

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
18 SEPTEMBER 2013

## **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Minute of Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held in the Committee Room, Fourth Floor, Council Building, 2 High Street, Perth on Wednesday 18 September 2013 at 2.00pm.

Present: Councillors A Stewart, D Doogan, A Munro, D Cuthbert, B Vaughan and A Younger.

In Attendance: G Taylor, I Innes, P Dickson, D Henderson and P Frazer (all Chief Executive's Service); B Atkinson, S Devlin, J Gilchrist, S Watson (Education and Children's Services); D Burke (Housing and Community Care) and B Renton (the Environment Service).

Also in Attendance: Councillor J Kellas

Apologies for Absence: Councillor M Barnacle and Mr I Jackson.

Councillor A Stewart, Convener, Presiding.

### **534. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

### **535. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minute of meeting of the Scrutiny Committee of 12 June 2013 was submitted, approved as a correct record and authorised for signature.

### **536. SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2012/13**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive (13/440) providing an overview of how the Perth and Kinross Community Planning Partnership had performed against the Single Outcome Agreement 2009-2011 for the period 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013.

Councillor Stewart referred to the decrease in the number of young people achieving a Duke of Edinburgh Award and queried how the Council could ensure that young people had the opportunity to participate in the scheme. J Gilchrist responded that the figures fluctuated according to the number of competing awards available and that the Duke of Edinburgh Award took longer to complete. However, an increase in the number of young people taking the Duke of Edinburgh Award this year was expected. S Devlin added that the figures were influenced by individual choice and the other opportunities available to young people.

Councillor Vaughan commented that, although a number of partner organisations were listed on the front of the performance report, reading some sections gave the impression that it was reporting on individual Perth and Kinross

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
18 SEPTEMBER 2013

Council initiatives. She sought an assurance on how reporting was being replicated in partner organisations and how, in the future, would scrutiny of the partnerships be undertaken. B Renton responded that the intention was to reflect all partnership working; however it had been difficult to obtain information from Police Scotland and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service due to their recent reorganisation.

D Burke reported that this would be the last report in this format. Each of the four new Outcome Delivery Groups would have a work stream feeding into a more dynamic reporting structure in the future.

In response to a question from Councillor Vaughan, D Burke confirmed that there was a ten month delay in NHS indicators as they were subject to validation by the NHS at national level. It was hoped to reach agreement with NHS Tayside to use non-validated data for future reporting.

Councillor Doogan referred to the Council's role in securing additional investment in the St John's Shopping Centre in Perth. B Renton confirmed that there had been no financial commitment from the Council; however, as a part-owner of the Centre, the Council had played an active part in encouraging new investment. In response to a further question from Councillor Doogan, B Renton reported that work to date on vacant commercial property had been very successful and Perth had one of the lowest town centre vacancy rates in Scotland.

Councillor Doogan referred to investment in the school estate and the award of £15 million by the Scottish Futures Trust and queried whether this figure was included in the £104.4 million Schools Estate Programme 2012/13 – 2019/20. B Renton advised that she would provide confirmation to Councillor Doogan outwith the meeting.

Councillor Doogan further queried how the Council could develop a better understanding of young peoples' destinations at age 16 and the value of training and employment options open to them. S Devlin responded that many young people opted to remain at school because they were unable to obtain employment. The Council placed equal value on vocational training and academic study; however, academic study was not suitable for all students therefore a range of vocational training opportunities were required. B Atkinson advised Councillor Doogan that Education and Children's Services could provide more information on destinations at age 16.

In response to a question from Councillor Vaughan, B Renton confirmed that the 203 people supported into employment by The Hub had been sustained in their jobs. Councillor Vaughan requested that information on the sustainability of employment be included in future reports.

In response to a question from Councillor Younger, B Atkinson reported that to date the responses to Big Listen 2 had been higher than those to Big Listen 1 at the same stage. The aim of the Big Listen 2 initiative was to engage with non-users of services to try and discover why they did not engage with what was on offer. Councillor Younger queried if everything possible was being done to promote events to ensure people heard about them. S Devlin reported that Cultural and Community

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
18 SEPTEMBER 2013

Services had developed an app for smart phones and tablets to promote events and the Council's Twitter account provided another source of information. S Devlin would provide more information to Councillor Younger outwith the meeting.

**Resolved:**

- (i) The Single Outcome Agreement Annual Performance Report 2012/13 as appended to Report 13/440 be noted.
- (ii) It be noted that the Single Outcome Agreement Annual Performance Report 2012/13 as appended to Report 13/440 was considered by the Council at its meeting on 26 June 2013.

**537. FOLLOW UP REPORT TO THE THIRD SCRUTINY REVIEW OF LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS AND CUSTOMER FEEDBACK**

There was submitted a report by the Depute Director (Environment Service) (13/441) providing a progress update on the recommendations which were made as part of the review.

Councillor Vaughan referred to Recommendation Three of the review and suggested that it would be useful to have more information on what had been learned, and improved, as a result of a complaint. She requested that some case studies be circulated to members of the Committee.

In response to a question from Councillor Cuthbert, D Burke reported that the Council's new Centre for Innovation and Improvement which would be launched later in September 2013, would work through existing structures to empower front-line staff to make improvements in their area of work. Staff will contribute to the development of processes to resolve problems. A report will be submitted to Council early in 2014 on what has been learned through the improvement journey.

**Resolved:**

- (i) The content of Report 13/441 be noted.
- (ii) The Depute Director (Environment Services) be requested to circulate case studies in respect of learning outcomes to members of the Scrutiny Committee.

**538. COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE PROGRESS REPORT**

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal Services (13/442) outlining the performance of the new Council Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) during the first three months of implementation – April 2013 to June 2013.

Councillor Vaughan requested clarification on how complaints from parents to individual teachers would be captured in the system in order to inform the Committee of progress. S Devlin confirmed that mechanisms were in place to ensure all front-line complaints across Education and Children's Services were captured. Councillor Vaughan requested that this aspect of the complaints handling process be included in subsequent reports to Committee.

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
18 SEPTEMBER 2013

In response to Councillor Cuthbert, P Dickson confirmed that complaint information from all recording systems across the Council would be included in the quarterly CHP report to the Executive Officer Team and Senior Management Team. Councillor Cuthbert also asked if the Committee could also receive reports quarterly rather than annually. Councillor Stewart advised that the annual reporting cycle had previously been agreed by Council.

In response to further questions from Councillor Cuthbert, I Innes confirmed that meeting the five day target for Front Line Resolution (FLR) had been challenging; however, he was hopeful that the numbers completed within the timescale would improve over time.

**Resolved:**

- (i) The content of Report 13/442 be noted.
- (ii) It be noted that an annual performance report will be submitted to the Scrutiny Committee.

**539. COUNCIL COMPLAINTS REPORT FOR APRIL 2012 – MARCH 2013**

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal Services (13/443) outlining the performance of the Council Complaints Procedure for the period April 2012 to March 2013.

**Resolved:**

The content of Report 13/443 be noted.

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