

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minute of meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held virtually via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday 9 June 2021 at 9.30am.

Present: Councillors S McCole, A Parrott, C Ahern, (substituting for H Coates), A Bailey (substituting for X McDade), L Barrett, D Illingworth, A Jarvis, I Massie, C Reid, W Robertson, F Sarwar, F Smith and C Stewart.

In Attendance: M Butterworth, C Guild, C Mailer and A Seggie (all Communities); S Johnston, D Macluskey and H Robertson (all Education and Children's Services) G Paterson (Health and Social Care Partnership) L Simpson, L Dott, D Henderson, C Irons, P Johnstone, A Brown, A McMeekin, M Pasternak and B Parker (all Corporate and Democratic Services).

Apologies: Councillors H Coates and X McDade.

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

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

3. MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE OF 12 MAY 2021

The minute of meeting of the Scrutiny Committee of 12 May 2021 was submitted and approved as a correct record.

It was noted that there were outstanding issues on Abernyte Primary School; Governance arrangements for Local Action Partnerships and the Business Gateway and reports would be brought to Committee at an early date.

Members expressed concern regarding the late issue of a report and the Teams invite for today's meeting and L Simpson explained the reason for the late report and assured members that invites would be issued earlier for future meetings. Members agreed to proceed with consideration of the late report.

4. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2020/21

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal and Governance (21/85) providing the Annual Governance Statement for the financial year 2020/21.

Resolved:

The contents of Report 21/85, be noted.

5. LOCAL GOVERNMENT BENCHMARKING FRAMEWORK 2019/20

There was submitted a report by the Interim Chief Executive (21/86) presenting a summary of the Council's performance during 2019/20 against the Local Government Benchmarking Framework indicators published by the Improvement Service in February 2021 and May 2021.

The benchmarking data helps the Council, members of the public and other stakeholders see how the Council is performing in key areas compared to other local authorities.

In response to a question from Councillor Illingworth, C Mailer confirmed there were a number of good examples when the benchmarking framework had been used.

Councillor Bailey queried the attainment gap figures and the difference in more deprived areas to the less deprived areas and asked what action was being taken to address the issue.

S Johnston advised of the improving situation and the more accurate ACORN comparator used in Perth and Kinross and referred to the Raising Attainment Strategy and confirmed there was lower attainment in more deprived areas.

D Macluskey also advised of action being taken to address the attainment gap and guidance given to schools.

It was noted that information would be issued to members on the ACORN data and the Raising Attainment report previously submitted to the Lifelong Learning Committee.

In response to a question from Councillor Reid, G Paterson advised of the multi-disciplinary process for assessing patients for discharge and of action being taken to address an anomaly in the recoding of readmission information.

Councillor Ahern referred to the figures for the number of children not reaching developmental targets being below the Scottish average and S Johnston advised these relate to children 27 to 30 months and the information was recorded by health visitors and agreed to obtain figures to share with members.

Councillor L Barrett queried the impact in the roads figures following the Council's agreement in this year's budget process to invest £4m and M Butterworth confirmed there would be an improvement in results in future years, however, sustained investment was required.

In response to a question from Councillor Sarwar on the Climate indicators and Climate Crises actions, M Butterworth confirmed an action plan was being prepared for submission to a future Council meeting.

Councillor Sarwar added it was disappointing that there was not an officer at today's meeting to provide further information as some Local Authorities had specific staff working on this issue.

C Mailer confirmed there was a member briefing arranged for the following day when relevant staff would be present to provide detailed information and respond to questions. C Mailer agreed a further date could be arranged on a Monday or Wednesday for members who could not attend tomorrow's briefing.

In response to a question from Councillor Jarvis, H Robertson provided figures for the re-registration within child protection and assured members the percentage included a small number of children.

Councillor Stewart queried the economic development investment and Perth and Kinross' improvement in ranking.

A Seggie confirmed a higher spend improved economic development and that this area had a spend below the Scottish average and agreed that an improvement to where the area ranked would be due to a reduced spend by some other Local Authorities.

Councillor Parrott stated that statistics were indicative rather than conclusive and referred to the information on CO2 emissions which were higher than the Scottish average but would be impacted by many vehicles passing through the area other than being only Perth and Kinross residents.

Resolved:

The Local Government Benchmarking Framework results for 2019/20, be noted and that the results would be used to inform the development of the Council's wider performance management and planning framework.

6. DATA PROTECTION COMPLIANCE 2019/20

There was submitted a report by the Data Protection Officer (21/87) providing a professional assessment of the Council's compliance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) for 2020/21, as required by legislation.

D Henderson referred to the impact of the pandemic on data protection with staff using new technology and required to adopt new ways of working.

Following discussion on the types of data breaches, Councillor McCole suggested refresher training for staff and Councillors on data breaches.

It was noted that this would be D Henderson's last meeting of the Scrutiny Committee and the Convener wished him a long and happy retirement.

Resolved:

The contents of Report 21/87, be noted.

DRAFT