

COMMUNITY SERVICES STANDING SCRUTINY PANEL.

Minutes of meeting in County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr,
26th March 2014 at 9.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors John Hampton (Chair), Ian Cavana, Peter Convery, Kirsty Darwent, Hugh Hunter, Brian McGinley and Corri Wilson.

Apologies: Councillors Peter Convery and William J. Grant.

Attending: V. Andrews, Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation; D. Hutchison, Head of Education; D. Burns, Policy and Strategy Manager; C. Gardner, Senior Strategic Planning and Performance Management Officer; W. Andrew, Property, Repairs and Maintenance Manager, I. Bashir, Asset Systems Manager; and D. Knight, Democratic Services Administrator.

Also Attending: Councillors Rita Miller, Philip Saxton and Margaret Toner (Portfolio-holders); and Councillor Douglas Campbell.

1. 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.

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 the previous meeting of 26th February 2014 (issued) ([link attached](#)) were submitted and approved.

4. Completion of the Review of Day Services for Older People.

Reference was made to the Minutes of 11th December 2013 (Page 3, paragraph 5) and there was submitted a report (issued) of 12th March 2014 ([link attached](#)) by the Executive Director – Care, Learning and Wellbeing providing the Panel with the completed findings of the Review of Day Services for Older People.

A concern was raised that the report on the final review of day services report had not been submitted to the Sub-Group prior to consideration by this Standing Scrutiny Panel and the Housing and Strategy Manager advised that he noted this concern.

Clarification was sought and provided that Self-directed support would be the mainstream approach to supporting individuals to access day services, that a period of more than four weeks in hospital ended a client's placement in day services with the vacancy being re-assigned, the appeals procedure in place should a client be dissatisfied with the needs assessment process, the improvements that would be required by providers to increase the Care Inspectorate's rating to a grade 6 (excellent), consultation that had taken place with service users, service providers and the community, that early notice would be given of the Council's intention to end block contracts with private providers and that the grades of staff working within the Council's day centres were comparable with other local authorities.

The Panel expressed its concerns about the condition of Overmills Day Care Centre and that, although the service itself was excellent, the building and external environment needed substantial upgrading.

The Panel welcomed the continuing partnership working with Voluntary Action South Ayrshire (VASA) and the opportunity for greater partnership working.

The Panel noted that the review had indicated potential full year efficiencies of £80,000 in line with the recently approved Budget for 2014/15.

Decided: having recorded their appreciation of the work that had been undertaken in relation to the Review of Day Care Services for Older People by the members of the Sub-Group and the Head of Community Care and Housing and the Policy and Strategy Manager and their staff

(1) to approve the findings of the Review of Day Services for Older people as contained in Appendix 1 of the report and as outlined as follows:-

- a transitional approach would be adopted to Day Care and that numbers would reduce naturally whilst new service users would consider alternatives;
- Day Services would be focused from the two Council facilities at Ayr (Overmills) and Girvan (Nursery Court);
- an amendment would be progressed to the registration at Nursery Court, Girvan to cater for up to thirty service users on any given day;
- the Council would withdraw its service from the NHS run facility at Castle View, Maybole;
- service users accessing Castle View Day Service in Maybole would be prioritised for relocation to Nursery Court in Girvan or Rainbow in Maybole;
- Care reviews would be carried out on those clients accessing private day care services with a view to adopting a Self Directed Support assessment and ensuring number of days attendance reflected assessed need;
- the Council would continue to build a relationship with VASA to offer new opportunities from Overmills and Nursery Court (befriending, podiatry etc);

- the Council would aim towards Day Hospital consultants operating from a Day Service to avoid duplication and support integrated working;
 - that a request be made for a structural and environmental survey of Overmills and Nursery Court;
 - that 2.4FTE vacancies at Overmills be advertised on a permanent basis;
 - an amendment be made to staff contracts from Castle View to Nursery Court in partnership with the Trade Unions and Human Resource;
 - the impact of Self Directed Support would be monitored with regard to the number of new referrals to Day Services, particularly in the Troon and Prestwick area; and
 - that VASA and the Sheltered Housing team would explore opportunities for social activities being delivered for residents within their own communities; and
- (2) to report the findings and recommendations including the Panel's concerns about the condition of Overmills Day Care Centre, to the next meeting of the Leadership Panel on 29th April 2014 and subsequently to the Shadow Integration Board for noting.

Councillor McGinley joined the meeting at 9.15 a.m. during consideration of the foregoing item.

5. Update on Progress against the Council's Strategic Outcomes.

Reference was made to the Minutes of 4th September 2013 (page , paragraph 7) and there was submitted a report (issued) of 19th March 2014 ([link attached](#)) by the Head of Policy, Community Planning and Public Affairs

- (1) updating on the progress against the Council's strategic outcomes that fall within this Panel's remit which had been reported on 4th September 2013 as 'not being on target'
- (2) advising that Appendix 1 of the report contained a six monthly update on:- Increased numbers of affordable homes; effective letting of Council housing; responsive and effective Council house repairs; and Council buildings that adopt best practice in relation to equality issues.

In response to a question regarding the remit of Standing Scrutiny Panels and their scrutiny reviews, the Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation advised that the Directorate responsibilities and Scrutiny Panel responsibilities and remit were not currently aligned. The completed Service and Improvement Plans for each Head of Service area would be submitted to the next meeting of the Leadership Panel in April for approval and thereafter to Standing Scrutiny Panels in May 2014. The review of the Scrutiny Panel structure and remits would be undertaken by Scrutiny and Governance Management Panel by the July Council.

The Panel discussed the outcomes as follows:-

- **“Increased numbers of affordable homes”:-**

The Panel discussed

- (a) the work being undertaken to increase the numbers of affordable houses and the level of subsidy being provided by the Scottish Government;
- (b) the number of applicants on the Housing list and the Transfer list;
- (c) the type of housing that was preferred in South Ayrshire; and
- (d) the implications of the Welfare Reform in relation to under-occupancy and the need for flexible accommodation.

- **“Effective letting of Council housing”:-**

The Panel discussed

- (a) whether the average time to relet properties could be improved;
- (b) the percentage of the rent lost due to lettable voids in comparison with other authorities; and
- (c) the procedures in place regarding tenant arrears in relation to former tenants.

- **“Responsive and effective Council house repairs”:-**

The Panel discussed

- (a) the drop in the Council’s performance in emergency repairs target response time of four hours from 98% in 2010/11 to 89% in 2012/13 and the steps being taken to ensure that repairs were properly categorised which would help to ensure that jobs were completed on target;
- (b) that repair teams were now working locally in geographical areas with the supervisors of the teams and operatives being multi-skilled;
- (c) that staff within Customer Centres and Housing had clear guidelines as to how to categorise repairs;
- (d) the pursuit of information to tenants;
- (e) the reduction in the number of craft operatives in the past eighteen months and the introduction of flexible working; and

(f) the employment of external contractors.

• **“Council buildings that adopt best practice in relation to equality issues”:-**

The Panel discussed

- (a) whether a link corridor between the buildings within the Southcraig Campus could be undertaken as part of the accessibility works required by the Equality Act 2010 and the Asset Systems Manager advised that schools were not covered by the Act, however, he gave an undertaking to examine this matter; and
- (b) the accessibility works being undertaken with regard to the public areas in Council buildings and the problems being encountered with older buildings to comply with the Act.

Decided: to note the progress that had been achieved against the strategic outcomes as detailed within Appendix 1 of the report.

Councillor Darwent left the meeting at 10.00 a.m. during consideration of the foregoing item.

6. Item for Call-in – Pilot Breakfast Club Provision in Primary Schools

Reference was made to the Minutes of the Leadership Panel of 18th March 2014 (Page 3, paragraph 5) when that Panel having considered a report of 12th March 2014 by the Executive Director - Children and Community had decided

- (1) to approve the extension of the current pilot arrangements in Dalmilling Primary School to the end of the current school session and to extend the pilot to include those Primary Schools with children living in areas of highest deprivation as defined by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation and other relevant indicators including free meal entitlement; and
- (2) to agree to support the pilot from £0.500m funding set aside to mitigate the effects of welfare reform and to request an evaluation of the pilot schools and a proposal for the next school session for the Leadership Panel of 17th June 2014. approved the submission of a bid to the Scottish Government for funding from the Schools for the Future Programme as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report.

The Panel was advised that the report had been the subject of a call-in (issued) (**link attached**) details of which, together with the written responses circulated in advance of the meeting are outlined below.

At a special Council meeting on 22nd October 2013, the Council discussed the provision of breakfast clubs and the following is an extract from the minutes of the meeting.

“South Ayrshire Council will encourage the development of Breakfast Clubs in those schools which currently do not have them where there is unmet demand and funding is available. The Council calls for a report on the current provision Breakfast Clubs and for an indication of the resource implications of enhanced provision prior to the end of the current financial year”.

Question 1

To ask what investigation had been undertaken by Officers to establish where there is unmet demand for breakfast clubs in schools in South Ayrshire?

Answer 1

Previous costings for breakfast club provision were based upon 100% uptake in primary schools. As a result, the budget required was substantial and ran the risk of failing to target those in greatest need of breakfast prior to the start of the school day. The intention of the pilot in Dalmilling Primary School was to identify what the actual demand for breakfast provision is in a school within an area of high deprivation. The actual figures are presented in the paper to the Leadership Panel and indicate an uptake of around 20% of the school roll. Based on these figures, the pilot is being extended to the next 4 primary schools with the highest levels of deprivation in South Ayrshire. Once the extended pilot is complete the level of unmet demand will be clearer.

Question 2

To ask Officers to report on the current provision of breakfast clubs in South Ayrshire?

Answer 2

Current information available indicates that breakfast provision is available as follows:

Sector	Total Number of establishments	Number of establishments with Breakfast Clubs	Provision of Club
Secondary	8	6	All operated by SAC Catering Services
Primary	41	10	5 operated by SAC Catering Services 4 operated by the Out of School Care Sector 1 small community / school provision
Special	2	0	
Pre-5 only establishments	3	0	

Question 3

To ask Officers when the report requested in the Motion would be submitted to the Council?

Answer 3

A report on the extended pilot of breakfast club provision will be submitted to the June meeting of the Leadership Panel.

The Chair invited Councillor Douglas Campbell to explain his reasons for the call-in and the Panel heard him advise that the special Council at its meeting on 22nd October 2013 had agreed that "South Ayrshire Council will encourage the development of Breakfast clubs in those schools which currently do not have them where there is unmet demand and funding is available. The Council calls for a report on the current provision of Breakfast Clubs and for an indication of the resource implications of enhanced provision prior to the end of the current financial year".

Councillor Campbell indicated that the report that had been submitted to the Leadership Panel on 18th March 2014 had not included the investigation of unmet demand for breakfast clubs in schools in South Ayrshire.

The Panel then heard from the Head of Education who confirmed that the report to the Leadership Panel on 18th March 2014 was an interim report and that a final report would be submitted in June to take into account the outcomes from the extended pilot and further commented on the attendance of children at Breakfast Clubs including the most vulnerable children, what the costs were likely to be and the implications of obesity and deprivation.

It was noted that additional volunteers were needed to run the Breakfast Clubs and that an approach could be made to VASA to ascertain whether Older People could be included.

Decided: following review, that the decision of the Leadership Panel in respect of this matter be confirmed and implemented.

The meeting ended at 10.35 a.m.