

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minute of meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held in the Committee Room, Fourth Floor, Council Building, 2 High Street, Perth on Wednesday 3 December 2014 at 2.00pm.

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

In Attendance: D Henderson, I Innes, P Steel, G Taylor and P Frazer (all Chief Executive's Service); B Atkinson, P Davison, S Devlin, R Drummond, P McAvoy, J Pepper, F Robertson and S Watson (all Education and Children's Services); J Gilruth, C Hendry, S Rankin and A Taylor (all Housing and Community Care); A Davidson, K McNamara and B Renton (all The Environment Service).

Apologies for Absence: Councillors D Doogan and A Younger.

Councillor A Stewart, Convener, Presiding.

787. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

The Convener welcomed all present to the meeting and apologies and substitutions were noted as above.

788. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

789. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minute of meeting of the Scrutiny Committee of 1 October 2013 was submitted, approved as a correct record and authorised for signature subject to the following amendment: Article 644(i) should read "a report will be submitted in six months' time".

790. JOINT BUSINESS MANAGEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT PLANS AND ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORTS

(i) Chief Executive's Service

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive (14/512) reviewing the performance of the Chief Executive's Service against its Business Management and Improvement Plan (BMIP) for the period 1 April 2014 to 30 September 2014. It was noted that Report 14/512 had been accepted by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee earlier in the day.

In response to a question from Councillor Cuthbert regarding some information not being available in the table, the Head of Legal Services confirmed, that as this was an exception report, data would not be available until the end of the year. It was noted that in future exception reports, information would be included advising which data was not available.

Resolved:

The contents of the Chief Executive's Service six-month performance summary against its Business Management and Improvement Plan (BMIP) for the period 1 April 2014 to 30 September 2014 as set out in Report 14/512 be accepted.

(ii) Education and Children's Services

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (14/458) reviewing the performance of Education and Children's Services against its Business Management and Improvement Plan (BMIP) for the period 1 April 2014 to September 2014. It was noted that Report 14/458 had been accepted by the Lifelong Learning Committee on 29 October 2014.

Councillor Stewart referred to the high target in 2014/15 in respect of initial child protection case conferences and asked for reassurance that the needs of children and young people were being met. The Depute Director (Education and Children's Services) acknowledged that production of the initial assessments needed to be quicker; however, proactive action was being taken to ensure that no child was left waiting for assessment.

In response to a question from Councillor Williamson about encouraging female participation in sport beyond the age of 13 years; F Robertson reported that an evaluation of barriers to participation was currently being undertaken to help build on the legacy of the Commonwealth Games and other sporting events in 2014.

Councillor Kellas asked for an explanation of the target figure for visits to online library services in 2014/15 compared to the number of visits in 2013/14. F Robertson referred to the dramatic increase in online use, which had not been fully understood at the time of the review of the library service. There were a number of new services launched in 2013/14; however, after an initial surge in take-up, the numbers of visits tailed off. The figure for 2014/15 was based on the reduced visitor numbers.

Councillor Cuthbert asked for more information on the impact of the new library opening hours on visitor numbers. F Robertson reported that the effect of the changes continued to be monitored and assessed and would be reported back to the Lifelong Learning Committee in 2015. Councillor Vaughan suggested that benchmarking against other local authorities could be included in future reports in order to assess how services were being used overall.

Resolved:

- (i) The contents of the Education and Children's services six-month performance summary against its Business Management and Improvement Plan (BMIP) for the period 1 April 2014 to 30 September 2014, as set out in Report 14/458, be accepted.
- (ii) The Executive Director (Education and Children's Services) be requested to submit the report on the impact of new library opening hours on library usage to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee following consideration by the Lifelong Learning Committee.

(iii) The Environment Service

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Environment) (14/481) reviewing the performance of The Environment Service against its Business Management and Improvement Plan (BMIP) for the period 1 April 2014 to 30 September 2014. It was noted that Report 14/481 had been accepted by the Community Safety Committee on 5 November 2014 and by the Environment Committee and Enterprise and Infrastructure Committee at their meetings on 12 November 2014.

In response to a question from Councillor Stewart, B Renton reported that she was confident that the Vacant Property Feasibility Grants, which had been agreed, would enable the target for vacant properties in 2014/15 to be achieved.

Resolved:

The contents of The Environment Service's six-month performance summary against its Business Management and Improvement Plan (BMIP) for the period 1 April 2014 to 30 September 2014, as set out in Report 14/481, be accepted.

(iv) Housing and Community Care

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Housing and Community Care) (14/449) reviewing the performance of Housing and Community Care against its Business Management and Improvement Plan (BMIP) for the Period 1 April 2014 to 30 September 2014. It was noted that Report 14/449 had been approved by the Housing and Health Committee on 29 October 2014 and by the Community Safety Committee on 5 November 2014.

Resolved:

The contents of Housing and Community Care six-month performance summary against its Business Management and Improvement Plan (BMIP) for the period 1 April 2014 to 30 September 2014, as set out in Report 14/449, be accepted

791. SCOTTISH PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN REPORTS

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal Services (14/523): (1) providing information about investigation reports and decision letters published by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) during 2013/14; and (2) summarising information about the complaints received and determined in total by the SPSO about the Council and all other local authorities from financial year 2013/14.

Councillor Stewart enquired whether information was available on how complaints upheld by the SPSO were used to inform learning and take recommendations forward. The Head of Legal Services advised that all complaints upheld by the SPSO were reviewed by the Chief Executive and Senior Officers.

Resolved:

- (i) The position regarding investigation reports and decision letters published by the (SPSO) about complaints against the Council be noted.
- (ii) The Head of Legal Services be requested to submit a further report to the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee on 11 February 2015 on complaints upheld by the Ombudsman, lessons learned and action taken in response to recommendations, and trend information.
- (iii) All recommendations have been accepted by Services and appropriate action has been taken in all other cases.
- (iv) The comparative information about complaints received by the SPSO in 2013/14 be noted.

792. COMPLAINTS HANDLING IN SCHOOLS

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Education and Children's Services) (14/513) providing information on: (1) the complaints handling processes in schools, particularly within Stage 1 (Frontline Resolution – FLR) of the Council's Complaints Handling Procedure; and (2) how school complaints activity is scrutinised and monitored.

Councillor Cuthbert queried why the computer system (SEEMIS) used in schools to record complaints was not compatible with the Council's complaints recording system. S Watson confirmed that it had not been possible to integrate the two systems; however a wide-ranging awareness-raising programme, focusing on complaint handling, was in place across the school estate. P McAvoy advised that SEEMIS was used to record information about pupils, and that the complaint may not be about a pupil. However, staff were fully aware of the process for recording complaints at Stage 1.

Councillor Vaughan observed that the logging of complaints was just part of the process; it was important to assess actions and outcomes at the end of the academic year. S Devlin reported that the Quality Improvement Officers (QIOs) record feedback and monitor learning outcomes as part of the complaints process. In response to a question from Councillor Vaughan, S Devlin confirmed that parents were advised to address their complaint to the school in the first instance unless there were mitigating circumstances which would prevent that.

Councillor Stewart requested that further information on learning outcomes from the complaints process be submitted to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

Resolved:

- (i) The content of Report 14/513 be noted.
- (ii) Request the Executive Director (Education and Children's Services) to submit a report on learning outcomes from the complaints handling process in schools to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee following the end of the next academic year.

S WATSON LEFT THE MEETING AT THIS POINT.

793. ATTAINMENT IN PERTH AND KINROSS SCHOOLS 2014

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Education and Children's Services) (14/459) providing a summary analysis of pupil attainment for academic session 2013/14 in Perth and Kinross, specifically in relation to Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) progress with learning and achievement in P4, P7 and S3, and Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) attainment at SCQF levels 5, 6 and 7. It was noted that Report 14/459 had been accepted by the Lifelong Learning Committee on 29 October 2014.

Councillor Vaughan noted in relation to the Perth City Campus, the positive pass rates for those students who had travelled to another school for courses. P McAvoy advised that some schools in rural areas, were investigating the possibility of accessing online courses through the campus model.

Resolved:

The content of Report 14/459 be noted.

P DAVISON, S DEVLIN AND M MCAVOY LEFT THE MEETING AT THIS POINT.

794. CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2013/2014

There was submitted a joint report by the Chief Executive and Executive Director (Education and Children's Services) (14/436) providing (1) an overview of the key activities of the work of the multi-agency partnership to ensure that children and young people in Perth and Kinross were protected from abuse and neglect; and (2) the findings from a wide range of single agency and multi-agency joint self-evaluation activities, identifying key strengths and areas for further development. It was noted that Report 13/436 had been accepted by the Council on 8 October 2014.

Councillor Vaughan referred to the key areas for improvement outlined in the report in particular: (i) young people's perceptions about who they could seek help from; (ii) the NSPCC; and (iii) the opinions of young people. R Drummond reported that the NSPCC would continue to roll out its ChildLine Schools Service across Scotland during 2015 with the aim of raising children's awareness of how to keep themselves safe. The Depute Director (Education and Children's Services) agreed that it was important to hear what children had to say and that he would investigate this issue further with schools.

Resolved:

The Child Protection Committee Standards and Quality Report 2013/2014 as contained in Appendix 1 to Report 14/436 be noted.

**795. REPORT ON SOCIAL CARE AND SOCIAL WORK IMPROVEMENT
SCOTLAND INSPECTIONS (SCSWIS)**

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Housing and Community Care) (14/452) advising of the key findings of inspections carried out in Perth and Kinross between September 2013 and August 2014. It was noted that Report 14/452 had been accepted by the Housing and Health Committee on 29 October 2014. In response to a question from Councillor Williamson, the Depute Director (Housing and Community Care) confirmed that trend information could be included in future reports.

Resolved:

- (i) The content of Report 14/452 be noted.

**796. OLDER PEOPLE'S JOINT INSPECTION ACTION PLAN PROGRESS
REPORT**

There was submitted a joint report by the Depute Director, (Housing and Community Care) and E Devine, Perth and Kinross Community Health Partnership (14/524) advising on progress towards the actions in the improvement plan arising from the Integrated Inspection of Health and Social Care Services for Older People conducted during January/February 2013. It was noted that Report 14/524 would be submitted to the Housing and Health Committee on 28 January 2015.

In response to a question from Councillor Stewart, J Gilruth responded that the concept of reablement was based on what people could do without support; a six-week assessment period was usually enough to determine whether people still required home care.

Councillor Vaughan requested information on whether the work on Anticipatory Care Plans (ACPs) had been completed. J Gilruth advised that progress on the ACPs had been slower than hoped; however, progress reports would be submitted to the Housing and Health Committee and the Health and Social Care Integration Pathfinder Board, and could be submitted to the Scrutiny Committee.

Resolved:

The content of Report 14/524 be noted.

797. CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2015-2016 AND ANNUAL RISK REPORT 2013-2014

There was submitted a report by the Depute Director (Environment) (14/528) presenting the Council's Corporate Risk Management Strategy 2015 – 2016 and Annual Risk Report 2013 – 2014. It was noted that Report 14/528 had been approved by the SP&R Committee earlier in the day.

Resolved:

The performance of services in managing the Service Risks contained in Appendix 2 to Report 14/528 be accepted.

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