

SERVICE AND PERFORMANCE PANEL.

Minutes of meeting in County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr,
on 30th August 2016 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors Kirsty Darwent (Chair), Andy Campbell, Peter Convery, Hugh Hunter, Mary Kilpatrick and John Wallace.

Apologies: Councillors Nan McFarlane and Brian McGinley.

Attending: V. Andrews, Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation; L. Bloomer, Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment; D. Hutchison, Director of Educational Services; T. Eltringham, Director of Health and Social Care; M. Baker, Head of Policy and Performance; K. O'Hagan, Head of Employee and Customer Services; J. Bradley, OD and Customer Services Manager; W. Carlaw, Democratic Governance Manager; D. Hashagen, Co-ordinator (Employability and Skills); and L. Sands, 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. Minutes of previous meetings.

The minutes of 31st May 2016 ([issued](#)) were submitted and approved.

The Chair commended the committee clerk for their full and comprehensive minute.

3. Action Log and Work Programme.

There was submitted an update of the Action Log and Work Programme for this Panel ([issued](#)).

Following a question from a Panel Member on the revised timescale for the "Corporate Finance and Accounting Services Service Review", in the work programme, the Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation advised that she was confident this would be met, unless there were any changes to circumstances. She further advised if there were any changes to circumstances the Service and Performance Panel would be informed of this.

Decided: with regard to:-

- (1) the Action Log, to note various updates; and
- (2) the Work Programme, to note the current position.

4. Progress against the Council Plan during 2015/16.

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 22nd August 2016 by the Head of Policy and Performance to allow a review of progress over the course of 2015/16.

The Chair proposed a different format for hearing updates from officers for this meeting, with each Director providing an update on their Directorate and Panel Members then asking questions at the end of all the updates and the Panel agreed this format.

Updates from officers, followed by comments and observations from members of the Panel and responses from officers are set out below:-

Council Performance.

The Head of Policy and Performance advised that the annual Council Performance was being reported in a different format to this Panel from the previous year, as it now included updates against the strategic objectives as well as information on measures and actions. The report also had a second appendix which was for the purposes of this Panel only, providing further detail on any exceptions highlighted in appendix 1.

Resources, Governance and Organisation.

The Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation provided an update to the Panel, highlighting the undernoted as key achievements for the Directorate during 2015/16:-

- Delivery of General Services capital programme was over 98% of budget for 2015/16, including completion of the Golf Clubhouse at Belleisle and New Schools projects commenced and progressed at Marr College and Ayr Academy;
- Procurement and Commercial Improvement Programme – South Ayrshire was one of the first Councils in Scotland to participate and achieved a score of 70% which was in the highest banding;
- On target for implementation of the Oracle Payroll project later this year with a ‘go live’ date in November, which would provide the platform for associated transformation of the way we work, for example, self -service for staff and managers’;
- ICT review implementation commenced last year with the conclusion of the Society of Information Technology Management (SOCITM) review and appointment of the Digital Transformation Manager. This in turn allowed for development and launch of the ‘Transform South Ayrshire’ programme of improvement and change and confirmed investment in development of ICT; and
- Employability and Skills service delivering and exceeding targets to support young people into work.

Following on from the above the Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation went on to highlight the challenges for the Directorate during 2015/16:-

- Supporting the budget process across the Council when the goalposts moved in December;
- Meeting the needs of customers and residents impacted by welfare reforms – a particular challenge and pressure for the Benefits Service and Customer Services teams;
- Implementation of the ICT review and continuing infrastructure and resilience issues;

- Asset rationalisation, including the office accommodation project – many ‘challenges’ in the delivery of this complex project;
- The ‘ESA IO’ (European System of Accounts) issue around Financial Close for Ayr Academy which introduced a delay out with the control of the Council at a key point in the project delivery plan;
- Supporting colleagues across services to implement service reviews, change and restructuring; and
- Delivering ‘never ending’ electoral events over and above usual workload.

Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment.

The Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment provided an update to the Panel, highlighting the key achievements and challenges for each service within the Directorate in 2015/16:-

Enterprise, Development and Leisure.

Achievements

- the good progress on the Golf Business Plan with a very significant drop in subsidy levels;
- the Town Centre Local Development Plan being undertaken to time and supporting the Council’s town centres; and
- the UK Government’s decision to move to a licensing process rather than a competition to become the United Kingdom’s first spaceport following sustained work with industry and the public sector by the Prestwick Aerospace Partnership.

Challenges

- the Ayrshire Growth Deal work being very resource intensive, however offered scope for significant investment in the area in pursuit of economic benefits; and
- Planning due to commence review work on the overall Local Development Plan.

Roads.

Achievements

- the improvements in parking and signage made in Ayr Town Centre to improve the access for visitors and residents;
- the completion of Prestwick Residents’ parking work; and
- the Flood Management Strategy being developed and approved.

Challenges

- Ayr Residents parking proposals being taken forward; and
- Managing the expectations of residents regarding road quality.

Communities.

Achievements

- the review of Communities was completed outlining how £529,000 of savings were to be made and would now be implemented;
- Grants –participatory budgeting had now commenced and was running well bringing new people and groups into local decision-making; and
- the Girvan Multifaceted Facility was on course to open in early 2017.

Challenges

- Taking forward the Community Asset Transfer legislation; and
- Continuing to support local empowerment work, including Charrettes and managing expectations on the progress of the action plans.

Neighbourhood Services.Achievements

- Belleisle – attendances at the park had doubled following the installation of the new play park and increased range of activities there;
- Planning permission had been secured for an alternative site for additional allotments to the south of Ayr following a long search;
- the conclusion of the Lightways dispute; and
- following extensive analysis of options and discussions with the workforce, double shifting was introduced on time and full savings forecast to be made.

Challenges

- Waste collection methods require to be looked at further due to the Scottish Government target of 60% waste to be recycled by 2020; and
- Industrial action in the Waste Collection service had been difficult for the workforce and time would be spent this year in consolidating the changes and building a firm base for future operations.

Housing and Facilities.Achievements

- A total of 68 additional affordable houses were added to the Council's stock in 2016, the bulk of these in the hugely successful Lochside development;
- The UK body Association for Public Sector Excellence (APSE) recognised the Property Maintenance service as one of the most improved and best services;
- Following the achievement of over £1m in savings during 2014/15, last year was one of consolidation in Facilities Management, and that had worked well, e.g. satisfaction rates in catering stood at 96% for primary schools and 92% for secondary schools; and
- A number of activities run in the sheltered housing for those who lived elsewhere in the local community include; Local Dementia Groups using 'The Carer's Corner' to support carers who looked after relatives, Bingo, Fund Raising, Neighbourhood Watch, Women's Guild and Community Council – Troon Leisure Classes.

Challenges

- Working to bring forward an ambitious programme to increase the Council's stock of affordable housing;
- Dealing with the impact of welfare reform and managing rent arrears recovery, where this Council was currently rated second best in Scotland; and
- Implementation of Work Schedule.

Educational Services.

The Director of Educational Services provided an update to the Panel, highlighting the undernoted key achievements and challenges for the Directorate in 2015/16:-

Achievements

- Solid progress within educational services;
- Clear vision for the service which was about closing the gap and stretching the top, however, closing the poverty related attainment gap took time and hinged on the right leadership within the school;
- Additional funding from Scottish Government focused on the three primaries with the highest levels of deprivation – Newton, Dalmilling and Braehead, and this year the funding would be extended to Ayr Academy;
- Focus was on basic literacy and numeracy and improving health and wellbeing;
- Although it would take time to result in closing the gap early indications were good; and
- In relation to looked after young people, a Looked After Children's strategy group was focusing on improving attainment and Education were working with the Centre for Excellence in Looked After Children (CELCIS) at Strathclyde University to improve outcomes, especially for those looked after at home and in kinship care.

Challenges

- Work required to be done in both closing the gap and challenging every learner;
- Need to be challenging every learner and need to expect more of all our children and young people;
- Important to bear in mind the overall context of reducing resources and a backdrop of consistent change driven nationally;
- the Scottish Government Delivery plan for education included a review of governance due to start in September; and
- continuing to focus on delivering the best education service that could be delivered, and the overall results are steady for most, with a focus on improving results for children and young people at risk because of deprivation.

Health and Social Care Partnership.

The Director of Health and Social Care provided an update to the Panel, highlighting the undernoted key achievements and challenges for the Directorate in 2015/16:-

Achievements

- 2015/16 was the first year of full operation of Health and Social Care Partnership. The Strategic Plan, outlining the priorities for the partnership, was approved by the Integration Joint Board on 2 April 2015 and an Annual Report on the first year's performance, in relation to the plan, would go to a future meeting of the Service and Performance Panel;
- Significant progress had been made with long standing objective to establish a joint store for equipment in relation to assisting with living;
- Existing work reviewing mental health and learning disabilities;
- The Health and Social Care Partnership had worked on the establishment of Locality Planning Groups in line with the requirements of the Public Bodies Act. These structures will be adopted by the Community Planning Partnership as the vehicle for community engagement;
- Significant opportunities working with partners to modernise working practices;
- Implementation of a replacement for the Social Work Database with work progressing to secure a new, fit for purpose IT system to support social work practice;
- Review of Children's Services with work started on the review aspects of the support given to children and their families to identify ways in which the need to accommodate young people might be reduced. The Centre for Excellence for Looked after Children in Scotland (CELCIS) was supporting this programme of activity;
- Care at Home Review: There had been a review of the Care at Home service and

work was now ongoing to implement key aspects of the review over the coming months; and

- The partnership was leading on the development of Anticipatory Care Planning, which involved multi-disciplinary team meetings based within GP practices aimed at supporting vulnerable people to maximise their independence.

Challenges

- Working over two statutory organisations to work collaboratively;
- In October 2015 it was necessary for the IJB to approve a Budget Recovery Plan which required reductions in spend in a number of areas. Most significant was the need to reduce the number of placements in care homes which resulted in a rise in the numbers of delayed discharges;
- The range and scope of the modernisation and redesign work being undertaken, however, the need for change was well understood. There are a wide range of programmes both internal to South Ayrshire Health Social and Care Partnership and others where South Ayrshire are working collaboratively with North and East Ayrshire. There are challenges in releasing key stakeholders to work on the range of activities and a shortage of skilled project and programme managers to support the work.

Following updates from the officers various questions were raised and comments made in relation to:-

Strategic Objective: Working in partnership to maximise the potential of our local economy.

The work on the playpark at Belleisle was commended by a Member of the Panel who advised that they would expect this type of playpark in all towns within South Ayrshire as part of any improvement plans. They further noted, however, that they were surprised that Prestwick beach had not been listed under the challenges for Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment. The Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment advised that the scope and nature of the challenges with Prestwick Beach were currently unknown but agreed it was a challenge. She further advised that the Head of Neighbourhood Services had been working with the community to find a cost effective way of removing the debris from the beach, however this was currently on hold due to finding asbestos.

Strategic Objective: Working in partnership to maximise the potential of our young people.

Following questions from a Member of the Panel, the Director of Educational Services advised that the Council were still continuing with Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) but had stopped any information sharing that did not comply with legislation and that the named person area could take at least a year to resolve following the Supreme Court decision. He also advised that teachers had voted on industrial action and had accepted that their grievance was with the SQA rather than their employer and that he did not expect any strike action.

A Member of the Panel enquired on the number of looked after children within South Ayrshire Council and what percentage of these were accommodated outwith the area and asked how these figures compared to the national average. The Director of Educational Services advised that he would pass this information on to the Panel as he was unsure of exact numbers, however, he could advise that the numbers were higher than the national average and that these had to be investigated. The Director of Health and Social Care further advised that accommodating young people outwith the authority included significant costs and that if the authority had been able to intervene earlier it may not be experiencing the difficulties it was now.

Strategic Objective: Working in partnership to maximise the potential of our young people.

DO3 – Implement the South Ayrshire Carers Strategy (2012-2017):-

Following a question from a Member of the Panel relating to unpaid carers, the Director of Health and Social Care advised that since this report had been issued there had been an update in COVALENT informing Members of a new Carers Scotland Act and that COSLA was in discussions with the Scottish Government regarding this.

Strategic Objective: Working in partnership to maximise the potential of our communities.

The Panel noted the exemplary work of the Community Engagement team and asked the Director of Health and Social Care to pass on their appreciation of the team's hard work to the Community Engagement Manager.

CM21 – Oversee implementation of the Community Planning related provisions of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act (2015):-

A Member of the Panel enquired as to how the Council would continue to support communities looking to run their own events, without providing funding, as communities would still require support and the Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment advised that the Community Engagement Team were a good support to communities in providing information to them and that communities could apply for grant funding for their events.

Strategic Objective: Working in partnership to maximise the potential of our environment.

A Member of the Panel queried the decision to reduce the amount from the roads budget by £350,000 and whether this had been the decision of officers and it was advised that this had been a Council decision and the proper processes had been followed.

SO5.2 04 Annual number of homeless presentations:-

A Member of the Panel enquired if the number of people living on the streets was due to Welfare Reform and the Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment advised that the areas of increase related to prison and relationship breakdowns, therefore, she did not believe it was due to Welfare Reform and that it was due to normal variation.

SO5.2 02 Number of new affordable homes completed across South Ayrshire in total:-

A Member of the Panel enquired why there was no affordable housing linked to developments and the Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment advised that the Council tried to develop affordable housing on site where possible, however, this was not always possible but there were also areas offsite.

A Member of the Panel commended officers in reducing tenant's arrears and wished them well in continuing this work.

ARA SA 01 Implement residents' parking plans in Ayr and Prestwick, to deliver improvements in parking provision and management:-

A Member of the Panel enquired as to when there would be a review of Ayrshire Roads Alliance (ARA) regarding how it was performing and the Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment advised that she did not recall a set period of overview but would confirm these details. She further advised that the progress of ARA was monitored by the Ayrshire Shared Services Joint Committee and also by the Partnerships Panel and South Ayrshire Council.

SO5.4 02 LGBF Street Cleanliness Index – Percentage Clean:-

Following a question relating to the reduction in street cleanliness and what could be done to improve this area the Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment advised that this Council had previously always performed well in this area and that the results had been disappointing, although they had met the Scottish national average. She advised that it might have something to do with the proposals to move to double shifting patterns, which resulted in absences and there was now a challenge to rebuild working relationships at the depots.

A discussion followed on the number of staff required to be present within a street sweeper and why one member of staff could not be outwith the vehicle sweeping streets. The Panel were advised that there could sometimes be a need for two members of staff within a street sweeper, however, where possible one member of staff should be outside the vehicle and the Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment advised she would ensure this was being enforced throughout the workforce.

Strategic Objective: Improve the way we work as a Council.

Following a question from a Member of the Panel, the Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation advised that the vacant post of Digital Transfer Manager would be advertised as soon as possible and meantime current work, where possible, would continue, with the Head of Finance and ICT taking on a more hands-on role until the post was filled.

SO6.4 03 LGBF Sickness Absence Days per Employee (excluding teachers):-

A Member of the Panel enquired what the Council was doing to try and reduce sickness absence as, although it had reduced, it had not reduced by much and the Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation advised that this Council was doing considerably better in comparison with the rest of Scotland, that management were much more skilled in dealing with sickness absence and that she was confident of the work being carried out by the Head of Employee and Customer Services and her team, also noting that the Appeals panel had a role to play in upholding decisions relating to absence on appeal. The Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation further advised that there were some areas proving difficult, however, there were a number of reasons for this and there were real improvements in other areas.

SO6.4 02 LGBF Sickness Absence Days per teacher:-

Following a question from a Member of the Panel, the Director of Educational Services advised that the reason for the reduction in sickness days for teachers was due to more accurate recording of data and better management information, specifically in the way sickness days were calculated and this resulted in this Council being closer to the national average.

Decided: to agree that there were no concerns that the Panel wished to draw to the attention of the Leadership Panel.

Councillor Kilpatrick left the meeting during discussion of the above item.

5. Service Review of Employability and Skills.

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 22nd August 2016 seeking approval of the findings and recommendations of the Employability and Skills Team (EST), as detailed in the report.

After the Head of Employee and Customer Services introduced the report the Organisational Development and Customer Services Manager and the Co-ordinator (Employability and Skills) outlined the background of the report and provided details on a number of areas including, the potential challenges faced by the team resulting from a number of different factors, including the result of the European Referendum; the key areas where there were gaps in the current service, including 'Services for People with Additional Supports' and 'Aftercare and In-Work Support'; and current pay rates of South Ayrshire Council's Modern Apprentices being out of line with other local authorities and the effect any changes to this could have on the work carried out by the EST. It was also highlighted that the current focus was on the services for Young People as the EST had only taken on the Adult Services area in April 2016. The Panel welcomed the excellent report and agreed that the information contained within it was very helpful.

Questions were asked in relation to the ESTs involvement with the Armed Forces; when the Ayrshire Growth Deal would be developed upon; and how young carers were supported by the team. The Co-ordinator (Employability and Skills) advised that the team had little involvement with the Armed Forces as young people interested in joining would usually apply through the careers services or Skills Development Scotland, however, the EST would support any young person wishing to choose that career path. He further advised that the Ayrshire Growth Deal was currently in draft form and the indication was that it should be completed by the end of September 2016 and that the team worked with a number of young carers, who were identified by schools, putting progress routes in place for them.

Concerns were expressed by members of the Panel in relation to the current pay rate for Modern Apprentices in South Ayrshire and a discussion took place regarding the difficulty faced by young people trying to further their career through a modern apprenticeship but having to take a reduction in their wage from another job, especially for those living alone. It was, therefore, suggested that the Panel make a recommendation to the Leadership Panel for them to consider the cost implications regarding reviewing the current pay rate.

A member of the Panel asked what percentage of Modern Apprentices were guaranteed permanent employment at the end of their one year apprenticeship and the Co-ordinator (Employability and Skills) advised that during their apprenticeship Modern Apprentices could apply for permanent posts within the Council and that the majority applying for administration based jobs were successful in gaining posts, however as the Council continued to reduce in size there would be fewer jobs to apply for.

Decided: to agree that the findings and the recommendations of the Employability and Skills service review be presented to the Leadership Panel for approval and to request that Leadership Panel consider the future pay model for the Modern Apprenticeship programme, and whether the current hourly rate of £3.30 was appropriate and equitable.

The meeting ended at 12:00 noon