

SERVICE AND PERFORMANCE PANEL.

Minutes of meeting in County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr,
on 5th February 2019 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors Alec Clark (Chair), Andy Campbell, Iain Campbell, Chris Cullen, Hugh Hunter, Derek McCabe and Bob Pollock.

Apology: Councillor Laura Brennan-Whitefield.

Attending: D. Hutchison, Depute Chief Executive and Director – People, T. Eltringham, Director of Health and Social Care; T. Baulk, Head of Finance and ICT; K. O’Hagan, Head of Employee and Customer Services; K. Carr, Executive Manager, Place Directorate; M. Baker, Service Lead – Corporate Planning and Improvement; W. Carlaw, Service Lead – Democratic Governance; C. Monaghan, Service Lead – Community Services and Facilities; K. Dalrymple, Service Lead – Neighbourhood Services; J. Johnstone – Service Lead – Economic Development; C. Gardner, Senior Strategic and Planning Performance Officer; 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 meetings.

The minutes of 20 November 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.

Decided:

- (1) With regard to the Action Log,
 - (a) to agree that in relation to the information to be provided to the Panel by the Director of Health and Social Care relating to Drug Related Hospital Stays, this be undertaken in the near future;
 - (b) to note that, in relation to the entry in the Log relating to “Residential Services for Older People” the Chair advised that a report on this matter would not now be presented to this Panel until June of this year, to allow proper and full scrutiny and consultation. The Director of Health and Social Care also confirmed this position; and
 - (c) to note that in relation to the entry in the Log relating to “Business Support in Rural Areas” and having heard a Member of the Panel advise of a recent announcement by the UK Government relating to a large investment in this area, the Panel noted that this would have a significant impact on business support in Rural areas; and

- (2) to note that with regard to the Work Programme, this would be populated, following consideration of item 5 of this Minute.

4. **Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2017/18.**

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 25 January 2019 by the Depute Chief Executive and Director – People

- (1) updating the Panel on the publication of the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) data for 2017/18; and
- (2) requesting that it consider where scrutiny of this information might be helpful to drive improvement.

By way of an introduction, the Service Lead - Policy and Performance advised

- (a) that with regard to the general trend for the LGBF measures, this Council was placed predominately in the higher quartiles;
- (b) that this report provided only a snapshot of overall Council performance measures; and
- (c) that there should be a tolerance in considering the measures, as for example a 0.1% increase or decrease should not necessarily be seen as a concern.

The Members of the Panel made detailed scrutiny of the commentaries against LGBF measures, as follows:-

- Performance measure SO1.1 03 LGBF Percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from Council operated/funded Employability Programmes – A Member of the Panel expressed concern that this measure was lower than previous years. The Head of Employee and Customer Services advised there had been a number of reasons for this including an issue with the external providers contract being cancelled which had caused a gap in the service and a temporary lag in funding provision, however an assurance was given that matters were now improving overall in this area.

Councillor McCabe left the meeting at this point.

- Performance measure SO4.2 13 LGBF Cost of trading standards per 1,000 population £ - A Member of the Panel expressed concern that this Council's cost was higher than the Scottish average. It was agreed that a Briefing Note on this matter would be provided to Members in this respect.
- Performance measures CHC 49b LGBF percentage of looked after children with more than 1 placement in the last year (Aug – July) and CHC 65b LGBF Percentage of child protection re-registrations within 18 months – A Member of the Panel expressed concern that it appeared that performance was dropping for looked after children with more than 1 placement in the last year while performance for the percentage of child protection re-registrations within 18 months was very good. The Director of Health and Social Care advised that the information provided was 2 years out of date due to the way its provided by the LGBF and that these two measure looked at different aspects. He advised that children could be on the Child Protection Register but not accommodated. The aim would be to minimise the number of placements, but the number would always relate to individual circumstances and what was in the best interests of the child.

- Performance measure CHC 40 LGBF the gross cost of “children looked after” in residential based services per child per week £ – A Member of the Panel enquired if there were any children from South Ayrshire accommodated outwith the Authority area. The Director of Health and Social Care advised that there were children from this Authority area looked after outwith this Authority area in residential schools or secure units, as they provided specialist care that we don't have facilities to cater for locally, and which despite their high costs, offer economies of scale. The Panel agreed that the Director of Health and Social Care provide a Briefing Note to them on placements made outwith this Authority, to include up to date figures for this Authority and why there was a high cost to this Authority compared to the Scottish average.
- Performance measure SO2.1.01 LGBF Percentage of children reaching their development milestones as part of the 27-30 month child health review - A Member of the Panel expressed concern that for this measure it was only expected that two-thirds of children would reach their developmental milestones. It was agreed that the Director of Health and Social Care would prove a Briefing Note with further information in this respect.
- Performance measure CHC.19.1 N LGBF Adults aged 65+ Home care costs per hour - A Member of the Panel asked why there was a differential between the cost for this Authority and the much higher costs of North Ayrshire. The Director of Health and Social Care advised that it may be due to tendering and procurement content and processes.
- Performance measure SO3.2 06 LGBF The net cost of residential care, per adult (65+) per week – A member of the Panel advised that this Council's costs were 19% less than the Scottish average. The Director of Health and Social Care advised that this was difficult to explain as the cost of such care was purchased at standard rates across Scotland, but that this may reflect fewer people receiving the full costs of their care here, compared to other areas.
- Performance measure SO1.5 01 LGBF Net cost per visit to museums and galleries – A Member of the Panel expressed concern as to the 10% reduction in recorded visits. The Service Lead – Communities and Facilities advised that work was being undertaken to see what could be done to improve this measure. Discussion took place over the potential correlation between the reduction in tourism numbers and the reduction on the number of people visiting museums in South Ayrshire, and it was agreed that marketing was an important issue when it came to promoting museums.

A Member of the Panel suggested that it would be beneficial to have more one-off exhibitions such as the tapestry exhibition held in the Town Hall, Ayr a few years ago. The Panel then went on to discuss the new museum due to open on the Sandgate, Ayr, which they were told would be marketed as the start to a heritage trail and that it was intended to have a changeover of artefacts every 8/10 weeks approximately.

- Performance measure SO1.5 03.4 LGBF Net cost per visit to libraries – A Member of the Panel expressed concern in the drop recorded visits and what could be done to improve this issue. The Service Lead – Communities and Facilities advised that future events in libraries were currently being examined, that the reduction in visits could be part due to the reduced opening hours.

The Panel discussed the importance of having an adequate rotation of audio books in libraries in the rural areas to cater for blind readers and an assurance was given that this had been reviewed.

- Performance measure SO4.5 06.1 LGBF Percentage of adults satisfied with leisure facilities (Scottish Household Survey) – A Member of the Panel advised that the use of social media in this area had improved significantly. The Panel agreed that congratulations were due for the improvement in this measure.
- Performance measure SO5.1 01.1 LGBF Percentage of Class A roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment – Following a question from a Member of the Panel as to why the roads in South Ayrshire were 18% worse than the equivalent roads in East Ayrshire, it was noted that East Ayrshire Council had invested significantly in them over recent years, South Ayrshire having invested an additional £2m in its own roads programme over the last year.
- Performance measure SO5.1 02.1 LGBF Cost of maintenance per kilometre of roads (capital and revenue costs) – The Panel noted the anomaly that in respect of this measure, the figures for 2107/18 were showing in the top quartile.
- Performance measure SO1.2 18 LGBF Proportion of people earning less than the living wage – A Member of the Panel asked for further clarity regarding this measure. The Lead Officer - Economic Development explained that this was a new measure within the Framework and that it gave a limited insight into the Council's performance, as it had limited levers to influence it.
- Performance measure SO1.2 17 LGBF Gross cost of economic development and tourism per 1,000 population – Following a question from a Member of the Panel and having heard the Lead Officer – Economic Development, it was noted that this Authority was one of the lowest spending authorities in economic development. Discussion took place over the possibilities of demonstrating the extent to which such expenditure represented value for money and it was concluded that it would be very difficult to compare this Authority against others.
- Performance measure SO1.4 01 LGBF Town Vacancy Rates – A Member of the Panel asked what was being done to improve this Measure. The Lead Officer – Economic Development advised that this issue was being explored with the various Council Departments specifically the Planning Service.

A Member of the Panel asked what was being done to attract business to Maybole in view of the pending Maybole by-pass. The Service Lead – Economic Development advised that work was ongoing to promote investment in this area including the identification of sites that were available for use by businesses.

Following a question from a member of the Panel, the Service Lead – Economic Development advised that work was ongoing with colleagues to encourage more people to use the various town centres in South Ayrshire.

- Performance measure SO5.2 06 LGBF Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as at 31 march each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year (SHR) – The Panel noted that universal credit in respect of rent could now be paid directly to the landlord, which would help to reduce levels of arrears.
- Performance measure SO5.3 03 LGBF Percentage of council houses that are energy efficient outwith those that are exempt or in abeyance (SHR) – Following a question from a Member, the Executive Manager, Place Directorate advised that this Council's recent drop in this measure could have been due to the purchase of stock not being up to standard when purchased.
- Performance measure SO5.4 02 LGBF Street Cleanliness Index Percentage Clean and SO5.4 04.1 LGBF Percentage of adults satisfied with street cleaning services (Scottish Household Survey) – Following a question from a Member regarding the difference in the results of these two measures, the Service Lead – Neighbourhood Services advised that the second measure above was the public's perception of street cleaning services. It was also noted that the figures from the Scottish Household Survey were based on limited numbers of interviews, and was an aspect that would require to be revisited.
- Performance measure SO1.2 06 LGBF Average time to deliver a commercial planning application decision – Following discussion, it was agreed that the Executive Manager – Place Directorate provide a Briefing Note with information regarding the average time to deliver a residential planning application decision.

The Panel noted that they were pleased with the measures for Educational Services and that they were pleased overall with the position of South Ayrshire against the Scottish average in the measures detailed.

Decided: to note the comments as detailed above.

5. **Reporting Schedule for Performance Reporting.**

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 25 January 2019 by the Depute Chief Executive and Director – People outlining the reporting schedule for performance reporting to the Service and Performance Panel.

Decided: to agree the reporting schedule for the Directorate Plans and Council Plan, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report.

The meeting ended at 11.15 a.m.