

**Agenda Item No. 2.****SERVICE AND PERFORMANCE PANEL.**

Minutes of meeting in County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr,  
on 26th April 2016 at 2.00 p.m.

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

Attending: V. Andrews, Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation; L. Bloomer, Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment; D. Hutchison, Director of Educational Services; K. O'Hagan, Head of Employee and Customer Services; R. Riddiough, Head of Legal and Democratic Services; T. Baulk, Head of Finance and ICT; D. Gillies, Head of Property and Risk; M. Baker, Head of Policy and Performance; D. Burns, Head of Housing and Facilities; M. Newall, Head of Neighbourhood Services; C. Monaghan, Head of Communities; J. Cronin, Head of Enterprise, Development and Leisure; 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. Minutes of previous meetings.**

The minutes of 23rd February 2016 ([issued](#)) were submitted and approved.

**3. Action Log and Work Programme.**

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

The Panel noted various Members' concerns that the last meeting of this Panel had been cancelled, even though there was no business to be transacted thereat.

**Decided:** to note the Action Log and Work Programme .

**4. 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.

## 5. **Employee Engagement Survey Focus Groups.**

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 18th April 2016 by the Head of Employee and Customer Services advising of the progress of focus groups following the 2014/15 Employee Engagement Survey.

Following a question from a Member of the Panel it was clarified that all staff would be notified – via email or paper as required -that the “You said, We Did” information for the various Services was available on Rewired.

### **Decided:**

- (1) to note the progress to date; and
- (2) to agree that a further report be presented to the meeting of this Panel in the Autumn, (subsequently confirmed as scheduled to take place on 8th November 2016), providing an update on action taken following completion of all focus groups.

## 6. **Payroll and HR Business and Resourcing Service Review.**

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 18th April 2016 by the Head of Employee and Customer Services advising of the findings and recommendations of the service review of Payroll and HR Business and Resourcing (PHRBR), for scrutiny prior to formal consideration by the Leadership Panel.

Questions were asked and clarification provided in relation to the use of electronic payslips and the use of the Oracle HR system. It was also clarified that a proportion of the already approved savings from the Employee and Customer Service would be delivered as a result of implementing this review.

The Panel discussed that generally for future it was desirable that that reports that were presented to this Panel (and elsewhere) should be clear how the report was linked to the Council Plan and objectives, and how service reviews in particular linked to the overall transformation programme.

Following a question from a Member, it was noted that ICT would be fully involved in the implementation of the proposals and that it was not known exactly how far the Review would have progressed eighteen months from now, but that there were timescales under the Project Plan for the implementation of the Payroll system .

**Decided:** to approve the following for recommendation to Leadership Panel for decision:-

- (1) that the following action be taken at the earliest opportunity, for completion by December 2016:-
  - (a) that existing PHRBR systems and processes be streamlined and automated to reduce the reliance on stand-alone database and spreadsheet record systems and to improve and automate mechanisms to communicate and engage with employees;
  - (b) that the revised roles and remits, required for the integrated HR/Payroll system and for the revised working arising from this review, were finalised and implemented;
  - (c) that the necessary refinements to the Oracle HR system were completed in preparation for the implementation of the Oracle Payroll System, and beyond;
  - (d) that the necessary steps be taken which would enable and require operational services to directly input information relating to sickness absence, timesheets, and PDR, with further roll-out of the remaining Learning Management System functionality as part of the OD service review;
  - (e) that, subject to a positive outcome to the current pilot exercise, the online booking system for supply staff was fully implemented, and, where feasible from an ICT perspective, extended to other services that use supply staff and casual workers; and
  - (f) that the alternative model to administer the occupational health service be reviewed at the end of the current pilot exercise and the recommendations of that exercise implemented;
- (2) that the following further actions were progressed, through the SIP process over the next twelve to eighteen months:-
  - (a) that the PHRBR team work with ICT and other relevant Council services to help establish the most appropriate arrangements for hosting and supporting the Oracle system, including the legacy Cyborg requirements;
  - (b) that work was undertaken to introduce electronic payslips in a way which ensures accessibility and ease of access for all individuals paid through the Council's payroll;
  - (c) that the PHRBR team continued to work with ICT and operational services to identify other opportunities to rationalise or streamline systems (such as the Flexi System) to achieve efficiencies at central and/or local/service level; and
  - (d) that the PHRBR team continued to work with the Property and Risk and Information and Governance teams to find a solution to the filing/accommodation issues that had been identified through this review;

- (3) that a report on progress in the implementation of the review and related savings be brought back to the Service and Performance Panel in November 2016 for scrutiny; and
- (4) that, at the appropriate time, steps be taken to realise the reduction in staffing resources resulting from the recommendations to contribute to the £350,000 savings required from Employee and Customer Services which were approved by Council in December 2014 and June 2015.

## **7. Employee Absence.**

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 18th April 2016 by the Head of Employee and Customer Services providing detailed information and analysis of sickness absence across Council services.

The Panel welcomed the downwards trend of employee absence for local government employees and teachers. It was noted that there were good examples of improved management of absence both in schools and other service areas.

There was discussion regarding reasons for sickness and the circumstances where staff were dismissed for their sickness record.

**Decided:** having scrutinised the information contained in this report in the context of the Local Government Benchmarking Information previously reported,

- (1) to note the contents of the report; and
- (2) to agree that a further update be reported to this Panel in twelve months time.

## **8. Refresh of the Service and Improvement Plans for 2016/18.**

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 18th April 2016 by the Head of Policy and Performance detailing information to allow the Panel to scrutinise the refresh of the Council's Service and Improvement Plans (SIPs) for 2016-18.

Comments and observations from the members of the Panel and responses from officers are set out below:-

### **Policy and Performance:-**

The Head of Policy and Performance introduced the SIP and it was noted that there had been a number of vacancies in the Communications Team over the last few months.

Following a concern raised by a Member that there were a number of targets that were unlikely to be met within the proposed timescales, the Head of Policy and Performance advised that they would be re-examined.

**SO6.8.06** – With regard to the percentage of South Ayrshire residents who used the local authority website to find Council information (Scottish Household Survey), clarification was sought as to how the Council assisted the public to change their behaviour in accessing the information. The Head of Policy and Performance advised of recent developments relating to Welfare Reform, where videos are being uploaded on the website and then promoted to service users.

Appendix 3 Supplies and Services - Clarification was sought and provided as to how costs were broken down.

### **Employee and Customer Services:-**

The Head of Employee and Customer Services introduced the SIP .

SO1.3 - With regard to the proportion of young people and adults with relevant qualifications, a member of the Panel enquired why future targets had been set lower than the current targets. The Head of Employee and Customer and Services advised that like for like was not being compared, as the age groups involved had been altered.

EC3 - With regard to the Ambitions Programme, it was noted that the Council had a contract with Skills Development Scotland and that the Council focussed on working with people who had barriers to employment.

SO6.4.01 - With regard to the proportion of employees having a current Performance Development Review, a Member of the Panel advised that the target should always be 100%. The Head of Employee and Customer Services advised that it would never be 100% due to factors such as employee turnover and long term sickness. It was suggested that in reporting against this measure it would be helpful to identify the distribution of employees who did not have a current PDR and the reasons.

### **Finance and ICT:-**

The Head of Finance and ICT introduced the SIP.

Section 3 - A Member of the Panel enquired how the evaluations against the two HGIOC Quality Indicators could be improved. The Head of Finance and ICT referred to the improvement actions identified within the SIP, and highlighted the revised approach to ICT and working with staff to improve communication, raise morale and improve leadership. He also highlighted the work being undertaken on budgeting software, to provide better interpretation of budget management information, the current process being spreadsheet orientated.

### **Legal and Democratic Services:-**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services introduced the SIP.

Section 3 - A Member of the Panel enquired how the evaluations against the two HGIOC Quality Indicators could be improved. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services mentioned the three areas identified in his SIP, particularly being able to translate the legal evaluation framework across other services and improving the range and coverage of performance measures.

Section 4 - Following a question from a Member over the challenges of Health and Social Care Integration, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services indicated that all services within RGO were there to support the challenges faced by the Partnership.

- SO6.2 A Member of the Panel enquired if there would be performance indicators developed following the introduction of new European and Scottish legislation relating to procurement. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services advised that the Council's strategy was being updated and would be brought before the Council in the autumn of this year. It was further noted that the introduction of this legislation would influence targets, such as Community Benefit.
- SO6.7 The Panel was pleased to note the high performance of the key performance measures relating to the Registration Service.

### **Property and Risk.**

The Head of Property and Risk introduced the SIP.

- Section 3 - A Member of the Panel enquired how the evaluations against the two HGIOC Quality Indicators could be improved. The Head of Property and Risk advised that it was important to keep all staff on track, working corporately with others, being helpful and accessible, rather than the historic culture of being defensive.

He went on to indicate that there was room for improvement within the approach to repairs, in particular increasing the amount of planned rather than reactive maintenance.

A Member of the Panel queried how improvement would be evaluated and the Head of Property and Risk reported that feedback would be used to gauge progress, work being done to better understand the experience of service users, their issues and concerns.

A member of the Panel intimated that there had been a marked improvement in the repair service.

### **Housing and Facilities.**

The Head of Housing and Facilities introduced the SIP.

- Section 3 - A Member of the Panel enquired how the evaluations against the two HGIOC Quality Indicators could be improved. The Head of Housing and Facilities indicated that the actual evaluations varied across the services, reflecting the fact that HGIOC was well established within Housing, Facilities Management and Property Maintenance having just gone through a period of substantial change, the intention now being to bring them all up to the same level.

A Member of the Panel queried the reference to training amongst the areas for development. The Head of Housing and Facilities explained that one element related to the aging workforce and the need for succession planning, another being encouraging staff to bring forward new and innovative ideas to South Ayrshire.

### **Enterprise, Development and Leisure.**

The Head of Enterprise, Development and Leisure introduced the SIP.

- Section 3 - A Member of the Panel enquired how the evaluations against the two HGIOC Quality Indicators could be improved. The Head of Enterprise, Development and Leisure reported that the service reviews would be a key element; in terms of leadership then staff needed to be better involved with HGIOC; and that within areas of Culture and Leisure, the reported costs needed to be driven down and better measures identified.
- SO4.5 03 Number of rounds of golf - Following a query raised by a Member, it was agreed that figures be provided to members indicating how much golf in South Ayrshire was being subsidised by.
- SO1.5 01 Cost per museum visit - A Member of the Panel queried the figure of £19.58. The Head of Enterprise, Development and Leisure reported that this figure would improve significantly in 2015/16, as increased numbers of visitors had been attracted and elements of the costs had been found to be incorrectly attributed to this measure in 2014/15.
- SO1.5 03 Cost per library visit - Following an enquiry from a Member, it was confirmed that no thought had been given to managers having direct ownership of the budgets for individual libraries and pools.
- SO4.5 04 Cost per attendance at sport facilities - A Member of the Panel queried the poor performance. The Head of Enterprise, Development and Leisure explained that there had been discussions with the Improvement Service over this measure, which was unfairly comparing the gross cost of provision by authorities such as our own, with the net costs of authorities that operate these services through Trusts.

### **Neighbourhood Services.**

The Head of Neighbourhood Services introduced the SIP.

- Section 3 - A Member of the Panel enquired how the evaluations against the two HGIOC Quality Indicators could be improved. The Head of Neighbourhood Services reported that he was looking to managers to develop innovative ways of improving how services are delivered.
- NS14 Dog Control and Fouling Strategy - A Member of the Panel queried the enforcement options, particularly over dog walkers being required to carry bags to clean up after their dogs.
- NS 6 Burial Capacity in Troon Cemetery – The Panel queried progress on increasing the capacity and the Head of Neighbourhood Services updated them over the discussions with SEPA over the use of concrete chambers and the cost of these relative to traditional burials.
- SO5.5 03 Net waste collection cost per premise - A Member of the Panel questioned the jump to £79.86 from £62.74 the previous year. The Head of Neighbourhood Services explained that this had been distorted in 2014/15 by a one off payment being made to the recycling contractor.

Appendix 3 Transport Costs - A Member of the Panel queried the huge proportion of the budget spent on transport costs. The Head of Neighbourhood Services advised that a large element of this were leasing costs, but that work was on-going to reduce running costs. He explained that six new electric vehicles had been purchase at no cost to the Council. A Member queried the availability of charging points. The Head of Neighbourhood Services advised that there were a number of charging points for electric vehicles in the coastal areas and that thought would now be given to providing more in the rural landward areas.

### **Communities.**

The Head of Communities introduced the SIP.

Section 3 - A Member of the Panel enquired how the evaluations against the two HGIOC Quality Indicators could be improved. The Head of Communities reflected that there were a range of ratings between the individual services, the overall assessment having been rated down because of the large volume of change within the Service at present. She wanted staff to buy in to development work and highlighted that it was often difficult to get measures to evaluate performance.

The Member of the Panel commented that they appreciated the honesty of the evaluations made by managers across the SIPs and their openness in identifying the necessary next steps.

SO4.1 New Number of charrettes - A Member of the Panel sort clarification of whether these were just a way of involving the community to achieve an outcome that had already been agreed. The Head of Communities clarified that this was not the case and explained their use in Girvan, Maybole and Prestwick, and how they were developing over time and in the light of experience.

### **Educational Services.**

The Director of Educational Services introduced the SIP.

Section 3 - A Member of the Panel enquired how the evaluations against the two HGIOC Quality Indicators could be improved. The Director of Educational Services reported that there was a need to do more for targeted groups, such as looked after children and young carers. One of the main challenges in addressing this and analysing the improvement achieved is finding the resources to do this, recent feedback from Educational Services staff indicating that 89% of those questioned were not able to deliver current expectations within normal working hours.

Following a concern from a Member regarding the resources required to provide the learning of Gaelic, the Director of Educational Services reported that arrangements would be made with East Ayrshire Council, should such a demand arise.

A Member asked in connection with GIRFEC, whether the Council had the resources for implementing named persons. The Director of Educational Services confirmed that these arrangements were already in place.

**Overall.**

A Panel Member advised that the information contained in Annex 3 of the report (the Equalities Impact Assessment) was not legible due to the size of the font.

**Decided:** to remit the refreshed Plans to Council on 12th May 2016 for approval.

**9. External Funding Officer.**

The Head of Communities provided an update with regard to the External Funding Officer post as follows:-

- (1) that the post was an outcome from the Grants Review that had been conducted;
- (2) that the job description for their post was being finalised with the post being filled prior to the summer recess; and
- (3) that the Post would deal with strategic grants and not deal with small grants at present.

**Decided:** to note the position meantime.

The meeting ended at 5.00 p.m.