

COMMUNITY SERVICES STANDING SCRUTINY PANEL.

Minutes of meeting in County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr,
12th September 2012 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors John Hampton (Chair), Kirsty Darwent, Hywel Davies, Hugh Hunter, Nan McFarlane and Corri Wilson.

Apologies: Councillors Andy Campbell and Ian Cavana.

Attending: M. Williamson, Head of Curriculum and Service Improvement; K. Leinster, Head of Community Care and Housing; V. Andrews, Head of Legal and Administration; D. Burns; Acting Manager (Strategic Service Planning); and A. Gerrish, Committee Services Officer.

1. Items for Call-in.

The Panel noted that there had been no call-ins for this meeting.

2. Minutes of previous meeting.

The Minutes of the previous meeting of 13th June 2012 (issued) were submitted and noted.

3. Matters Arising.

The Head of Community Care and Housing

- (1) referred to the previous Minutes in relation to the Improvement Plan for the Housing Repair Service and advised that this matter would be submitted to the next meeting of this Panel; and
- (2) gave a brief overview of the position of the Improvement Plan for Housing and Repair Service.

Questions and comments were raised by Panel Members in relation to repair services, maintenance programmes, multi-skilling and evaluation forms and the Head of Community Care and Housing responded accordingly.

Decided: to note that a joint report on the Improvement Plan for the Housing Repair Service would be submitted to the next meeting of this Panel scheduled to take place on 10th October 2012.

4. Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 5th September 2012 by the Executive Director – Children and Community

- (1) informing of outstanding issues relating to the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan Scrutiny Review;

(2) intimating

- (a) that in January 2011, the findings of the review had been presented to Members whilst setting the rents for the period 2011/12 and at that time, a number of required actions were outlined and that over the following nine months, these actions had been considered by Members through three briefing sessions and thereafter presented to Council on 7th November 2011 (Page 675, paragraph 3);
- (b) that following consultation with tenants, they reported that they felt the existing rent structure was generally fair, however, they voted for greater equality in charging policies for sheltered housing and high rise flats in comparison with main stream housing and that tenants were also in support of fixed rent increase of 5.2% per annum until 2015 to support compliance with the Scottish Housing Quality Standard;
- (c) that a validation exercise confirmed that the Council's estimated life cycle costs and anticipated replacement dates were generally correct with some minor amendments required with no net overall loss or gain to the Housing Revenue Account; and
- (d) that the new and amended Business Plan and associated addressing of legacies were implemented from April 2012 as agreed by Council; and

(3) reporting

- (a) that the Business Plan review was therefore completed, however, extensive involvement with tenants had highlighted areas where tenants would like to see improvements include greater transparency over costs charged to the Housing Revenue Account from the General Fund, improvements to the repairs service and consideration over garden maintenance charges;
- (b) that the above issues were being considered further in partnership with tenants and other interested stakeholders; and
- (c) that any future proposed changes to service delivery would be presented to Members for agreement as required.

Various questions and comments were raised by Members of the Panel in relation to the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan and if the contribution from the rental premium for new builds covers the interest only or capital and interest costs of Prudential Borrowing and the Head of Community Care and Housing and the Acting Manager (Strategic Service Planning) responded accordingly and advised that they would provide a note to Elected Members in relation to the rental premium for new builds.

Decided: to note the conclusion of the work undertaken in relation to the review of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.

5. **Update on Enablement.**

There was submitted a report (issued) of 5th September 2012 by the Executive Director – Children and Community together with an addendum report updating progress on Enablement (tabled)

- (1) outlining the progress of the implementation of the Enablement models of practice across South Ayrshire; and

- (2) intimidating
- (a) that following the encouraging results from the initial pilot in Girvan and Maybole and subsequent implementation in Prestwick and Troon, that the full roll out of an Enablement service in South Ayrshire be completed and reporting that the roll-out to Ayr locality had commenced in July 2012;
 - (b) that the roll out of the Enablement service would be supported by the continuing delivery of the training programme to in-house staff and the recruitment of an Enablement Co-ordinator; and
 - (c) that following the completion of the roll-out to Ayr a full cost analysis of the Enablement Service would be undertaken.

Questions and comments were raised by Members of the Panel in relation to financial issues, assessment of time allocated to individuals and the timescale for the full cost analysis being carried out and the Head of Community Care and Housing responded accordingly and advised that the full cost analysis would be carried out by the end of this financial year.

Decided: to note the progress on the roll out of the Enablement Service to the whole of South Ayrshire.

6. Scrutiny Reviews – 2007 to 2012.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 7th August 2012 by the Executive Director – Children and Community detailing the scrutiny activity undertaken by equivalent Panels during the previous Administration from May 2007 to May 2012.

The Head of Curriculum and Service Improvement advised that the Annual Performance Report was being submitted to the next meeting of the Council on 27th September 2012 and that the Panel might wish to examine this before making the decision on what scrutiny reviews might be undertaken.

The Head of Legal and Administration advised that due to the diverse remit of this Panel it was not appropriate for a presentation to be made to this Panel specifically regarding Children and Community activity.

Decided:

- (1) to note the scrutiny activity undertaken from May 2007 to May 2012; and
- (2) to agree to examine the Annual Performance Report before making any recommendations for consideration for the Programme of Scrutiny Reviews.

The meeting ended at 12.05 p.m.