

SERVICE AND PERFORMANCE PANEL

Minutes of meeting in County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr,
on 8 September 2020 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillor Alec Clark (Chair).

Present

Remotely: Councillors Laura Brennan-Whitefield, Andy Campbell, Iain Campbell, Chris Cullen and Hugh Hunter.

Apologies: Councillors Derek McCabe and Bob Pollock.

Attending: E. Howat, Chief Executive; M. Newall, Assistant Director - People; M. Inglis, Head of Children's Health, Care and Justice Services; J. Dunne, Service Lead – HR Policy and Operations; and A. Gibson, Committee Services Officer.

Attending

Remotely: W. Carlaw, Service Lead - Democratic Governance.

1. Opening Remarks.

The Chair took the sederunt and confirmed that today's meeting was not open to the press and public, which was permissible under the COVID-19 legislation. He also confirmed to Members the procedures to conduct this meeting.

A Councillor intimated his displeasure that the press and public had no access to this and other Council meetings at the present time. Following discussion on the recording of meetings being passed to the press and public, he was advised that a report would be considered on proposed future developments at the next Council meeting in October 2020.

2. 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.

3. Minutes of previous meeting.

The minutes of 19 August 2020 ([issued](#)) were submitted and approved subject to the amendment of an officer's job title.

4. Action Log and Work Programme.

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

With regard to the Action Log, the Panel noted that, with regard to entry No.3 "Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2018/19 – Adult Social Care – Percentage of Care Services graded good or above" the more information previously requested on this indicator may be delayed further and that the Log would be updated to indicate this.

5. Council Plan 2018-22 (2020 Mid-Term Refresh) – April to June 2020.

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 1 September 2020 by the Assistant Director – People allowing Members the opportunity to review progress made towards achieving the strategic objectives contained within the Council Plan 2018-22 (2020 Mid-Term Refresh).

The Assistant Director -People gave an update on various issues arising from the report.

A Member of the Panel enquired, with COVID-19, if progress on achieving the strategic objectives had been hindered. The Assistant Director – People advised that there should not have been a loss in productivity with staff working from home.

With regard to objective, COPL 01.1a “Redesign and rebuild the Council’s website with a focus on delivering digital services and digital engagement”, a Member of the Panel asked if 31 March 2022 was still expected to be the completion date. The Assistant Director – People advised that this completion date would be met. Following a request for information on what new services would be online and what enhancements were to made to other services online, the Assistant Director – People advised that he would provide this information to Members by way of a Briefing Note.

With regard to the objective, COPL 01 2a “Provide Service Leads with Workforce Planning support and advice”, and following a question from a Member of the Panel, it was noted that the completion date of 31 March 2022 was deliverable.

With regard to the objective, COPL 01 2b “Create modern apprenticeship opportunities across South Ayrshire for our young people” and following a question from a Member of the Panel, it was agreed that the Assistant Director – People would provide Members with a Briefing Note on the current position with the opportunities available for modern apprentices outwith the Council.

With regard to the objective, COPL 02.2e “Work with partners to improve employability outcomes for care experienced young people” and following a question from a Member of the Panel, the Head of Children’s Health, Care and Justice Services detailed the activity undertaken with partners.

With regard to the objective, COPL 03.1c “Adapt our properties to provide modern fit for purpose facilities which can be better utilised by Services and their clients” and having heard a Panel Member, it was noted that Hillcrest was complete but that South Lodge was not as yet.

With regard to the objective, COPL 05.1a “Deliver on the Engagement Strategy and ensure meaningful engagement with our stakeholders” and having heard a Member of the Panel advise that he was disappointed to see this objective was only 11% complete and enquired how technology could be used in this area for improvement, the Assistant Director – People advised that he would provide Members with a Briefing Note in response to this issue.

With regard to the objective, COPL 06.1f “Raise the awareness of the effects of car idling on air quality and climate change and the penalties for breaching the Road Traffic (Vehicle Emissions) Fixed Penalty (Scotland) Regulations 2003 through a programme of publicity” and after a Panel Member raised the importance of this matter, it was noted what had been done in this area.

With regard to COPL 06.2a “Develop mobile solutions for our workforce, enabling them to deliver more to our residents in the community” and following the matter being raised by a Member of the Panel, it was agreed that the Head of Children’s Health, Care and Justice Services would provide Members with a Briefing Note with more detail on this issue.

Having considered the progress through the narrative set out within Appendix 1 of the report, the Panel

Decided: to note the contents of the report.

6. **Employee Absence.**

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 1 September 2020 by the Head of Legal, HR and Regulatory Services providing detailed information and analysis of sickness absence across Council services for the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

The Service Lead – HR Policy and Operations gave an introduction to the report and indicated that there was a gradual and consistent improvement in the Council’s performance in this area.

Following a question from a Member of the Panel regarding the indirect costs associated with staff absence, it was agreed that the Service Lead – HR Policy and Operations would provide Members with a Briefing Note in this regard.

A Member of the Panel enquired about the psychological absence rate and what interventions were there to alleviate this. The Service Lead – HR Policy and Operations advised that this was a national issue and explained where support for this came from, including the Occupational Health Section within the Council.

It was confirmed that the figures shown were calculated prior to the commencement of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Having scrutinised the information in the context of the Local Government Benchmarking Information previously reported, the Panel

Decided: to note the contents of the report.

Councillor Cullen left the meeting during consideration of the above item.

7. **Review of Management Structure.**

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 1 September 2020 by the Chief Executive providing an initial update regarding the impact on services affected by revised structural arrangements.

Having heard the Chief Executive in further detail and having scrutinised the contents of the report, the Panel

Decided: to request that the Chief Executive submit a full report to this Panel by March 20221.

The meeting ended at 11.15 a.m.