

A large crowd of people, mostly young women, are gathered outdoors. In the foreground, a person is wearing a purple furry costume. The background shows trees and colorful decorations.

W E M A K E
K I L M A R N O C K

Neighbourhood Board Meeting for Kilmarnock

CentreStage, Circle Lounge
3:30 – 5:30pm 4th March 2026

Fiona McKenzie (Chair)

Billy Bowie

Craig Hume

Lilian Jones MP

Eddie Fraser

Councillor Douglas Reid

David Cameron

Richard Grieveson (Deputy for Eddie Fraser)

Councillor Graham Boyd (Deputy for Barry Douglas)

Chris McMail

Barry Morton (Deputy for Angela Cox)

Also Attending:

Pamela Clifford

Norman Gill

Karen Purves

Apologies:

Angela Cox

Councillor Barry Douglas

Lynne McNiven

Susie Chow

- | | | |
|---|--|-------|
| 1 | Welcome | FMc |
| 2 | Chair Update | FMc |
| 3 | Actions from Previous Meeting | FMc |
| 4 | Plan Submission Update | NG/KP |
| 5 | Workstream Update | NG |
| | - 5a (Alliance Funding) | |
| | - 5b Town Centre (Shop Front Pilot) | |
| | - 5c Town Centre (Shop Development Grants) | |
| | - 5d Town Centre (Tidy Up/Brighten Up) | |
| | - 5e Public Art | |
| 6 | Decisions Required | NG |
| 7 | Masterplan Update | RG/PC |
| 8 | AOB | All |
| | - Meeting Schedule to Jan 2027 | |

Item 3 - Actions Arising From Previous Meeting

- NG to circulate final version of plan to Board members on Friday following Board meeting.
- Board members thereafter to return with any final comments on plan by following Monday (24th November) to allow time for submission.
- All to feed good news stories to NG or FMcK.
- KP to liaise with RG re Greener Communities review and future presentation to Board.

Item 5 – Workstream Update

Alliance Funding	Item brought for discussion and approval	Slide 7
Town Centre (Shop Front Pilot)	Item brought for discussion, seeking approval to start work, with plan to follow up via business case in May	Slide 8
Town Centre (Shop Development Grants)	Item brought for discussion with plan to follow up via business case in May	Slide 10
Town Centre (Brighten Up)	Business case brought for approval	Slide 11
Public Art	Item brought for discussion with plan to follow up via business case in May	Slide 12

Item 5 – Workstream Update

Business Case Timetable

		Funding Starts	Y1 Funding	Mar-26	May-26	Jul-26	Sep-26	Nov-26	Jan-27	Mar-27	May-27
Platform Projects	Communications Strategy	26/27	£20k								
	Events	26/27	£50k								
	Neighbourhood Board Fund	26/27	£40k								
	Alliance Funding	26/27	£50k								
Early Impact Initiatives	Town Centre (Shop Front Pilot)	26/27	£100k		X						
	Town Centre (Shop Dev Grants)	26/27	£50k		X						
	Town Centre (Brighten Up)	26/27	£10k	X							
	Town Centre (Street Furniture)	26/27	£25k			X					
	Town Centre (Foregate)	26/27	£100k				?				
	Public Art	26/27	£25k		X						
	Addressing Anti Social Behaviour	27/28	£10k						X		
Major Projects	Town Centre (Retail Revival)	29/30	£1800k								
	Town Centre (Multi Storey Site)	28/29	£750k								
	Parks (Experiential Train)	27/28	£10k								
	Parks (Building Restoration)	28/29	£250k								
	Parks (Bandstand)	33/34	£100k								
	Parks (Youth Hub)	29/30	£40k								
Third Horizon Initiatives	Town Centre Living	28/29	£50k								
	River Development	34/35	£650k								

These are the board meetings to which we expect to bring the relevant Business Cases for Early Impact Initiatives

Item 5a – Alliance Funding

Alliance Funding – Governance and Delivery Update

As set out in our Plan for Neighbourhoods, the six local Alliances are central to ensuring that investment reaches beyond the town centre and delivers meaningful change across all parts of Kilmarnock. Each Alliance has already developed a community-led action plan, identifying locally agreed priorities and practical steps for delivery. Initial capacity funding has demonstrated the ability of Alliances to mobilise volunteers, test ideas, and respond quickly to community need .

As we move into the next phase, we propose to formalise the governance and accountability arrangements for **Alliance Funding** in a way that strengthens local leadership while maintaining clear oversight by the Neighbourhood Board.

Proposed Structure

It is recommended that:

1. Each of the six Alliances nominates one representative to act as the formal link between that Alliance and the Neighbourhood Board.
 - This individual would attend Board meetings (or a defined agenda item within them) when Alliance matters are discussed.
 - Their role would be to present local priorities, provide updates on delivery, and ensure two-way communication between the Board and their locality.
2. These six representatives would form an Alliance Funding Working Group, sitting formally under the Neighbourhood Board governance structure.
 - The Working Group would have delegated authority to shape and approve Alliance Funding allocations within an agreed financial envelope and framework set by the Board.
 - It would operate with light-touch processes, aligned to each Alliance's action plan, enabling responsive, community-led decision-making.
 - The Neighbourhood Board would retain overall strategic oversight, receiving regular reports on spend, outcomes and emerging risks.

This model builds on the governance principles outlined in the Plan — namely community leadership combined with accountability through East Ayrshire Council as the accountable body . It ensures that funding decisions are made as close as possible to communities.

Item 5b – Town Centre (Shop Front Pilot, 1 of 2)

Shop Front Pilot – Progress Update

The Shop Front Pilot remains a central early intervention within our plan, directly aligned to the priorities identified through consultation around improving shop quality, addressing unsightly units, and “brightening up” Kilmarnock . It is also closely connected to wider regeneration objectives focused on high streets, vacancy reduction and restoring confidence in the town centre .

It is proposed that the next phase of development focuses specifically on the shops at The Foregate, subject to agreement from property owners. The Foregate represents a strategically important frontage within the town centre and will benefit from regeneration activity planned over the coming year. Aligning the Shop Front Pilot with these improvements creates the opportunity for visible, coordinated transformation rather than isolated interventions.

Over the coming weeks we will engage directly with unit owners and relevant stakeholders to gauge appetite for participation. This engagement will test willingness to co-operate, explore potential match contributions where appropriate, and assess practical constraints. Owner buy-in will be critical to determining the scope and scale of the pilot, with a second option at St Marnock Square available to consider if required.

Development of a Full Business Case

Subject to the outcome of this engagement work we will bring the **May Board meeting a detailed business case**. That business case will:

- Set out options appraisal (including light-touch improvement versus more comprehensive façade renewal);
- Clarify legal and ownership considerations;
- Present estimated capital costs;
- Outline funding structure (including any private contribution);
- Confirm alignment with planning policy and design codes;
- Assess economic impact and contribution to town centre vitality.

Item 5b – Town Centre (Shop Front Pilot, 2 of 2)

Request for Pre-Business Case Spend

In order to prepare a robust and evidence-based business case, we are seeking the Board's approval for pre-business case expenditure of up to £20,000 to commission professional conditions surveys of the relevant units.

These surveys will allow us to:

- Understand structural and façade condition;
- Identify constraints (e.g. hidden defects);
- Provide accurate cost estimates;
- Assess phasing options;
- Avoid under-scoping or unforeseen financial risk.

This technical work is essential to ensuring that any proposal brought back to the Board is realistic, deliverable and represents value for money.

All surveys will be procured using best value principles in line with current East Ayrshire Council procurement processes, ensuring compliance, transparency and appropriate professional standards.

This work will be undertaken in close collaboration with the Council Planning Team, ensuring that any design proposals complement emerging improvements and the wider Foregate changes anticipated over the coming year. The objective is to align private frontage improvements with public investment, maximising visual impact and reinforcing town confidence.

Item 5c – Town Centre (Shop Development Grants)

The proposed Shop Development Grants Scheme forms a key element of our wider town centre regeneration strategy, directly responding to the priorities identified through consultation around shop quality, vacant units and the need to improve the overall retail offer. Alongside the Shop Front Pilot, this intervention is intended to stimulate confidence, reduce barriers to entry, and support both new and existing businesses within Kilmarnock town centre.

Purpose of the Scheme

The primary objective of the Shop Development Grants is twofold:

1. To make it easier for new traders to take on vacant units and begin trading quickly, helping address vacancy and footfall challenges identified in the Strategic Case for Change.
2. To support existing retailers to adapt, improve and grow, ensuring that current businesses remain competitive and resilient.

Business Case – May Board

A full Business Case will be brought to the May Board meeting. This will set out:

- Proposed eligibility criteria (geographic focus, property type, business type);
- Funding thresholds and intervention rates;
- Assessment criteria and scoring framework;
- Conditions attached to grant awards;
- Monitoring and evaluation measures;
- Risk management and clawback provisions.

The Business Case will also consider how the scheme complements planning guidance and shopfront design principles, ensuring that supported works contribute positively to the wider streetscape and regeneration ambitions.

Item 5d – Town Centre (Brighten Up/Tidy Up)

As part of the wider Brighten Up / Tidy Up workstream, we have developed a small but visible Early Impact proposal focused on repainting 20 everyday metal features around the town centre. These include railings, benches, bins and bike racks located in high-footfall areas. While structurally sound, many currently show signs of wear, corrosion and faded finishes, which detract from the overall appearance of the town centre.

This intervention represents a low-cost (£5,300), high-visibility improvement that will deliver immediate visual uplift while protecting these assets by extending their lifespan. It aligns with our broader regeneration ambition by reinforcing pride, improving perception and demonstrating active care in the town centre.

Please note that this project is a subset of the wider Brighten Up / Tidy Up programme, rather than the entirety of it. We are also using this as a test of our Business Case process for Early Impact Initiatives — ensuring clarity on scope, risk, procurement, governance and reporting before progressing to larger-scale interventions.

If approved, works would be delivered on a phased basis over six months, providing visible momentum while we bring forward further elements of the workstream.

Areas for Painting:

- Braeside Street - Academy Steps Railing
- King Street - Bins
- Riverside - Timmer Brig, Sandbed Street,
- Laigh Kirk - Railings & Benches
- St Marnock Street - Car Park Railings
- Waterside Street - Car Park Railings
- Bank Street / John Finnie Street - Bike Racks
- Bank Street - Bins
- Train Station Sign
- Back of West Street Buildings - Railings
- Portland Street - Partners for Inclusion - Railings
- Wellington Street - Old Hospital Fence
- Old High Kirk Gates
- Back of Upper Foregate Staircase & Benches
- Low Road - Car Park Railings
- Town Green Riverside - Railings
- Kay Park Parish Church - Railings

Item 5e – Public Art

Introducing We Make Kilmarnock: A Visible First Step

Making Kilmarnock Brighter – Riverside Activation

We are seeking Board agreement to take forward the proposed riverside “Colourwashing” activation as the first visible public expression of *We Make Kilmarnock* .

During site visits, what became clear is that while murals remain powerful, there is an opportunity to create something more immediate and impactful. By colour-transforming a concentrated riverside stretch of rear building elevations, we can create a bold, unified visual statement that signals change is happening now.

This intervention would:

- Deliver an immediate visual impact in a central, highly visible location
- Create something naturally shareable and “Instagrammable”, spreading positive messaging organically
- Stimulate confidence among nearby traders and property owners
- Reinforce momentum alongside our wider regeneration and public art initiatives

The riverside location is a good one. It is easily accessible, connects to key shopping streets, and extends the existing interest around New Laigh Kirk and Burns mural. Working on the rear elevations also simplifies permissions and allows for quicker delivery.

This is not just about paint. It is about visibly introducing We Make Kilmarnock to the town — showing that regeneration is active, creative and confident.



Item 5e – Public Art

Public Art, Community & Immediate Impact

This activation sits squarely within our wider Public Art initiative and is designed as both a physical intervention and a communications moment .

The proposal includes:

- Professional creative direction and colour consultation
- Coordination with local suppliers for delivery
- Photography and AV capture to document and promote the transformation

This is also a community moment. The proposal suggests a launch day where schools, youth groups, local business leaders, Board members and other local figures can participate symbolically in the “first strokes” . This reinforces that regeneration is being done *with* the town, not *to* it.

Communications opportunities include:

- A pre-announcement investment release
- Media coverage on activation day
- Case studies linked to wider regeneration plans
- A completion “picture story” marking visible change

At a time when confidence is critical, this offers a fast, affordable and high-impact way to demonstrate intent.

Board approval today would allow us to progress detailed permissions and supplier engagement pending approval from UK Government. A follow up Business Case will be brought to next board.



Item 8 – AOB

Proposed dates of future meetings:

- 13 May 2026
- 15 July 2026
- 16 September 2026
- 11 November 2026
- 20 January 2027