

**COMMUNITY SERVICES STANDING SCRUTINY PANEL.**

Minutes of meeting in County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr,  
on 24th August 2011 at 10.00 a.m.

- Present: Councillors Hugh Hunter (Chair), Ian Douglas, Ann Galbraith, Elaine Little, Alec Oattes and Philip Saxton.
- Apologies: Councillors John Allan and Bill Grant.
- Also Present: Councillors Douglas Campbell (Portfolio-holder), John McDowall, Helen Moonie and Nan McFarlane (in attendance for item 3 only).
- Attending: H. Garland, Executive Director – Children and Community; V. Andrews, Head of Legal and Administration; K. Leinster, Head of Community Care and Housing; L. Long, Acting Head of Children’s Services; D. Burns, Policy and Strategy Manager; C. Gardiner, Senior Strategic Planning and Performance Management Officer; A. Gerrish, Committee Administrative Officer.

**1. Item for Call-in – Review of Housing Options for Older People.**

Reference was made to the Minutes of the Leadership Panel of 16th August 2011 (Page 472 paragraph 4) when that Panel, having considered a report of 7th July 2011 by the Executive Director – Children and Community, had decided to agree the implementation of the key recommendations of the Review of the Housing Options for Older People as detailed in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.6 of Appendix 1 of the report, namely:-

- (1) to review the Sheltered Housing allocations process to adopt a more integrated assessment of housing and care needs;
- (2) to identify mainstream properties which had been adapted and could be designated as Amenity Housing;
- (3) to review the remit of Sheltered Housing Wardens;
- (4) to develop housing options advice and information for older people;
- (5) to work with the Private Sector to develop private housing which would meet the needs of an ageing population;
- (6) to explore the use of sheltered housing communal facilities to provide day care and community services; and
- (7) to refer the report back to the Community Services Standing Scrutiny Panel for further scrutiny of the issues that had been raised.

The Panel was advised that the report had been the subject of a call-in (issued) for the following reasons:-

- (a) in relation to paragraph 2 (1)(b) of the report, what was the minimum standard of adaptation by which a property could be designated as amenity housing;
- (b) what are the legal implication, in terms of right to buy legislation, for a current tenant when that tenant’s property is re-designated from mainstream to amenity housing (paragraph 2(1)(b));

- (c) in relation to paragraph 5.1 and efficiency savings, which costs would be attributable to General Services and which costs to H.R.A;
- (d) are there additional costs which are not accounted for within the Housing Business Plan which would impact on future rent increases; and
- (e) to consider the consequence of increased amenity housing stock, reducing the availability of affordable housing stock.

The Chair invited Councillors McDowall and Moonie to explain their reasons for the call-in and, thereafter, the Panel heard them enquire in relation to (a) to (e) above and the Head of Community Care and Housing and Head of Legal and Administration responded accordingly.

The Head of Community Care and Housing further intimated that the report was a progressive paper for the provision of support for elderly people and that it sought authority to examine the service in more detail and any recommendations which resulted in a change to existing policy or services would be submitted to a future meeting of the Leadership Panel for consideration.

The Chair then invited the Portfolio Holder to comment on the issues raised and Councillor McDowall to sum up.

Questions and comments were raised by Members of the Panel in relation to consultation, the impact on the Business Plan and cost analysis of Sheltered Housing and the Head of Community Care and Housing responded accordingly.

**Decided:** following review, that the decision of the Leadership Panel in respect of this matter be confirmed and implemented.

## **2. Item for Call-in – Housing and Homelessness Support Services.**

Reference was made to the Minutes of the Leadership Panel of 16th August 2011 (Page 473 paragraph 5) when that Panel, having considered a report of 4th July 2011 by the Executive Director – Children and Community, had decided

- (1) to approve the proposed approach to delivery of Housing and Homelessness support services as outlined in Appendices 1 and 2 of the report;
- (2) to approve the implementation of two tender processes for the appointment of suitable organisations to effectively undertake this work; and
- (3) to agree to early notification of the intention to end existing contracts on completion of the tender process and appointment of Housing and Homelessness Support providers.

The Panel was advised that the report had been the subject of a call-in (issued) for the following reasons:-

- (a) to consider whether the options appraisal was comprehensive in considering all aspects of potential service delivery and performance management, e.g. could Service Level Agreements include performance information; could existing service providers provide a more co-ordinated service using local knowledge and experience gained over many years; and
- (b) can assurances be given that appropriate weight and consideration would be given to existing service providers should some or all wish to enter the tender process.

The Chair invited Councillors McDowall and Moonie to explain their reasons for the call-in and, thereafter, the Panel heard them enquire in relation to (a) and (b) above and the Head of Community Care and Housing responded accordingly.

The Chair then invited the Portfolio Holder to comment on the issues raised and Councillor McDowall to sum up.

Questions and comments were raised by Members of the Panel in relation to existing services being provided at the present time, timescales for tenders and Service Level Agreements and the Executive Director – Children and Community, the Head of Community Care and Head of Legal and Administration responded accordingly.

Councillor Saxton then moved that the report be referred back to the Leadership Panel with the view that Officers enter into discussion with the existing providers with a view to overcome any concerns and possibly providers to work together to better the service.

Councillor Saxton failed to find a seconder and therefore his Motion fell.

Councillor Saxton requested that his dissent be recorded.

**Decided:** following review, that the decision of the Leadership Panel in respect of this matter be confirmed and implemented.

#### **Adjournment.**

The time being 11.35 a.m., it was agreed that the meeting be adjourned for five minutes.

#### **Resumption of meeting.**

The meeting resumed at 11.40 a.m.

### **3. Item for Call-in – Provision of Modern Residential Child Care Accommodation.**

Reference was made to the Minutes of the Leadership Panel of 16th August 2011 (Page 475 paragraph 6) when that Panel, having considered a report of 1st August 2011 by the Executive Director – Children and Community, had decided to agree

- (1) the development of plans for a modern Child Care Residential Unit at Caledonia Road, Ayr and thereafter, for a planning application to be submitted; and
- (2) the appointment of one Design Team to integrate the Child Care Residential Unit with planned council new build houses in Caledonia Road, Ayr.

The Panel was advised that the report had been the subject of a call-in (issued) for the following reasons:-

- (a) for further consideration and explanation of what community consultation would be undertaken and whether or not this was restricted to material planning consideration;
- (b) to consider whether the communities of Maybole and Craigie were afforded a greater level of consultation and as a consequence, whether the proposals were fair and equitable;
- (c) to seek explanation as to why the land was to be transferred to the General Services at a valuation for affordable housing when it is not being transferred for the purposes of affordable housing and the affordable housing valuation is a reduced valuation; and

- (d) why Officers have not, following Members' request, provided revenue costs for the proposed unit for 2012/13 and what were they?

The Chair invited Councillor Moonie to explain her reasons for the call-in and, thereafter, the Panel heard her enquire in relation to (a) to (d) above and the Executive Director – Children and Community, Acting Head of Children's Services and the Policy and Strategy Manager responded accordingly.

The Chair then invited the Portfolio Holders to comment on the issues raised and Councillor Moonie to sum up.

Questions and comments were raised by Member of the Panel in relation to Looked After and Accommodated Children and the Acting Head of Children's Services responded accordingly.

Councillor Saxton then moved that the report be referred back to the Leadership Panel for further consideration so that public consultation can be carried out prior to planning consultation, affording the residents of Forehill, the same opportunities of those communities of Maybole and Craigie.

Councillor Saxton failed to find a seconder and therefore his Motion fell.

Councillor Saxton requested that his dissent be recorded.

**Decided:** following review, that the decision of the Leadership Panel in respect of this matter be confirmed and implemented.

#### **4. Minutes of previous meeting.**

**Decided:** to note the Minutes of the meeting of 22nd June 2011 (issued).

#### **5. Annual Statutory Reporting of Performance Information.**

There was submitted a report (issued) of 17th August 2011 by the Head of Policy, Performance and Communication detailing the Council's performance to 31st March 2011 against the indicators selected for statutory reporting purposes which fell within this Panel's remit.

A prior workshop had been held with the Panel members to identify the areas where scrutiny was felt to be required. Based on this, a paper was tabled that gave further information on all of the areas which were identified.

The Panel worked through the report and the areas identified for scrutiny, covering the following issues to which the relevant officers responded accordingly, namely:-

- information on the contrast in 'effective contributors' between primary at 93% and secondary at 64% (SA05b040.4Li05a2 & SA05b040.8Li05a2);
- information on the Active Schools' Programme (SA05b041.1);
- the number of pupils who have been excluded and an analysis of how often these pupils are excluded (SA05d049.1 and SA05d049.2);
- the percentage of looked after children achieving awards at SCQF Level 3 or above by the end of S4 (SA05d054Li07c3);

- examples of what has been consulted upon and what has been done as a result of the feedback received (SA06a056.1-6);
- the numbers of people participating in surveys/consultations (SA06a058.5);
- the number of children re-registered on the Child Protection Register (SA07a062Li08a1);
- the number of South Ayrshire community alarm calls answered on a monthly basis (SA07a078); and
- information on the resources involved in providing Anti Social Behaviour meditation services (SA09a086).

**Decided:**

- (1) to request the Executive Director – Children and Community to submit a report to the Councillors Information Bulletin by the end of 2011/12 academic year on the value being gained from the Campus Police; and
- (2) to note the performance achieved to 31st March 2011 as outlined in Appendix A, against those indicator selected for statutory reporting purposes relevant to the remit of the Panel.

The meeting ended at 12.45 p.m.