

DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT STANDING SCRUTINY PANEL.

Minutes of meeting in County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr,
on 3rd June 2014 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors Kirsty Darwent (Chair), Andy Campbell, Ian Cochrane, Ann Galbraith and Mary Kilpatrick.

Apologies: Councillors Peter Convery, William J. Grant and Brian McGinley.

Also

Present: Councillor Bill Grant, Portfolio Holder.

Attending: L. Bloomer, Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment; C. Monaghan, Head of Policy, Community Planning and Public Affairs; M. Newall, Head of Neighbourhood Services, K. Dalrymple, Neighbourhood Services Manager; M. Toshner, Building Standards Manager; H. Gazem, Team Leader (Environmental Health and Trading Standards); B. Lawrie, Team Leader (Environmental Health and Trading Standards); C. Gardner, Senior Strategic Planning and Performance Manager; and A. Gibson, Committee Services Officer.

1. Declarations of Interest.

There were no declarations of interest by Members in terms of Council Standing Order No. 17 and the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

2. Items for Call-in.

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

3. Minutes of previous meeting.

The Minutes of the previous meeting of 7th May 2014 (issued) ([link attached](#)) were submitted and approved.

With reference to that item entitled "Service and Improvement Plans – 2014-17" (Page 1, paragraph 4), the Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment advised that further information regarding the targets for voids would be presented to the next meeting of this Panel, scheduled to take place on 24th June 2014, with the appropriate Officers being present to address any questions that might arise from the Panel.

4. Service and Improvement Plans – 2014-17.

With reference to the Minutes of the Leadership Panel of 29th April 2014 (Page 11, paragraph 16), there was submitted a report (issued) ([link attached](#)) of 27th May 2014 by the Head of Policy, Community Planning and Public Affairs requesting that the Standing Scrutiny Panel consider the second of three Service and Improvement Plans (SIPs) which have been remitted to them for consideration and revision as required, namely the SIP for Neighbourhood Services.

The Head of Policy, Community Planning and Public Affairs outlined the general observations that had arisen from consideration of the Service Improvement Plans at the last round of Scrutiny Panel meetings.

The Members of the Panel then scrutinised the Plan in detail, raising the following matters with the following outcomes:-

- (1) questioned the cost of trading standards per 1,000 population. It was indicated that Trading Standards were seen as a high performance service area and this Council's Service was regarded as one of the best in Scotland. The Panel agreed that a narrative was required to be provided for this key performance measure;
- (2) discussed the approach to pre-building Warrant application consultations and how this contributed to Building Standards providing a high performance service. The Panel noted that there had been a recent up-turn in building warrant applications and that a succession planning programme being developed;
- (3) questioned the cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population. The Panel agreed that this Council provided a very high standard of street cleaning and this was important given South Ayrshire was a tourist destination area. It was noted since 2012/13, both fleet and overtime had been reduced, with these cost savings being evident in the figures to be reported for 2013/14;
- (4) queried the conflicting performance reported against the Local Environmental Audit and Management Score and the Street Cleanliness Score. The Panel were advised that the former was regarded as the industry standard and that further included a range of aspects. Consideration would take place of what might be influencing the poorer performance against the latter to ensure that any areas of concern were being addressed;
- (5) questioned the cost of parks and open spaces per 1,000 population and were advised that the higher figure reported in 2011/12 was inaccurate due to an error in a formulae;
- (6) noted that a number of measures that were statutorily reported, particularly focus on cost and do not have accompanying measures reflecting the quality of service/outcomes that were being pursued; and
- (7) discussed the tonnage of biodegradable waste that was landfilled and noted that the Council remained confident of achieving its targets. The Panel also discussed the take up of the food waste recycling scheme and the on-going promotional and educational work that was seeking to support the required cultural shift.

Decided: having reviewed the Neighbourhood Services Service and Improvement Plan 2014-17, to request the Chief Executive to make recommendations to the Council that it adopted the SIP as presented to the Leadership Panel, with the addition of a further narrative being provided, as detailed at (1) above.

The meeting ended at 11.10 a.m.