

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
10 June 2009

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minute of Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held in the Committee Room, Fourth Floor, Council Building, 2 High Street, Perth on Wednesday 10 June 2009 at 2.00pm.

Present: Councillors K Baird, J Law, I Campbell, D Scott and B Vaughan and Mr I Jackson.

In Attendance: G Taylor, M Kay, J McMinn (until Art. 319(iii)), F Mackay (until Art. 319(iii)) and M Cochlan (until Art. 319(iii)) (all Chief Executive's); M Walker (until Art. 319(iii)), A Taylor (until Art. 319(iii)), H Jack (until Art. 319(iii)), C Webb (until Art. 319(iii)), J Gilchrist and C Flynn (all Education and Children's Services); J Walker (until Art. 319(v)), L Cameron (from Art. 319(iv)), L Cooper (from Art. 319(iv)) and C Johnston (from Art. 319(iv)) (all Housing and Community Care); K McNamara and H Hope (until Art. 319(iv)) and A Seggie (from Art. 319(iv)) (all the Environment Service); G Stevenson, Executive Director (Corporate Services), E Crighton (until Art. 319(iii)) and D Henderson (from Art. 319(iii)) (all Corporate Services);

Also Attending: A Borrows (Henderson Loggie)

Apologies for Absence: Councillor A Gaunt, Councillor W Lumsden and Mr D Stewart.

Councillor Baird, Convener, Presiding.

317. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made in terms of the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

318. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

(i) Scrutiny Committee

The Minute of Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee of 1 April 2009 (Arts. 180 – 184) was submitted, approved as a correct record and authorised for signature.

(ii) Audit Sub-Committee of 11 March 2009

The Minute of Meeting of the Audit Sub-Committee of 11 March 2009 was submitted and noted. (**Appendix I**)

319. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORTS

(i) Chief Executive's Service Annual Performance Report 2008/09

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive (09/293) reviewing the performance of the Chief Executive's Service for the period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009.

The Head of Democratic Services was present to answer members' questions on the report.

The Executive Director (Corporate Services) highlighted the benefits of technological advances to the work of the Council in a number of areas, and in particular relating to a caseload management system for elected members and the potential for upgrading meeting rooms to provide computer screens.

Resolved:

- (i) The Chief Executive's Service Annual Performance Report for the period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009 as detailed in the Appendix to Report 09/293 be accepted.
- (ii) It be noted that the Chief Executive's Service Annual Performance Report for the period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009 had been submitted to and accepted by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 10 June 2009.
- (iii) In relation to the future reporting to Committee on results of the employee engagement survey, consideration be given to providing (1) trend information over at least three surveys and (2) comparator information.

(ii) Corporate Services Annual Performance Report 2008/09

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Corporate Services) (09/281) reviewing the performance of Corporate Services for the period from 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009.

The Executive Director (Corporate Services) was present to answer members' questions in relation to the benefits of technological solutions to support the further development of mobile working and in analysing the results on Employee Review and Development completions.

Resolved:

- (i) The Corporate Services Annual Performance Report for the period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009 as detailed in the Appendix to Report 09/281 be accepted.
- (ii) It be noted that the Corporate Services Annual Performance Report for the period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009 had been submitted to and accepted by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 10 June 2009.

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- (iii) A report be submitted to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee in relation to details of financial or other constraints where these impacted on the ability to progress actions contained in Business Management Improvement Plans.

D HENDERSON ENTERED THE MEETING AT THIS POINT.

(iii) Education and Children's Services Annual Performance Report 2008/09

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Education and Children's Services) (09/295) reviewing the performance of Education and Children's Services for the period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009.

The Depute Director and Heads of Service from Education and Children's Services were present to answer members' questions in relation to the priority given to reducing class sizes and the robust action being taken and funding allocated to achieve this; the benefits of technological solutions such as GLOW (a virtual learning environment) in enhancing learning and teaching; and relationships with communities of interest, including community councils, in relation to the strategy for community engagement and locality planning, and the training required to underpin this.

Resolved:

- (i) The Education and Children's Services Annual Performance Report for the period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009 as detailed in the Appendix to Report 09/295 be accepted.
- (ii) It be noted that the Education and Children's Services Annual Performance Report for the period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009 had been submitted to and accepted by the Lifelong Learning Committee on 27 May 2009.
- (iii) Performance information not available at this time due to the timescale for submitting the report be submitted to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

I JACKSON, M WALKER, A TAYLOR, H JACK, C WEBB, J MCMINN, E CRIGHTON, F MACKAY AND M COCHLAN ALL LEFT THE MEETING AT THIS POINT.

A SEGGIE, L CAMERON, L COOPER AND C JOHNSTON JOINED THE MEETING AT THIS POINT.

(iv) The Environment Service Annual Performance Report 2008/09

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Environment) (09/262) reviewing Service performance against The Environment Service Business Management and Improvement Plan for the period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009.

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The Head of Environmental and Consumer Services and the Economic Development Manager were present to answer members' questions in relation to the response to the employee survey; fees for planning applications; the effect of the economic downturn on planning income without a corresponding reduction in workload; monitoring of economic healthcheck indicators; the effect of changes at Scottish Enterprise and noted that certain measures recorded were not targets but economic indicators outwith the Service's control.

Resolved:

- (i) The Environment Service Annual Performance Report for the period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009 as detailed in the Appendix to Report 09/262 be accepted.
- (ii) It be noted that the Environment Service Annual Performance Report for the period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009 had been submitted to and accepted by the Environment Committee on 3 June 2009.
- (iii) Performance information not available at this time due to the timescale for submitting the report be submitted to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.
- (iv) The members of the Committee be provided with information on the cost per tonne of kerbside recycling in multi-occupancy flats.
- (v) The Chief Executive seek the views of the Committee on the range of economic indicators to be reported.

H HOPE AND A SEGGIE LEFT THE MEETING AT THIS POINT.

(v) Housing and Community Care Annual Performance Report 2008/09

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Housing and Community Care) (09/230) providing details of performance against Housing and Community Care Business Management and Improvement Plan targets for the year ending 31 March 2009.

The Depute Director (Housing and Community Care), Head of Strategy and Support and the Neighbourhood Services Manager were present to answer members' questions in relation to the results of the employee survey; key pressure areas of affordable housing and homecare; breakdown of statistics on personal care; the level of qualified staff and the time taken to re-let vacant Council houses.

Resolved:

- (i) The Housing and Community Care Annual Performance Report for the period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009 as detailed in the Appendix to Report 09/230 be accepted.
- (ii) It be noted that the Housing and Community Care Annual Performance Report for the period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009 had been submitted to and accepted by the Housing and Health Committee on 13 May 2009.

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- (iii) It be noted that the Annual Performance Report will be published on the Council's website and a summary report will be made available for all stakeholders.
- (iv) Consideration be given to providing elected members with statistics submitted to the Scottish Government which may be of assistance in their consideration of performance.

J WALKER LEFT THE MEETING AT THIS POINT.

(vi) Freedom of Information Performance Report 2008

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Corporate Services) (09/294) providing information on the continuing good performance of the Council during 2008 in respect of the implementation of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

The Information Compliance Manager was present to answer members' questions in relation to time taken to respond to enquiries; reasons for requests and the difference between a request for information and a Freedom of Information request; the value of a central team in ensuring consistency of response; and the cost of providing the service.

Resolved:

The contents of Report 09/294 be noted.

320. VALEDICTORY

The Convener noted that this was Gavin Stevenson's last meeting of the Scrutiny Committee prior to his taking up his new post as Chief Executive of Dumfries and Galloway Council, thanked him for his contribution to the work of the Committee and wished him well for the future.

321. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE REVIEW

The Convener asked that it be minuted that the report on the Grounds Maintenance Review scheduled to be submitted to this meeting will be submitted to Committee on 16 September 2009.

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