

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minute of meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held virtually via Microsoft Teams on Monday 29 November 2021 at 9.30am.

Present: Councillors S McCole, A Bailey (substituting for Councillor X McDade), L Barrett, P Barrett (substituting for Councillor W Wilson), Councillor D Illingworth, A Jarvis, I Massie, C Reid, F Sarwar, F Smith and C Stewart.

In Attendance: B Renton, Executive Director (Communities); S Devlin, Executive Director (Education and Children's Services); B Atkinson (Independent Chair, Perth and Kinross Child Protection Committee); D Littlejohn, S Merone, F Robertson (all Communities); J Pepper, S Johnston, J Chiles, P Davison, G Doogan, D Macluskey, F Mackay and B Martin-Scott (all Education and Children's Services); G Fogg, C Flynn, H Lorimer, D Williams, A Brown, L McGuigan, A McMeekin and M Pasternack (all Corporate and Democratic Services).

Apologies: Councillors A Parrott, H Coates, X McDade, W Wilson

Councillor S McCole, Convener, Presiding.

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

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

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Jarvis declared a non-financial interest in Item 4(ii).

3. MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE OF 15 SEPTEMBER 2021

The minute of meeting of the Scrutiny Committee of 15 September 2021 was submitted and approved as a correct record.

Councillor McCole delivered a brief update at this point, advising that, in the first instance, there would be a Light Scrutiny Review in relation to the Abernyte School Closure Review and the Review of Dispersal of Funds to Community Groups Under Emergency Powers, with the potential for further Review if appropriate. Councillor McCole advised that it was intended for meeting of the Review Groups to be held in private, with outcomes in public at the Scrutiny Committee.

EMERGENCY MOTION

Motion (Councillors A Bailey and C Stewart)

This Committee resolves that the Scrutiny Review Panel meetings should be held in public, and exceptions shall be made in any case where information

that is exempt under the Local Government Scotland Act etc. is to be discussed, in which the case the session should be held in private.

Amendment 2 (Councillors S McCole and F Sarwar)

The Scrutiny Reviews into the process and cost of judicial review into to the closure of Abernyte Primary School and the process Dispersal of funds to Community Groups during Emergency Powers, be conducted in private, with the review panels having the discretion to hold any or all of their work in public.

In terms of Standing Order 21.6 a roll call vote was taken.

2 members voted in accordance with the Motion:
Councillors A Bailey and C Stewart.

9 members voted in accordance with the Amendment:
Councillors L Barrett, P Barrett, Illingworth, Jarvis, Massie, McCole, Reid, Sarwar and Smith.

Resolved:

In accordance with the Amendment.

4. UPDATE BY ARMS LENGTH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

(i) Update by Horsecross Arts Ltd.

There was a slide-based presentation delivered by Willie Anderson, Head of Finance and Administration, Colin Hood, Chair, and Chris Glasgow, Head of External Relations, Horsecross Arts Ltd. During the presentation, the representatives of Horsecross Arts Ltd. made specific reference to management and assessment of economic impact, staffing and recruitment, financial rebuilding and activities and programming since reopening in the wake of the Pandemic.

Members sought assurance on matters such as equipment and energy costs, accessibility of Perth Youth Theatre to all young people, and equipment.

The Convener thanked Colin Hood, Willie Anderson and Chris Glasgow, Horsecross Arts Ltd for their attendance.

(ii) Live Active Leisure Ltd.

There was a slide-based presentation delivered by Paul Cromwell, Chief Executive Officer, and David Macle hose, Chair, Live Active Leisure Ltd. During the presentation, the representatives of Live Active Leisure Ltd. made specific reference to COVID-19 support, venue provision, work with schools and the community, financial positions, facilities and investment.

Members sought assurance on matters such as facilities at Live Active Rodney, wellbeing activities and provisions for sports clubs.

The Convener thanked representatives of Live Active Leisure Ltd. for their attendance.

THERE FOLLOWED A TEN MINUTE RECESS

5. PERTH AND KINROSS CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2020/21

There was submitted a report by J Pepper, Chief Social Worker, (21/225). Perth and Kinross Child Protection Committee (CPC), in compliance with Scottish Government guidance, publishes an annual Standards and Quality (S&Q) Report. The S&Q report for the academic year 2020/2021 provides an overview of the key activities and work of the CPC partners to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and exploitation.

This year's report describes the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on children, young people and families, how performance has been maintained, and how services and agencies have successfully adapted. This report also confirms that the CPC continues to focus on learning and improvement and has prepared a programme of improvement work for 2021 and beyond.

B Atkinson, Independent Chair, CPC, advised members that this was the first year of reporting with the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic. J Pepper, Chief Social Worker, advised members that there had been some changes to the CPC team, which it was hoped would bring a level of consistency.

In response to a query from Councillor P Barrett regarding a fall in Child Protection Case Conferences and the impact of a multi-agency approach on this, B Atkinson advised that a fall in Case Conferences usually means that the services have met the needs before having to progress to a Case Conference.

In response to a query from Councillor McCole regarding arrangements for children who might struggle to be heard, such as children with disabilities and children for whom English isn't their first language, B Atkinson advised that a number of services and advocacy were available through a number of agencies.

Resolved:

The contents of Report 21/225, be noted.

6. ATTAINMENT AND PUPIL EQUITY FUNDING UPDATE 2021

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Education and Children's Services) (21/201) providing an update on progress made in Perth and Kinross to raise attainment and close the poverty-related attainment gap. It outlines the range of measure implemented to improve performance and monitor progress of improvements, including the use of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) to support children

and young people. It meets the requirements to report on the National Improvement Framework (NIF) for education and on the expenditure and impact of the Pupil Equity Fund.

Resolved:

The contents of Report 21/201, be noted.

7. BUSINESS GATEWAY

There was submitted a report by the Head of Planning and Development (21/226) providing an overview of the Business Gateway Tayside service, and its performance and contracting arrangements. It also provides an update on the related Governance arrangements.

Roz Taylor, Elevator, delivered a slide based presentation

In response to a query from Councillor Parrott regarding availability of programmes, Roz Taylor advised that Elevator would reach out to Council's and then programmes would be available to all. Roz Taylor added that there had been an increase in reach since programmes moved online.

Resolved:

The contents of Report 21/226, be noted.

8. REGISTRATION OF BIRTHS, DEATHS, MARRIAGES AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS – INSPECTION REPORTS BY NATIONAL RECORDS OF SCOTLAND

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal and Governance Services (21/227) commenting on the annual inspection reports from the National Records of Scotland on the provision of registration services in the Perth and Kinross Council area in 2019.

Resolved:

The contents of Report 21/227, be noted.

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