

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

GOVERNANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 7 NOVEMBER 2013 AT 1000 HOURS IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS, LONDON ROAD, KILMARNOCK

PRESENT: Councillors Barney Menzies, John McGhee, Helen Coffey, Andrew Hershaw, Hugh Ross, Neil McGhee, Jim Roberts, John Bell and Elaine Dinwoodie.

ATTENDING: Elizabeth Morton, Depute Chief Executive; Graham Short, Executive Director of Educational and Social Services; Alex McPhee, Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Support; Chris McAleavey, Acting Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services; Craig McArthur, Head of Finance; David Mitchell, Head of Legal, Procurement and Regulatory Services; Euan Couperwhite, Head of Service: Projects; Alan Ward, Acting Head of Service: Schools; Eilidh McKay, Chief Auditor; David Doran, Acting Health and Safety Manager; Simon Bell, Capital Programme Manager; Ann Robertson, Performance Development Team Leader; and Stuart Nelson, Democratic Services Officer.

APOLOGIES: Councillors John McFadzean and Drew McIntyre.

CHAIR: Councillor Barney Menzies, Chair.

CHAIR'S REMARKS

1. The Chair welcomed to the meeting as an observer within the public gallery, Simon Macken who had recently been appointed to the position of Auditor within the Council's Internal Audit Section.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

2. The Chair, at his discretion and in terms of Standing Order 19, agreed to amend the order of business and consider Agenda Item 9 - "Barr East Ayrshire Landfill Communities Fund" following Item 2 on the Agenda, as undernoted.

PREVIOUS MINUTES

3. APPROVAL AS A CORRECT RECORD

There were submitted and approved as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2013 (circulated) subject to noting that the reference within Item 3, paragraph 2, bullet points 3 and 6 to "homecare stewards" should read "homecare workers"

SCRUTINY GROUPS (SCRUTINY)

4.1 SCRUTINY GROUP: RAISING EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND EQUIPPING OUR YOUNG PEOPLE FOR THE WORLD OF WORK

There were submitted for information, and noted, the Minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Group: Raising Educational Attainment and Equipping Our Young People for the World of Work, held on 13 September 2013 (circulated).

4.2 SCRUTINY GROUP: PROMOTING TOWN CENTRE LIVING

There were submitted for information, and noted, the Minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Group: Promoting Town Centre Living, held on 16 October 2013 (circulated).

BARR EAST AYRSHIRE LANDFILL COMMUNITIES FUND (SCRUTINY)

5. There was submitted a report dated 4 October 2013 (circulated) by the Depute Chief Executive which advised of the disbursement of Environmental Improvement Grants through the Barr East Ayrshire Landfill Communities Fund Committee, administered by SCORE Environment.

The Depute Chief Executive provided further information in response to questions from Members regarding the qualifying criteria for applications to the fund, and the availability of information and application packs to potential applicants.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note the decisions taken by the Barr East Ayrshire Landfill Communities Fund Committee as set out in the report;
- (ii) to receive further reports on the activity of the Fund Committee on an annual basis;
- (iii) to note that the Depute Chief Executive would arrange for information to be circulated to members of the Committee on the detailed qualifying criteria for applications to the Fund; and
- (iv) otherwise, to note the contents of the report.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES REPORT: RAISING EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND EQUIPPING OUR YOUNG PEOPLE FOR THE WORLD OF WORK (SCRUTINY)

6. There was submitted a report dated 4 November 2013 (circulated) by the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services which provided an update of progress against the targets highlighted to ensure that we continue to:- (i) raise educational attainment and skills development; (ii) improve engagement of children and young people in their learning; (iii) foster and grow the partnerships between local schools and businesses to ensure our young people are work ready; (iv) support young people into approved apprenticeships; and (v) review the levels of support and challenge provided to schools and centres.

During discussion, the Acting Head of Service: Schools provided further information in response to questions by Members as follows:-

- ongoing developments directed towards enhancing the attainment opportunities for Looked After Children, including an increased focus on the nature and level of support provided to this group and further developing links to relevant partners including through GIRFEC activity;
- proposals to roll out to all primary schools the Primary Engineering Programme and the proposed development of initiatives to continue opportunities for pupils within science, technological, engineering and mathematical subjects into secondary years; and

- action taken to ensure that the impact of factors such as deprivation on educational attainment are explained and highlighted when information on this area is presented to the public realm.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note, as advised by the Acting Head of Service: Schools, that at paragraph 2.3 of the report the acronym SCQF stands for Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework;
- (ii) otherwise, to note the information provided in the report and the excellent progress being made overall; and
- (iii) that the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services would arrange to circulate to Members of the Committee a briefing paper on recently published SIMD data for primary schools.

EAST AYRSHIRE PERFORMS - SUMMARY REPORT (PERFORMANCE)

7.1 Declaration of Interest

Councillor Hugh Ross declared a non-financial interest in respect of this report, which he considered not to be significant having regard to the terms of the objective test outlined in paragraph 5.3 of the Council's Code of Conduct and remained for determination of this item.

7.2 Consideration of Item

There was submitted a report dated 31 October 2013 (circulated) by the Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Support which advised of a number of important performance measures as at 22 September 2013 (Period 6) including the projected financial position for the year, expenditure reduction measures, treasury indicators, progress of the capital programme, absence management, complaints, health and safety and risk management.

During discussion, the officers concerned provided further information on the following matters, namely:-

- the allocation, and take up by groups, of an amount of £90,000 within the Vibrant Communities budget to provide support to groups in taking forward potential projects within the Community Asset Transfer agenda;
- the anticipated level of savings during 2013/14 on the Property and Estate Rationalisation workstream, the extent of which would become clearer as the financial year progressed;
- the possibility of upgrading the running track at Doon Academy as part of the project for provision of a new synthetic pitch at the school, together with certain other improvements to allow the new pitch to be used by Craigmark Football Club for junior football matches, if required, all subject to funding being available;
- the reasons for, and circumstances around, the additional cost on the contract for the demolition of the former Council Offices at Rennie Street, Kilmarnock, in respect of the salvage of roof tiles;
- efforts being made to schedule internal refurbishment works within Cumnock Town Hall to accommodate existing bookings at that venue; the currently ongoing assessment of the heating system within the Town Hall and the cost of repair or

replacement; the schedule for the contract for phase 2 of the refurbishment works, it being anticipated that the tendering process would be complete by the end of the current calendar year; and the requirements for, and the current position with regard to, granting of planning permissions for the range of internal and external refurbishment works at the Town Hall;

- with regard to the “People” section of the report, the impact of a recent change in the approach to the collection of statistical information which meant that there was limited historical data available at this time with which to identify trend information but, notwithstanding, available data was subject to detailed analysis to identify actions for improvement;
- in general terms, the findings/outcomes of unannounced visits undertaken by the Health and Safety Section;
- the ongoing review and revision of processes to ensure that Housing Asset Services continue to achieve a high percentage of “first time fixes” on housing repairs; and
- the significant work being undertaken by the Council towards compliance with the requirements of the Cabinet Office in relation to the Public Sector Network, and the range of issues which required to be addressed and overcome, all with a view to ensuring that the Council remains connected to the Network.

It was, otherwise, agreed to note the terms of the report.

COMMUNITY PLANNING ACTION PLAN AND SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT - ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2012/13 (PERFORMANCE)

8. There was submitted a report dated 22 October 2013 (circulated) by the Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Support which presented for consideration and review, in respect of the Council’s interests, a summary of the consolidated Annual Performance Report for 2012/13 in respect of the Community Plan Thematic Action Plans and East Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership Single Outcome Agreement (SOA).

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note that the Community Plan/SOA Annual Performance Report had been approved by Council at its meeting on 9 October 2013 and by the CPP Board on 10 October 2013, and submitted to the Scottish Government thereafter;
- (ii) to note the content of the related Improvement Plan;
- (iii) to note that East Ayrshire’s SOA 2013-2015 and the plan for addressing areas for development had received Ministerial sign off and that actions were being taken forward in this regard; and
- (iv) otherwise, to note the contents of the report.

PUBLIC SECTOR INTERNAL AUDIT STANDARDS AND REVISED INTERNAL AUDIT CHARTER (AUDIT)

9. There was submitted a report dated October 2013 (circulated) by the Chief Auditor which provided an update on the introduction of the new Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) effective from 1 April 2013, and sought approval of a revised Internal Audit Charter in line with PSIAS requirements.

On the matter having been raised, the Chief Auditor confirmed the terms of the Charter in respect of joint working arrangements with other agencies/authorities such as the Ayrshire Roads Alliance and the Health and Social Care Partnership.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to approve the revised Internal Audit Charter presented at Appendix 2 to the report, in line with PSIAS requirements; and
- (ii) otherwise, to note the contents of the report.

**2013/14 INTERNAL AUDIT MID-YEAR PROGRESS REPORT AND REVISED
INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN (AUDIT)**

- 10.** There was submitted a report dated October 2013 (circulated) by the Chief Auditor which provided a mid-year progress report on performance against the Audit Plan for the six months from April to September 2013 and presented a revised Internal Audit Plan for 2013/14 for approval.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to approve the revised audit plan presented at Appendix 1 to the report, in line with PSIAS requirements, and the approach laid out to managing the audit plan; and
- (ii) otherwise, to note the contents of the report.

**CONSULTATION REPORT - EDUCATION PROVISION AT JAMES HAMILTON
ACADEMY, KILMARNOCK ACADEMY, NEW FARM LOCH PRIMARY SCHOOL
AND EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE AND SILVERWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL
(SCRUTINY)**

- 11.** There was submitted a report dated 25 October 2013 (circulated) by the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services which informed (i) of the decision of East Ayrshire Council's Cabinet on 30 October 2013; (ii) of the referral of the Cabinet report dated 11 October 2013 and appended Consultation Report dated 2 October 2013 to this Committee for its consideration in accordance with the Cabinet decision; and (iii) that any views/further recommendations from this Committee would be submitted for consideration by the Cabinet at its meeting of 13 November 2013, prior to final determination being made.

The Committee having considered the Cabinet report dated 11 October 2013, and the appended Consultation Report published on 2 October 2013, had no views or further recommendations and agreed to refer the matter back to Cabinet in order that a final determination on the proposal could be made in terms of Section 11(1) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 at the meeting of Cabinet on 13 November 2013; and otherwise noted the contents of the report.

**AWARDING OF CONTRACTS - PERIOD FROM 29 AUGUST TO
23 OCTOBER 2013 (SCRUTINY)**

- 12.** There was submitted a report dated 22 October 2013 (circulated) by the Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Support which provided, for information, details of tenders which had been accepted on behalf of the Council for the period from 29 August to 23 October 2013.

During discussion the Head of Legal, Procurement and Regulatory Services provided further information to Members relative to matters associated with the “Mechanical Maintenance and Minor Works Framework Agreement” and the “Electrical Maintenance and Minor Works Framework Agreement” with regard mainly to contractual and TUPE matters.

It was agreed to note the report submitted and the further information provided by the Head of Legal, Procurement and Regulatory Services.

Councillor Elaine Dinwoodie left the meeting during discussion, but prior to determination, of this item.

The meeting terminated at 1217 hours.