

SERVICE AND PERFORMANCE PANEL.

Minutes of meeting in County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr,
on 5th June 2018 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors Alec Clark (Chair), Laura Brennan-Whitefield, Andy Campbell, Iain Campbell, Chris Cullen, Martin Dowey and Bob Pollock.

Apology: Councillor Hugh Hunter.

Attending: E. Howat, Chief Executive; T. Eltringham, Director – Health and Social Care; M. Baker, Service Lead – Corporate Planning and Improvement; W. Carlaw, Democratic and Governance Manager; J. Dunne, Service Lead – HR Policy and Operations; J. Johnstone, Service lead - Economic Development; S. McCall, ICT Enterprise Architect; D. McVey, Team Leader (Information Governance); 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 17th April 2018 ([issued](#)) were submitted and approved.

3. Action Log and Work Programme.

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

4. Complaints – Scrutiny Update – Period: 1st October 2017 to 31st March 2018.

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 30th May 2018 by the Chief Executive

- (1) providing complaints performance information for the period from 1st October 2017 to 31st March 2018 and comparing performance to the same reporting period in 2016/17; and
- (2) advising that this information reflected the statutory reporting categories which was required by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman as well as information on how the Council improved its services following Stage 2 and Ombudsman complaints.

With reference to Appendix 2 of the report providing a breakdown of complaints and reasons, questions were made by Members of the Panel in relation to some small increases and trends within certain council services, namely:- planning, children and families and housing access.

The Team Leader (Information Governance) advised that in some instances there were no specific reasons for slight increases and it was part of the natural ebbs and flows of complaints. In other instances, for example in children and families, the increase could be attributed to proactive training being undertaken with the section on the use of the complaints recording system, therefore there was an increase in the number of complaints being logged. Also, there had been an increase in Kinship complaints. Otherwise, the Team Leader (Information Governance) would obtain further information on the possible reasons why there was a slight increase in the remaining areas listed above and circulate to members for their information.

In relation to one of the service improvement case studies on Appendix 3 of the report relating to Facilities Management and the parking management strategy at Marr College, Troon, it was noted that improvements had been implemented and the Team Leader (Information Governance) would circulate the detail to Members of the Panel.

In respect of another service improvement case study on Appendix 3 of the report relating to housing and works carried out by a contractor, the Team Leader (Information Governance) would ascertain with the Housing Service if there was a clerk of works role overseeing work being carried out and report back to Members.

Additionally, the Team Leader (Information Governance) explained that complaints were looked at on a case by case basis in most circumstances by a senior member of staff but on other occasions it may be more appropriate for another section to investigate, for example, complaints falling under the category of employee behaviour.

In terms of the complaints survey, it was noted that this was being reviewed so that it was in line with the complaints process.

The Panel, having scrutinised the report and its appendices

Decided: to request a further report to a future meeting of the Panel providing an update on the Council's complaints performance during the period 1st April to 31st September 2018.

5. Transform South Ayrshire Programme - Update.

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 30th May 2018 by the Chief Executive providing an update on the progress of Transform South Ayrshire (TSA) programme and outlining the revised arrangements following the Council's restructuring.

In response to a question relating to Appendix 1 of the report on the TSA project status, it was noted that further information would be provided in respect of timeframes for each of the projects. Further questions were asked by a Member of the Panel in relation to mobile devices and security and compatibility issues between devices. The ICT Enterprise Architect commented on mobile device software and management tools and advised of work being undertaken by EE in the near future to resolve set-up issues. Also, he informed of the different security type requirements between an educational classroom based use of devices as opposed to the corporate approach with one particular issue being addressed. It was noted that the Procurement section was currently looking at mobile devices.

The Panel, having considered the progress of the TSA programme since December 2017

Decided: to note

- (1) the cessation of the TSA Board and the establishment of the Technical Review Board; and
- (2) that future delivery of the transformation agenda would be undertaken by Executive Managers and reported as part of the overall Council plan reporting.

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.

6. Review of Residential Services for Older People.

With reference to the Minutes of 24th January 2017 (Page 2, paragraph 5), 21st November 2017 (Page 5, paragraph 5) and 17th April 2018 (Page 1, paragraph 4), there was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 22nd May 2018 by the Head of Community Health and Care Services providing an update on the review of residential services for older people.

The Director – Health and Social Care explained that a needs analysis was being undertaken as part of the review of residential services for older people. The Chair sought assurances from the Director that the facility in Girvan would remain open until it was known what the replacement would consist of and the Director provided reassurance.

Various questions were raised by Members of the Panel in relation to the needs analysis and whether this would take into consideration respite provision. Also, whether there was a possibility of a visit to another local authority area to ascertain its approach to residential services. The Director - Health and Social Care advised that various options would be explored as part of the review. In relation to questions on other care homes within South Ayrshire as well as the length of time being taken for this review, the Director commented on various issues and commented that the private sector provided most of the services in South Ayrshire. Also, following concerns, he confirmed that he would provide Panel members with answers to all previously raised questions from various meetings of this Panel from 24th January 2017 to date.

The Panel, having noted that the Director would provide answers to previously asked questions at various meetings of this Panel from 24th January 2017 onwards

Decided:

- (1) to note that further detailed needs analysis was being undertaken into the provision of care services to older people by officers within the Health and Social Care Partnership and it was anticipated that a report would be submitted to the meeting of the Service and Performance Panel on 20th November 2018; and
- (2) to agree to await the outcome of the needs analysis before undertaking further consideration of the potential models of care in Girvan.

7. Employee Absence 2017/18.

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 30th May 2018 by the Head of Employee and Customer Services providing detailed information and analysis of sickness absence across Council services for the period from 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018.

Various questions were asked by Members of the Panel in relation to the considerable costs associated with absence and whether action could be taken against those considered to be abusing the system. The Service Lead – HR Policy and Operations advised that, on balance, that would be difficult to ascertain.

In terms of the Health and Social Care Partnership and whether the higher level of absence was the result of the role undertaken by carers, it was noted that, for example, carers were exposed to illnesses. The Service Lead – HR Policy and Operations commented on arrangements being made by the occupational health service to deliver health promotion days for this group of workers as well as commenting on other interventions available to help in this regard. It was noted that feedback would be available in due course following these sessions to ascertain if they had helped to alleviate absence levels.

In relation to the increase in absences for Housing and Facilities, the Service Lead - HR Policy and Operations advised that this increase was being looked at and might relate to the use of discretion applied by Managers within this section although it was noted that a discretion did not always result in an automatic referral to occupational health therefore the costs associated with occupational health were not necessarily linked to discretions.

A question was asked in relation to whether national statistics could be used as a comparison for absences and the Service Lead – HR Policy and Operations referred to Audit Scotland and that absence was reviewed within the context of the 32 Scottish local authorities. In terms of learning from the private sector, this could be done as there were a number of publications available relating to both private and public sectors however it was noted that the main difference between both sectors was that the public sector had occupational sick pay and better terms and conditions. Further questions were asked about occupational sick pay and the Service Lead – HR Policy and Operations explained that if the employee had sufficient service then they were entitled to receive payment when off sick. Following the suggestion as to whether good attendance could be rewarded, it was noted that the current terms and conditions for local authorities were part of a national agreement via CoSLA.

In terms of whether patterns of absence could be identified and whether there were any gender / age trends, the Service Lead – HR Policy and Operations advised that this type of data was available. Also, it was noted that ways in which to address succession planning was being looked at and this would take cognisance of an ageing workforce in a non-discriminatory manner.

The Panel, having scrutinised the information contained in the report and its appendices and having expressed concerns in relation to the costs associated with absences

Decided:

- (1) to note this information within the context of the Local Government Benchmarking Information previously reported; and
- (2) to request a six monthly interim report which would also include additional information in relation to the underlying processes.

8. Invest South Ayrshire.

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 30th May 2018 by the Director – Place providing an update on the Invest South Ayrshire activities being delivered to support the local economy and encourage business investment in South Ayrshire.

Questions were asked by Members of the Panel in relation to the work of the Invest South Ayrshire team and, as well as activity surrounding the Glasgow Prestwick hub and safeguarding work, what other types of activity was undertaken and in what parts of South Ayrshire. In response, the Service Lead – Economic Development described the sector approach relating mainly to tourism and aerospace activities although limited to some degree in respect of tourism. A discussion took place around the food and drink industry within South Ayrshire and timber investments and also on the uncertainty, at this time, of the impact of Britain leaving the European Union.

A further question was asked in relation to small / medium enterprises (SME) and the potential for work being undertaken to grow this area with the remaining funding from the General Services Review Budget for 2017/18. In response, the Service Lead – Economic Development provided the staffing breakdown of his team - out of the twenty-one members of staff, two worked on Invest South Ayrshire with the others working on a range of activities such as business start-ups and town centre initiatives. It was noted that in terms of SME, staff provided advice and information by way of workshops or one-to-one sessions.

In relation to the Council's Planning and Procurement sections and Economic Development, it was noted that there was a good working relationship between all three sections to encourage investment and support companies and local business where possible.

In terms of the work which had been undertaken to secure the ferry terminal at Arran in North Ayrshire in recent years, it was noted that the Service Lead – Economic Development had had extensive discussions with representatives with the Associated British Ports regarding the Troon Harbour option at that time. He added that a good working relationship continued and was currently proactive around Heathrow Airport developments and the potential benefits for this area.

It was noted that some targets were slightly down and assurances were sought that these timescales would be met. The Service Lead – Economic Development advised that although the Leadership Panel at its meeting on 17th March 2015 (Page 1, paragraph 3) had set performance targets, the Invest South Ayrshire team had not been in place until January 2016. However, he was confident that these targets would be met in due course.

The Panel, following scrutiny

Decided: to note the activities undertaken and performance against original targets as set out in the report to the Leadership Panel of 17th March 2015.

The meeting ended at 11.20 a.m.