marymass Flower Show, Irvine Horticultural Society arrange a schools poster competition. I was pleased to go along and present the prizes to the young people.

CITIZENSHIP CEREMONY, 15 November

The ceremony took place in Saltcoats Town Hall. It is always a pleasure to attend these ceremonies, and celebrate the end of what can be a long and arduous journey for those applying for UK Citizenship.

LARGS ACADEMY LEGACY EVENING, 15 November

I was delighted to join pupils and staff at Largs Academy at their legacy evening. The event looked back over the years and at various milestones, whilst looking forward to their move to the state of the art Largs Campus next year.

AYRSHIRE HOSPICE RECEPTION, 16 November

The Chief Executive and I attended a reception in the Lochgreen House Hotel, Troon which was hosted by the Ayrshire Hospice. The event was arranged to thank all those who support the Hospice, and raise funds for what is such a worthwhile cause.

SHOWMEN'S GUILD ANNUAL LUNCHEON, 17 November

I attended the annual luncheon hosted by the Showmen's Guild. It was good to catch up with members of the guild, as many of them have operated in North Ayrshire at one time or another.

THREE TOWNS MOTOR PROJECT, 21 November

I was delighted to pay a visit to the Three Towns Motor Project team. This very successful project has helped many young people gain a variety of skills in motor mechanics.

PRINCE'S TRUST, 24 November

I visited Auchenhavie Academy for the launch of its new Nail Bar. The school received funding from Developing Young Workforce Ayrshire and the Prince's Trust. These projects enhance pupils' employability prospects by delivering key vocational skills. I was also the first customer to get my nails done.

AYRSHIRE HOSPICE LIGHT UP A LIFE CHRISTMAS CONCERT, 26 November

The event took place in the Grand Hall, Kilmarnock and included performances from the Salvation Army Band, A Chaired Taste, Isle of Cumbrae RBL Pipe Band and local schools. The concert was an evening of Christmas celebration, and at a point in the proceedings the audience had the opportunity to light a light, in memory of their loved ones.

CASH FOR KIDS ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LUNCH, 1 December

I attended the annual lunch in Ayr Racecourse and picked up a cheque on behalf of North Ayrshire Council for £54,646, for children most in need here in North Ayrshire. Cash for Kids is an excellent charity and one which I am delighted to support.

SPRINGSIDE COMMUNITY CENTRE, 3 December

I popped into Springside Community for their festive celebration Breakfast with Santa. An excellent event which was enjoyed by many.

PRINCE'S TRUST EVENT, 4 December

I paid a visit to Greenwood Academy for the official opening of their new bike repair and furniture upcycling projects, which were funded in partnership with Developing the Young Workforce and Prince's Trust Scotland, to promote employability skills.

GARNOCK CAMPUS, 6 December

I joined the Royal British Legion Scotland at the Garnock campus, for the dedication and memorial service for those from Glengarnock who gave their lives in Word War 2.

CONSUL GENERAL OF JAPAN RECEPTION, 6 December

It was fabulous to attend a reception hosted by the Japanese Consul General, Mr Daisuke Matsunaga on 6 December through in Edinburgh at the Assembly Rooms. The event was attended by other Provosts, and many distinguished guests, and gave us all the opportunity to experience some diverse and fascinating Japanese culture.

IRVINE BURNS CLUB LASSES, 7 December

I attended a St Andrew's concert at the Burns Club in Irvine. The "Lasses" sang some beautiful songs, and I thoroughly enjoyed the night celebrating our patron Saint.

BURNS DAY CENTRE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS, 8 December

It was a lovely morning spent meeting and chatting with some of the service users who attend the Burns Day Centre in Girdle Toll, as we got into the Christmas spirit. I was delighted to be asked to switch on their Christmas lights. It goes without saying how fabulous a job the staff in our day services do in providing enormous help and support to our elderly community. We were joined on the day by young people from Stanecastle School, who sang Christmas songs.

FOSTER CARERS CHRISTMAS COFFEE, 11 December

And talking of great staff, it is always great to meet our North Ayrshire foster carers and to get the chance to thank them for the great work they do in our community. I had the chance to do just that when I went along to the HSCP Family Placement team Christmas Coffee morning at

PROVOST'S REPORT



Fullarton Connexions. As well as chatting with some of the foster carers, there was a raffle to raise funds for the Foodbank Appeal and a fantastic £115 was raised in total.

FINALLY

I would like to thank everyone who has made 2017 another remarkable year. It is a real honour to be Provost of North Ayrshire, and nothing gives me more pleasure than spending time with our communities. Is there a Community in your area which would welcome a visit?

I'd like to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and best wishes for the New Year.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ian Clarkson". The script is fluid and cursive.

Councillor Ian Clarkson
Provost North Ayrshire Council