

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
30 NOVEMBER 2016

## **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Minute of meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held in the Gannochy Suite, Dewar's Centre, Glover Street, Perth on Wednesday 30 November 2016 at 2.00pm.

Present: Councillors B Vaughan, K Baird, D Cuthbert, D Doogan and A Younger.

In Attendance: C Jolly, K McNamara and B Renton (all The Environment Service); J Chiles, P Davison, S Devlin, R Drummond, R Hill (up to and including Art. 817), J Pepper and S Watson (up to and including Art. 818), (all Education and Children's Services); H Rheinallt, L Simpson and G Taylor (all Corporate and Democratic Services); L Cameron (up to and including Art. 816), C Hendry and A Taylor (all Housing and Community Care).

Apologies for Absence: Councillors J Flynn and A Munro.

Councillor B Vaughan, Convener, Presiding

### **812. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

The Convener welcomed all those present to the meeting. Apologies for absence were noted as above.

### **813. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

### **814. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minute of meeting of the Scrutiny Committee of 21 September (Arts. 652-659) was submitted, approved as a correct record and authorised for signature.

### **815. CORPORATE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2015/16**

There was submitted a report by the Depute Chief Executive, Environment (Sustainability, Strategic and Entrepreneurial Development) (16/535) providing an overview of how the Council and the Community Planning Partnership have performed against the shared strategic objectives for Perth and Kinross as set out within the Single Outcome Agreement 2013-2023 and the Council's Corporate Plan 2013-2018, for the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016.

In response to a query from Councillor Cuthbert regarding the availability of comparator data for the rate of smoking amongst pregnant women, K McNamara advised that only one year's data is available as the performance indicator used by the NHS has changed.

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Councillor Doogan highlighted the forecasted increase in the number of single young people presenting as homeless. L Cameron advised that the indicator takes into account the factors leading to homelessness, and therefore the forecasted figure remains high due to current issues such as welfare changes and the affordability of housing.

In response to a query from Councillor Doogan regarding the correlation between the ambition to increase both average monthly earnings and employment in food and drink sectors, B Renton responded that the food and drink park is an important part of the Tay Cities Deal, and that the current approach to the creation of jobs can generate a higher level of incomes.

The Convener raised concerns regarding the future availability of the EU-funded LEADER programme. B Renton provided assurance that both the Scottish and UK Governments had guaranteed that the funding for this round of the programmes will continue until 2020/2021.

In response to a query from Councillor Doogan regarding the increase in cost per dwelling of collecting Council Tax, A Taylor responded that the service centre costs of collecting Council Tax had recently been allocated to this indicator. He provided assurance that continuing work is being done to make the collection of Council Tax more efficient, for example through the use of electronic transactions.

The Convener queried whether the amount of on target or improving indicators suggested that the targets were not aspirational enough. B Renton responded that although this is taken into account during consideration of the targets, other factors are also taken into account, such as future financial challenges in terms of budget availability.

**Resolved:**

- (i) The Perth and Kinross Annual Performance Report 2015/16, attached as Appendix 1 to Report 16/535, be approved.
- (ii) It be noted that the Perth and Kinross Annual Performance Report 2015/16, attached as Appendix 1 to Report 16/535, will be submitted to the Community Planning Partnership Board meeting on 2 December 2016.
- (iii) It be agreed that reporting on the Council's Best Value Duties will in future be presented through progress updates on the Council's Business Plan.

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**816. JOINT BUSINESS MANAGEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT PLANS AND ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORTS – SIX MONTH PERFORMANCE SUMMARY**

**(i) Education and Children's Services**

There was submitted a report by the Director (Education and Children's Services) (16/480) reviewing the performance of Education and Children's Services against its Business Management and Improvement Plan (BMIP) for the period 1 April 2016 to 30 September 2016. It was noted that Report 16/480 had been accepted by the Lifelong Learning Committee on 2 November 2016.

In response to a query from Councillor Doogan regarding the effectiveness of measures being taken to increase the number of visits to museums and galleries, S Devlin responded that the PLAYER event had exceeded expectations in this regard, and agreed to provide further information. The Convener highlighted that representatives from Culture Perth and Kinross, Live Active Leisure Ltd and Horsecross Arts Ltd will be invited to speak at future meetings of the Committee.

**Resolved:**

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 2016 to 30 September 2016, as set out in Report 16/480, be accepted.

**(ii) The Environment Service**

There was submitted a report by the Director (Environment) (16/490) reviewing the performance of the Environment Service against its Business Management and Improvement Plan (BMIP) for the period 1 April 2016 to 30 September 2016. It was noted that Report 16/490 had been accepted by the Environment, and Enterprise and Infrastructure Committees on 9 November 2016 and the Community Safety Committee on 23 November 2016.

Councillor Baird requested clarification on requirements for businesses joining the Perth and Kinross Better Business Partnership. C Jolly confirmed that there are a number of qualifications for businesses who want to join, including the payment of a registration fee and the location of the business. Police Scotland is also involved in the application process.

**Resolved:**

The contents of the Environment Service six-month performance summary against its Business Management and Improvement Plan (BMIP) for the period 1 April 2016 to 30 September 2016, as set out in Report 16/490, be accepted.

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**(iii) Housing and Social Work**

There was submitted a report by the Director (Housing and Social Work) (16/470) reviewing the performance of Housing and Social Work against its Business Management and Improvement Plan (BMIP) for the period 1 April 2016 to 30 September 2016. It was noted that Report 16/470 had been accepted by the Housing and Health Committee on 2 November 2016 and the Community Safety Committee on 23 November 2016.

Councillor Cuthbert requested further clarification regarding the information provided to elected members through the BMIP process. C Hendry advised that discussions will take place with elected members on future indicators. K McNamara highlighted that emerging issues will be reported through a refreshed approach to risk in due course.

Councillor Baird raised concerns regarding the rise in refusals of tenancy offers. L Cameron advised that the largest number of refusals are for rural properties.

Members discussed the method of reporting through the BMIPS, with specific regard to the six monthly updates, raising issues such as: (i) the information contained in the 6 monthly reports is old by the time the reports come to the Committee; (ii) there are many performance indicators for which there is no available data; (iii) there are not enough links between the narrative and the performance indicators. In response, K McNamara highlighted the importance of moving performance indicators to a dynamic online environment, whereby information will be more current and relevant.

**Resolved:**

- (i) The contents of the Housing and Social Work six-month performance summary against its Business Management and Improvement Plan (BMIP) for the period 1 April 2016 to 30 September 2016, as set out in Report 16/470, be accepted.
- (ii) The Director (Environment), Director (Education and Children's Services) and Director (Housing and Social Work) be requested to consider alternative ways of reporting on performance indicators to allow information to be submitted to elected members as close to real time as possible; and to report the results to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee

**817. ATTAINMENT IN PERTH AND KINROSS SCHOOLS**

There was submitted a report by the Director (Education and Children's Services) (16/481) presenting a summary analysis of pupil attainment for academic session 2015/16 in Perth and Kinross, specifically in relation to Curriculum for Excellence progress with learning and achievement in P1, P4, P7 and S3, and attainment at SCQF levels 5, 6 and 7 in secondary years S4, S5 and S6.

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Councillor Cuthbert requested clarification on the drop in the number of pupils taking Advanced Higher qualifications. R Hill responded that there are less pupils, and less demand from universities for Advanced Higher qualifications.

In response to a query from Councillor Cuthbert regarding the number of those pupils not meeting targets, S Devlin advised that Perth and Kinross schools have the highest number of mainstreaming Additional Support Needs (ASN) pupils. The number of pupils who are meeting expected targets is high; high levels of mainstreaming of young people with ASN will mean such targets are unlikely to be met.

Councillor Cuthbert raised concerns regarding Perth and Kinross S4, S5 and S6 pupils who are behind their virtual comparator in terms of literacy and numeracy. R Hill highlighted that the pupils are above the virtual comparator in terms of the total tariff score. He further provided assurance that literacy and numeracy is being considered in all schools to identify where it is falling behind, and that work will be done to combat this issue.

The Convener requested that the figures for attainment by each individual school be distributed to the members of the Committee.

Councillor Doogan highlighted the number of pupils secure at third level or above in S3 in 2016 with regards to listening and talking, and requested clarification on what that meant for the outcomes of the young people. S Devlin commented that secondary school teachers, who have not been working with Curriculum for Excellence as long as primary school teachers, have less confidence in measuring the pupils against the planned outcomes.

**Resolved:**

The contents of Report 16/481 be noted.

**818. SCHOOL COMPLAINTS – ACADEMIC YEAR 2015-2016**

There was submitted a report by the Director (Education and Children's Services) (16/536) presenting to the Committee the school complaints information for the Academic Year 2015-2016.

**Resolved:**

- (i) The contents of Report 16/536 be noted.
- (ii) It be noted that work is continuing to promote and further embed the complaints handling process across all schools through ongoing advice, support and briefing/training sessions.
- (iii) It be agreed that school complaints information no longer be presented to the Scrutiny Committee as a separate report, unless exceptional circumstances arise.

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**819. PERTH AND KINROSS CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2015-2016**

There was submitted a joint report by the Chief Executive and Director (Education and Children's Services) (16/443) providing an overview of the key activities of the work of the Child Protection Committee to protect children and young people from abuse and neglect, and presenting the findings from a wide range of single agency and multi-agency self-evaluation activities led by the Child Protection Committee. The report set out the progress made against a 3-year improvement plan and identified key strengths and areas for further development. The report concluded that there was a strong capacity for continued improvement across the partnership to protect children and young people.

Councillor Doogan requested clarification on the increase in the number of child protection investigations and percentage of case conferences resulting in registration. J Pepper provided assurance that as there is a steady increase in the number of investigations, with conversion rates staying the same, the number of children on the register has risen steadily. She further provided assurance that the right children are going into the child protection system. There should be a reduction next year, and evaluation work has been carried out to demonstrate that intervention is being carried out earlier.

In response to a query from Councillor Doogan regarding what action is being taken on the most prevalent household characteristic, J Pepper responded that work is being done with Housing, and that these issues are being taken very seriously on a corporate level in the Council.

The Convener requested further clarification on the identification of young carers in the primary sector. S Devlin advised that colleagues from PKAVS had been attending headteacher development sessions to provide advice on young carers, and these had been productive sessions. She provided further assurance that consideration is being given to how the sessions can be improved and groups of schools can be better targeted.

**Resolved:**

The contents of the Child Protection Committee Standards and Quality Report 2015 – 2016, attached as Appendix 1 to Report 16/443, be noted.

**820. FIFTH SCRUTINY REVIEW – CHARGING FOR COUNCIL SERVICES**

There was submitted a report by the Depute Chief Executive, Environment (Sustainability, Strategic and Entrepreneurial Development) (16/573) providing an update on the ongoing implementation outstanding of recommendations from the Fifth Scrutiny Review (Charging for Council Services). The implementation of the Review's recommendations was initially reported to the Scrutiny Committee on 20 April 2016 (Report 16/77 refers).

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**Resolved:**

- (i) The work undertaken to implement outstanding recommendations from the Fifth Scrutiny Review, as detailed in Appendix 1 to Report 16/573, be noted.
- (ii) The rolling programme of service charge reviews, as outlined in Appendix 2 to Report 16/573, be continued.
- (iii) The Depute Chief Executive, Environment (Sustainability, Strategic and Entrepreneurial Development) be requested to submit a further update report once the reviews scheduled for 2017/18, as outlined in Appendix 2 to Report 16/573, have been completed.

**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.**

**821. MINUTE OF MEETING OF SOCIAL WORK COMPLAINTS REVIEW COMMITTEE OF 8 SEPTEMBER 2016**

There was submitted and noted the minute of meeting of the Social Work Complaints Review Committee of 8 September 2016.

**822. MINUTE OF MEETING OF SOCIAL WORK COMPLAINTS REVIEW COMMITTEE OF 16 SEPTEMBER 2016**

There was submitted and noted the minute of meeting of the Social Work Complaints Review Committee of 16 September 2016.

**823. MINUTE OF MEETING OF SOCIAL WORK COMPLAINTS REVIEW COMMITTEE OF 27 OCTOBER 2016**

There was submitted and noted the minute of meeting of the Social Work Complaints Review Committee of 27 October 2016.

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