

PARTNERSHIPS PANEL.

Minutes of meeting in County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr,
on 9th June 2015 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors John Hampton (Chair), John Allan, Andy Campbell, Ian Cavana, Ann Galbraith, Sandra Goldie and Mary Kilpatrick.

Apology: Councillor William J. Grant.

Also present: Councillors Bill Grant and Bill McIntosh, Portfolio Holders.

Attending: L. Bloomer, Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment; V. Andrews, Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation (for item 8 only); C. Monaghan, Head of Communities; and J. McClure, Committee Services Officer.

Also Attending: Chief Superintendent Gillian MacDonald and Chief Inspector Eileen Taylor, Police Scotland (for item 4 only); Jim Scott, Local Senior Officer for Ayrshire, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (for item 6 only); and Stewart Turner, Head of Roads and Kevin Braidwood, Operations Unit Manager, Ayrshire Roads Alliance; and Chris McAleavey, Depute Chief Executive (Safer Communities), East Ayrshire Council (for item 7 only).

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. Minutes of previous meeting.

The minutes of 21st April 2015 (issued) ([link attached](#)) were submitted and approved.

The Chair thanked Councillor Goldie for Chairing this meeting in his absence.

3. Work Programme and Action Plan.

There was submitted an Action Log and Work Programme for this Panel (issued) ([link attached](#)).

The Head of Communities advised that, with reference to the briefing/workshop session for Members of this Panel to utilise the Audit Scotland Partnerships Toolkit, this had been arranged to take place shortly after the Summer recess.

The Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment further advised that the report on Performance of Common Good Funds and Assets would now be considered at this Panel later in the year to be in line with the finalisation of accounts.

Decided: to note the Action Log and Work Programme.

4. **Police Performance Report and Related Issues.**

There was submitted a report (issued) of 22nd May 2015 ([link attached](#)) by the Head of Communities inviting Panel Members to scrutinise papers received from Chief Superintendent Gillian MacDonald relating to policing in South Ayrshire, including a performance report for 2014-15.

The Chair welcomed Chief Superintendent MacDonald and Chief Inspector Taylor to the meeting and Chief Superintendent MacDonald gave an update to the Panel on the Local Policing Plan 2014-17 which the Council had approved at its meeting of 15th May 2014 outlining

- (1) the local priorities highlighted by community members as concerns;
- (2) an update on financial year 2014/15 against those priority areas.

Questions were then asked by Panel Members:

- (a) in relation to Tackling Drug Supply and Misuse:
 - (i) whether a pro-active approach was taken to apprehend drug dealers and users and Chief Superintendent MacDonald advised that there was intelligence around all types of issues in relation to drug use and dealing, with the use of the roads networks used in the first instance to target those people transporting drugs;
 - (ii) the reason for the increase in detection of drug misuse and whether there was an increase in usage or Police Scotland were being more vigilant and Chief Superintendent MacDonald advised that Police Scotland remained committed to capturing these offenders and used information from members of the public to assist them; and
 - (iii) whether Police Scotland received assistance from Community Councils and Chief Superintendent MacDonald advised that officers received great support from Community Councils, members of the public and the local media and that the use of social media also assisted them in apprehending offenders;
- (b) in relation to Road Safety, how accident hot spots were identified and Chief Superintendent MacDonald advised that these were priority routes identified by the number of accidents which occurred and additional patrols were provided to make these roads safer;
- (c) in relation to Violence and Anti-Social Behaviour, whether the victims of domestic abuse were revisited following the perpetrator having been apprehended and Chief Superintendent MacDonald advised that the victim was re-visited by officers within 24 hours of the assault taking place and then an appropriate safety plan put in place which could include providing the victim with a mobile phone and personal safety alarm and providing key contacts or a refuge if the victim still felt at risk and Police Scotland would provide ongoing support to the victim;

- (d) in relation to rowdy and drunken behaviour,
 - (i) whether the new drink/drive limits had an impact on reducing this behaviour and Chief Superintendent MacDonald advised that the new legislation had an impact in reducing rowdy and drunken behaviour and also on people driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs which was pleasing; and
 - (ii) whether the time of year was a factor in the number of incidents and Chief Superintendent MacDonald advised that it was anticipated that the numbers of reported drunken behaviour would increase over the summer months with an increase in drinking in public places predicted, however, campus Police Officers in schools continued to play a large part in educating young people on the dangers of over indulging in alcohol;
- (e) in relation to the HMIC inspections, whether officers were aware of when the inspections were taking place and Chief Superintendent MacDonald advised that she was advised in advance of the date of the inspection; and
- (f) the low numbers of Police complaints and the reasons for the complaints and Chief Superintendent MacDonald advised that Ayrshire Division was amongst the lowest numbers in Scotland for complaints and that she could supply a breakdown of the reasons for the complaints.

The Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment advised that the four options for consideration by the Panel on improving awareness on local policing could be considered at the workshop dealing with the Audit Scotland Partnerships Toolkit.

Decided:

- (A) to note the Annual Review of the Local Policing Plan for 2014-17 and the results of the public consultation;
- (B) to note the outcome of the HMIC Inspection of Ayrshire Division; and
- (C) to consider the four options for improving awareness on local policing at the workshop dealing with the Audit Scotland Partnerships Toolkit.

5. Variation in Order of Business.

In terms of Council Standing Order No. 13.2, the Panel agreed to vary the order of business as hereinafter minuted.

6. **Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Strategic Plan – Update from J. Scott, Local Senior Officer for Ayrshire.**

The Chair welcomed Jim Scott, the Local Senior Officer for Ayrshire, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to the meeting and Mr. Scott advised

- (1) that work was now commencing on the development of the Fire and Rescue Service's next Strategic Plan and, at this initial engagement session, he was keen to hear the views of Panel Members in terms of the Plan;
- (2) of the potential funding gap of up to £43m which could prove challenging as the needs of the public still required to be met;
- (3) of the recommendations made by the Audit Commissioner; and
- (4) that formal consultation on the Plan would commence later in the year.

Questions were then raised by Panel Members regarding

- (a) combatting the setting fire of wheelie bins and Mr. Scott advised that he was aware of an incident which had occurred, that the Local Station Officer had contacted the family concerned and that all occupants of neighbouring houses had been requested to remove all waste around their houses to reduce the risk of this recurring; and
- (b) the different priorities for rural and urban areas and Mr. Scott advised that the priorities depended on the key risks within each area, e.g. whether the area was predominantly residential, had a hospital, was an industrial area, etc. and demand was assessed.

Decided:

- (i) to thank Mr. Scott for his update; and
- (ii) to agree to consider the Strategic Plan at the meeting of this Panel scheduled to take place on 24th November 2015 when the Panel would also be considering the mid-year progress report and to feedback comments to Mr. Scott at this time.

7. **Ayrshire Roads Alliance (ARA) Service Plan 2015/16 and Performance Report 2014/15.**

There was submitted a report (issued) of 18th May 2015 ([link attached](#)) by the Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment detailing the Ayrshire Roads Alliance Service Plan for 2015/16 and the performance report for 2014/15.

The Head of Roads, ARA advised that the performance report had been submitted to the Ayrshire Shared Services Joint Committee of 24th October 2014 and approved by that Committee and that the Service Plan setting out the ARA's visions and the challenges faced would be submitted to that Committee for approval on 16th June 2015.

Questions were asked by Panel Members regarding

- (1) whether the ARA was on target to make the prescribed savings and the Head of Roads advised that the Business Realisation Plan outlined where the savings had been made and that all savings were on target at present;
- (2) how local residents were consulted prior to yellow lines being added to a road and the Head of Roads advised that appropriate consultations were carried out with members of the local community prior to the addition of yellow lines, however, there were issues that could be addressed to make consultation more effective;
- (3) parking problems in Maidens where motorists were parking on double yellow lines and not using the nearby car park, leading to objections from local residents regarding parking when planning applications were received and the Operations Unit Manager advised that he was aware of the situation but would require to investigate further and report back to the Elected Member and the Head of Roads further advised that consultation would be carried out with the Community Council on this matter in an attempt to alleviate the problems;
- (4) response times to customers' complaints and the Head of Roads advised that the ARA responded to everyone who wrote to them and that the target was to respond to all complaints within 7 days;
- (5) why South Ayrshire's figure for complaints responded to within the allotted timescale was 25% for April 2015 and East Ayrshire's was 94% and the Head of Roads advised that South Ayrshire's figures had improved since these figures were compiled;
- (6) whether the roads surrounding Ayr Hospital were given priority for repairs due to ambulances utilising these roads and the Operations Unit Manager advised that a new inspection regime had been introduced on 1st April 2015 whereby defects were categorised and appropriately prioritised; and that hospitals were given priority for winter gritting;
- (7) whether pavements were inspected following utility companies digging holes and the Head of Roads advised that, as pavements formed part of the public road, they were inspected periodically for trip hazards and treated the same as roads; and the Operations Unit Manager further advised that there were programmed footway works being carried out whereby pavements were inspected along with the carriageways and that he hoped the information received from inspections could be put into a scoring matrix, however, this required resources;
- (8) an issue with a speed limit being 60mph where children played nearby and the Operations Unit Manager advised that he was aware of this situation, that this was being investigated and the proposal was to reduce the speed limit in this area;
- (9) the method of repairing pot holes and the Operations Unit Manager advised that where conditions did not allow a permanent repair to be completed, a temporary repair would be carried out to make the hole safe until it could be repaired properly;
- (10) how many companies had authorisation to dig up pavements and the Operations Unit Manager advised that all public utilities companies could dig holes together with housing developers and private householders putting an extension on their dwellinghouse, however, they must apply to be included on the Scottish Roadworks Register; and that he was currently seeking to appoint an Inspector to inspect all works carried out by utility companies; and

- (11) yellow and white lines on roads not being visible due to being worn away and the Operations Unit Manager advised that for zig-zag lines around schools and for yellow lines, works were put out to tender and that there were a limited number of road lining contractors; and that East Ayrshire Council had provided funding to purchase a ride-on white lining machine which would also be used in South Ayrshire.

Councillor McDowall, Portfolio Holder and Chair of the Ayrshire Shared Services Joint Committee, outlined

- (a) that there was a considerable amount of good information included in the performance scorecard, together with some areas of concern;
- (b) that, although figures were improving, a lot of work still required to be carried out and done to a high standard; and
- (c) that the Head of Roads and the Operations Unit Manager were to be commended for visiting community groups to consult with members of the public on work to be undertaken.

The Depute Chief Executive (Safer Communities), East Ayrshire Council advised that it was helpful to receive feedback from Members to enable the Roads Alliance to continue to provide a good service and that there were opportunities to improve how works were carried out in future by using new technology and skill sets.

Decided:

- (i) to note the Ayrshire Roads Alliance Service Plan for 2015/16;
- (ii) to note that regular progress updates were provided to the Ayrshire Shared Services Joint Committee; and
- (iii) to note the performance report for 2014/15.

8. Review of Scrutiny Panels.

There was submitted a report (issued) ([link attached](#)) of 29th May 2015 by the Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation seeking Members' input to a review of current scrutiny arrangements as a result of the Best Value Action Plan, including proposed changes to Panel remits and related procedures.

The Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation

- (1) clarified the basis for bringing the report to Members advising that, in order for her to prepare a report for Council on 25th June 2015, she required input from all four Scrutiny Panels Members on how they believed the Scrutiny Panels were working and ran through a number of questions the Panel might like to consider (as detailed in paragraph 4.2 of the report);
- (2) explained the different roles each of the Scrutiny Panels had to play; and
- (3) outlined the comments received to date from Members of the other Scrutiny Panels.

A full discussion took place in relation to the balance of business and role of each of the Scrutiny Panels; whether each Panel carried out the same type of scrutiny; the content of agendas and time allocations for each item on the agenda; and additional training for members in developing their scrutiny role.

The Panel

Decided: to agree that the proposed changes specified in paragraph 4.3 be recommended to Council for approval.

The meeting ended at 12.30 p.m.