

SERVICE AND PERFORMANCE PANEL.

Minutes of meeting in County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr,
on 22 October 2019 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors Alec Clark (Chair), Laura Brennan-Whitefield, Andy Campbell, Hugh Hunter and Bob Pollock.

Apologies: Councillors Iain Campbell, Chris Cullen and Derek McCabe.

Attending: M. Baker, Service Lead - Corporate Planning and Improvement; W. Carlaw, Service Lead - Democratic Governance; M. Inglis, Head of Children's Health, Care and Justice Services; G. Farrell, Service Lead – Organisational Development; J. Andrew, Organisational Development Co-ordinator; 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 meeting.

The minutes of 10 September 2019 ([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.

Having heard the Service Lead - Corporate Planning and Improvement, the Panel noted

- (1) that, in relation to the entry in the Action Log relating to training to be provided to Members on the Pentana program, the various political groups within the Council had been contacted with a view to dates being set; and
- (2) that following additional meetings of this Panel having been timetabled, the Work Programme would be updated accordingly.

4. Corporate Workforce Plan – Annual Update.

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 16 October 2019 by the Head of Employee and Customer Services updating the Panel on the progress that has been made to implement the 2018-22 Corporate Workforce Plan.

A Member of the Panel advised that succession planning was mentioned briefly in the report and asked for further information on what was being done by the Council in this area. The Service Lead – Organisational Development advised of development programmes such as modern apprentices and university interns. It was agreed that an update on succession planning be reported to this Panel in six months' time.

After a Member of the Panel raised the issue of turnover of staff within the Council, it was noted that each Service Lead within the Council was provided with figures in this respect and that each Service may have its own specific reasons for turnover. It was also noted that the Health and Social Care Partnership were looking at this issue, due to their level of turnover.

Following a Member of the Panel raising the issue of staff leaving the employment of this Council for career progression, the Panel were informed that exit interviews were offered to staff to gain feedback, with the information gathered being reported to relevant managers. It was further noted that Personal Development Reviews (PDR) forms would now include an area on “ambitions” to be completed.

After a Member of the Panel raised the issue of gender split in caring roles and what was being done to encourage more men into this area, it was agreed that the Health and Social Care Partnership provide a Briefing Note in this respect. The Service Lead – Organisational Development advised that data on occupational segregation was pulled annually as part of Equality Monitoring; that occupational segregation was a challenging area and that a number of steps could be taken to help address the balance such as targeted recruitment. It was agreed that she would provide a Briefing Note with further information.

A Member of the Panel expressed his view that PDRs were important and that the quality of these was paramount. The Service Lead – Organisational Development stated that staff would provide feedback on them through the new Employee Engagement Survey.

With regard to statistics provided on the average days lost per employee, it was noted that the figures for the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) included staff from the NHS. The Head of Children’s Health, Care and Justice Services advised that absence levels for the HSCP were concerning. It was noted that figures relating to absence would be reported to this Panel in the future where scrutiny could be conducted. The Panel asked for information to be included in this reporting, namely the cost of providing agency staff for sickness and what was being done to address the two main absence reasons, ie psychological and musculoskeletal.

A Member of the Panel expressed concern with the figures provided for “Directorate – Age Breakdown 2019” which showed an “aging workforce” and reiterated the need for succession planning.

The Panel

Decided:

- (1) to note the progress that had been made and the updated Annual Plan,
- (2) to request a further update by the end of the 2020 calendar year; and
- (3) that an update on succession planning within the Council be reported to this Panel in six months time.

5. Mainstreaming Participatory Budgeting – Update.

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 16 October 2019 by the Depute Chief Executive and Director – People updating the Panel on the progress being made towards the continuing development of mainstreaming ‘Participatory Budgeting’ (PB).

The Service Lead – Corporate Planning and Improvement provided a short briefing to the Panel on mainstreaming and grant based PB and their differences.

A Member of the Panel made comment on the results of the Budget Engagement Survey in that on the whole, the residents that responded were from more affluent areas. The Service Lead – Corporate Planning and Improvement advised that this was a continuing journey being the third year of engagement and that further work was required to engage with harder to reach and underrepresented groups. However, this data was an overview and could be broken down into relevant sections where and when required.

Following a Member of the Panel raising the issue of there being an under representation of minority groups who sought funding, it was noted that there had been a Youth Forum last year as well as other activities to raise awareness of Participatory Budgeting.

It was noted that the Service Lead - Corporate Planning and Improvement would raise awareness of Participatory Budgeting at the Place Planning Steering Group. It was also noted that the involvement of smaller and more rural communities required to be examined as they may well have different issues to raise compared to other areas.

The Panel

Decided:

- (1) to note the progress, as detailed within the report; and
- (2) to request a further update in six months time at the meeting of this Panel scheduled to take place on 21 April 2020.

Councillor Hunter left the meeting during discussion of the above item.

The meeting ended at 11.15 a.m.