

SERVICE AND PERFORMANCE PANEL.

Minutes of meeting in County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr,
on 17th April 2018 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors Alec Clark (Chair), Laura Brennan-Whitefield, Iain Campbell, Martin Dowey and Hugh Hunter.

Apologies: Councillors Andy Campbell and Chris Cullen.

Attending: K. Leinster, Head of Community Health and Care Services; J. Johnstone, Service lead - Economic Development; Z. Fance, Service Lead – Procurement; M. Baker, Service Lead – Corporate Planning and Improvement; W. Carlaw, Democratic and Governance Manager; and E Wyllie, 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 6th February 2018 ([issued](#)) were submitted and approved.

3. Action Log and Work Programme.

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

The Service Lead – Corporate Planning and Improvement advised that the temporary Head of Children's Health, Care and Criminal Justice Services would now be in a position to progress some outstanding actions contained within the log relevant to her service. He also provided reasons why two of the items from the Work Programme initially proposed for this meeting were now planned for the June meeting.

The Panel

Decided: to note the contents of the Action Log and Work Programme.

4. Review of Residential Services for Older People.

With reference to the Minutes of 24th January 2017 (Page 2, paragraph 5) and 21st November 2017 (Page 5, paragraph 5), there was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 3rd April 2018 by the Head of Community Health and Care Services providing additional information as requested by this Panel.

The Head of Community Health and Care Services referred to a range of options contained within the report relating to various proposals for the replacement of Hillcrest Care Home, Girvan which had available land adjacent to the current facility.

A member of the Panel asked for further information in relation to Options 5(a) to (d) contained within Appendix 1 of the report relating to housing with care and whether this would be a suitable option for someone needing care and, for example, suffering from dementia who perhaps would have difficulty undertaking the role of a tenant. The Head of Community Health and Care Services explained the differences between sheltered housing care provision and that provided by a care home and that the suggested housing with care approach sat between both these models and was determined by the level of care required. In terms of whether someone had the capacity to be a tenant, the person who had guardianship order / power of attorney for that individual could assist with tenancy arrangements. Also, in relation to housing with care, the Head of Community Health and Care Services advised of the availability of a Government subsidy for housing. He further described the considerations around options 5(a) to (d), such as who could build, how could it be financed and how would care be provided as well as how these different scenarios would impact on rent levels.

The Chair commented on previous concerns intimated from interested parties and expressed his concerns in relation to some of the aforementioned options given the level of vulnerabilities of some of the residents. He added that the Care Inspectorate report commended the quality of care provided by staff at Hillcrest during its previous inspection although the quality of the built provision was not up to modern standards. Also, he felt that catering issues would require to be considered and wanted assurances around respite provision for carers and sufficiently sized communal areas. The Head of Community Health and Care Services outlined various catering options and potential costs ranging from capital funding to build a kitchen facility and revenue funding for catering staff as opposed to providing meals from another source. Similarly, he commented on respite care provision and communal areas. These were all the types of issues to be considered as part of the options appraisal exercise.

In relation to 5(a) to (d) of the report it was asked why there was a difference of around £200,000 more for in-house staffing costs compared to external providers. The Head of Community Health and Care Services advised that in-house staff were paid at a higher rate and management costs were also higher. Additionally, he referred to variances in terms and conditions. On this, a request for a further breakdown of staffing costs was made and whether this could include information on the impact of variances within terms and conditions. It was also mentioned that it would be interesting for a review of an external provider's management structure to be undertaken to ascertain if that model of delivery could be replicated within the Council.

Further comments were made in relation to the importance of maintaining the high standard of care currently provided and that the focus should not be on costs. In terms of staffing, the Head of Community Health and Care Services commented that this was an important issue and depending on the subsequent option being progressed could become more complicated if, for example, staff were out sourced.

A question was asked in relation to the housing with care approach in respect of Government funding and how this could be utilised. The Head of Community Health and Care Services explained the funding and advised that there was scope to expand the communal living space, for example, with capital funding from the Council. He assured members that any work undertaken would be within funding guidelines.

In relation to a query about South Lodge, Ayr, the Head of Community Health and Care Services added that proposals for South Lodge would be considered at a later date due to no site currently identified within Ayr.

The Panel, having discussed the various options and having expressed their wish to ensure that any recommendations being made to the Integration Joint Board suited the needs of the residents

Decided:

- (1) that a further breakdown of information was required;
- (2) that a Special meeting of this Panel be arranged to consider this information in greater detail and that comparative figures and costings associated with staffing, respite options, catering provision and communal areas should be provided; and
- (3) thereafter, the Panel should be in a position to provide feedback to the Integration Joint Board on the Options Appraisal.

5. Council Procurement to Support the Local Economy.

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 5th April 2018 by the Director – Place providing an update on the collaborative action plan which was being developed to promote procurement to support the local economy and to address the decreasing performance in the Council's procurement spend on local small / medium enterprises (SMEs) as reported in the Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2016/17.

A Member of the Panel sought clarification in relation to the percentages around the capital expenditure to the South West Hub as outlined at paragraph 3.3.2 of the report. The Service Lead – Procurement advised that the percentages of 17% related to 2016/17 with the 5% figure relating to the period 2012-2017. A further breakdown of information was available to members if they so wished.

An update was requested by a Member of the Panel in relation to the benchmarking exercise referred to at paragraph 4.3 of the report and it was also asked how this information would be reported to members. The Service Lead – Procurement described the type of benchmarking being carried out to obtain a baseline for all improvement activities. Undertaking this exercise would also provide Officers with the opportunity to interrogate data and gain a better understanding of any issues and she indicated that information could be reported back to this Panel in due course.

Assurances were sought as to whether enough was being done to improve the performance situation. It was noted that previously a Working Group had been established and that this corporate approach had led to improvements. The Service Lead – Procurement indicated that there was positive collaboration with services and a best value approach was taken. A further comment was made by a member of the Panel that other forms of best value can be achieved, for instance, by awarding small contracts to local business therefore enabling that business to employ an apprentice. The Service Lead – Procurement advised that consideration on a case by case basis was undertaken.

Following a question by a member of the Panel in relation to ways in which to encourage businesses to participate in the tendering process and whether the actual process deterred some businesses. The Service Lead – Procurement described the purpose of the Supplier Development Programme aimed at assisting local businesses to complete documentation as well as request feedback. Forthcoming events in this regard were arranged. The Service lead – Economic Development commented on the balance between providing support to businesses with the tendering process and keeping a distance so that there was no favouritism.

A question was asked about how successful the Quick Quote system was and the Service Lead – Procurement commented that three out of six local businesses must be invited to every quick quote, where available, and on-going monitoring of both the local spend and awarded contracts showed that this system was working well. In relation to how local businesses were made aware of the system, the Service Lead – Procurement advised that around 718 people were registered and awareness raising was made via the Council's website and other methods of communication. Also, the Service Lead – Procurement would be attending one of the forthcoming events and would be encouraging attendees to register.

Having heard a Panel member suggest that perhaps members of the Panel should attend these events, the Service Lead – Procurement advised that she would circulate dates to Panel members relating to the two forthcoming procurement events taking place in Ayr.

The Panel

Decided:

- (1) to note the approach being taken to promote the Council's procurement to support the local economy;
- (2) to agree that an action plan of future activities would be reported to Leadership Panel at its meeting on 27th November 2018; and
- (3) to note that a performance update relating to benchmarking to ensure a baseline for all improvement activities would be presented to a future meeting of this Panel in approximately fifteen months' time.

Closing Remarks.

The Chair, on behalf of the Panel, thanked the Service Lead - Corporate Planning and Improvement for his support to this Panel as Lead Officer over the years and wished him well in his new role within the Council. The Service Lead - Corporate Planning and Improvement thanked the Panel for their kind wishes.

The meeting ended at 11.20 a.m.