

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
22 APRIL 2015

## **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Minute of meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held in the Gannochy Suite, Dewar's Centre, Glover Street, Perth on Wednesday 22 April 2015 at 2.00pm.

Present: Councillors A Stewart, B Vaughan, R Brock, D Cuthbert, D Doogan, A Munro and M Williamson (substituting for A Younger).

In Attendance: P Frazer, D Henderson, D Mitchell and G Taylor (all Chief Executive's Service); B Atkinson and J Chiles (both Education and Children's Services); J Mayglothling and A Taylor (both Housing and Community Care); M Cochlan and B Renton (both The Environment Service).

Apology for Absence: Councillor A Younger.

Councillor A Stewart, Convener, Presiding

### **257. WELCOME**

The Convener welcomed all present to the meeting.

### **258. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest made in terms of the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

### **259. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minute of meeting of the Scrutiny Committee of 11 February 2015 was submitted, approved as correct record and authorised for signature.

### **260. FOI PERFORMANCE REPORT 2014**

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal Services (15/164), describing the Council's FOI performance for the year 2014.

Councillor Stewart noted the increasing number of information requests, year-on-year, and the costs involved in managing the process. Furthermore, it was noted that it might be necessary to examine the resources currently available in order to meet future needs. D Henderson reported that the reduction in staffing levels during 2014 had resulted in a slightly slower response time; however, a new member of staff had now been appointed and response times had improved.

In response to a comment from Councillor Stewart, D Henderson responded that it would be very difficult for the FOI team simply not to respond to a request for information as a way of reducing costs.

Councillor Cuthbert suggested that if the results of FOI requests were published online it might prevent other people submitting similar queries. B Renton responded that information was put into the public domain wherever possible; however, it was likely that no two questions would be the same. D Henderson

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commented that although requests for information might be received about the same topics, preparing the response for disclosure could prove difficult without a dedicated computer programme for that purpose. Councillor Vaughan suggested that publishing 'frequently asked questions' could be very helpful in reducing the number of very similar requests.

**Resolved:**

- (i) The content of Report 15/164 be noted.
- (ii) The FOI performance target for the Council for 2015 of 95%, be noted.
- (iii) The actions proposed for 2015 as detailed in Sections 4.2 – 4.6 of Report 15/164, be noted.
- (iv) Instruct the Head of Legal Services to include feedback in the next annual report on making FOI answers available on-line.

**261. SUMMARY REPORT ON CARE INSPECTORATE AND HMI INSPECTIONS**

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Education and Children's Services) (15/165): (1) providing an overview of the performance of Education and Children's Services inspected over the past year from 1 April 2014 to 4 February 2015 (2014/15) by the Care Inspectorate and Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI), and (2) setting out the Service's approach to implementing improvement actions arising out of inspection.

In response to a question from Councillor Cuthbert, B Atkinson reported that, as the Care Inspectorate was moving towards a risk-based approach, there had been an increase in the number of follow-up inspections resulting from a previous assessment of high-risk.

Councillor Doogan referred to Appendix A1 in respect of the grading history of day care and queried how the bar was set, when each provider was graded no lower than good. B Atkinson reported the grading was based on a national standard; however the aim was for continual improvement and grading's of very good.

In response to a question from Councillor Stewart, B Atkinson confirmed that the Care Inspectorate was moving towards all unannounced inspections.

**Resolved:**

The content of Report 15/165 be noted.

**262. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD PLANNER 2015/16**

There was submitted a report by the Head of Environmental and Consumer Services (15/166) presenting a forward planner for scrutiny at Perth and Kinross Council during 2015/16.

Councillor Doogan noted the familiar content of the forward planner and suggested a more topical approach to issues, which may be of more interest to the general public.

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In response to a question in respect of surveys on service provision from Councillor Cuthbert, B Renton confirmed that feedback on the service centre was included in the BMIP; however, the Environment Service was not subject to many statutory inspections.

Councillor Vaughan reminded Elected Members that they could ask for reports to be submitted to, or request officers to attend, the Committee as required.

**Resolved:**

The contents of Report 15/166 be noted.

**IT WAS AGREED THAT THE PUBLIC AND PRESS SHOULD BE EXCLUDED DURING CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM IN ORDER TO AVOID THE DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION WHICH IS EXEMPT IN TERMS OF SCHEDULE 7A TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 1973.**

**263. MINUTE OF MEETING OF SOCIAL WORK COMPLAINTS REVIEW COMMITTEE OF 6 FEBRUARY 2015**

There was submitted and noted the minute of meeting of the Social Work Complaints Review Committee of 6 February 2015.

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