

## SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minute of Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held in the Committee Room, Fourth Floor, Council Building, 2 High Street, Perth on Wednesday 14 September 2011 at 2.00pm.

Present: Councillors K Baird, I Campbell, A Gaunt, W Lumsden, B Vaughan and A Wylie.

In Attendance: G Taylor and M Kay (both Chief Executive's Service); T Yule, J Gilchrist, F Mackay and M Cochlan (all Education and Children's Services); J Walker, Depute Director (Housing and Community Care), C Mailer, J Newton and J Irons (Housing and Community Care); and B Renton (The Environment Service).

Apologies for Absence: Councillor D Scott and Mr D Stewart.

Councillor K Baird, Convener, Presiding

### 517. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

### 518. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

#### (i) Scrutiny Committee

The Minute of Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee of 15 June 2011 (Arts. 370-377) was submitted, approved as a correct record and authorised for signature.

#### (ii) Audit Sub-Committee

The Minute of Meeting of the Audit Sub-Committee of 25 May 2011 was submitted and noted. (*Appendix I*)

### 519. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2010/11 (Art 399)

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive (11/467) (1) presenting the Council's Annual Performance Report 2010/11 and (2) providing an overview of the Council's performance against the Corporate Plan 2009-12, the Single Outcome Agreement 2009-11 and the delivery of Best Value during 2010/11. The information contained in report 11/467 had been approved at the meeting of the Council on 29 June 2011.

In response to members' questions as to progress being made in the key areas for improvement set out in the Annual Performance Report, J Walker, Depute Director, Housing and Community Care, referred to (1) improvements which had been made within Housing Services in relation to Homeless and Resettlement

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
14 SEPTEMBER 2011

Services; (2) a meeting arranged with Registered Social Landlords to discuss development of a housing collaborative to make best use of resources; (3) the success of the neighbourhood services conferences; (4) the approach taken to managing rent arrears and garden maintenance and (5) the partnership approach being taken between Housing and Community Care services to provide support where needed.

In response to concern expressed by Councillor Vaughan on the progress on strengthening effective partnership working across Community Planning Partnerships and the need to involve elected members from the various Partnerships in the current review, also stressed by Councillor Wylie, T Yule, Head of Corporate Business Change and Information Technology, explained; (1) the current position on the review of the Community Planning Partnership structure and governance, in particular in relation to the Lifelong Learning Partnership; and (2) the implication for this of potential changes which may arise from the Scottish Government's response to the recommendations of the Christie Commission; and advised that Minutes of Community Planning Partnership meetings would in future be submitted to Council.

In response to a question from Councillor Vaughan in relation to the Employability Network Development Plan 2011-2014 attached as Appendix 1 to Report 11/435, which had been approved by the Housing and Health Committee at its meeting on 31 August 2011, and the reference made to the key theme of employability in Paragraph 3.5 of the Annual Performance Report, which she stressed should be a cross service issue, J Walker explained; (1) the background to this, and (2) the impact of economic conditions and welfare reform, and confirmed that a strategic approach was being taken on this with the Community Planning Partnership and that a report on the review of the strategy would be submitted to the Economic Partnership.

In response to a question from Councillor Campbell on the cost of Residents' Academies and the usefulness of qualifications gained by tenants, J Walker explained the benefits of tenant involvement and engagement.

In response to concern expressed by Councillor Wylie on non availability of performance data relating to pregnancy and breastfeeding in deprivation areas, T Yule referred to on-going dialogue with NHS Tayside on collection of data and suggested that the validity of current performance indicators in this area be considered by the Strategic Health Partnership.

Councillor Wylie referred to the figures relating to the number of wilful fires recorded and J Irons explained that this figure did not distinguish between categories of fires.

**Resolved:**

- (i) The Council's Annual Performance Report 2010/11 as detailed in Appendix A to Report 11/467 be approved.
- (ii) The Depute Director (Housing and Community Care) provide more detailed information on the work of Residents' Academies for circulation to members of the Committee following the meeting.

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
14 SEPTEMBER 2011

- (iii) More detailed information be provided on the figures relating to wilful fires for circulation to members of the Committee following the meeting.

**520. ASSURANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2011-14 (Art 400)**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive (11/468) outlining the Assurance and Improvement Plan prepared by the Local Area Network of audit, inspection and regulation bodies to inform the Council of the strategic scrutiny activity planned for 2011 to 2014. The information contained in report 11/468 had been noted at the meeting of the Council on 29 June 2011.

**Resolved:**

The Assurance and Improvement Plan for 2011 - 2014 as detailed in Report 11/468 be noted.

**521. ANNUAL REVIEW OF RISK MANAGEMENT (Art 525/10)**

There was submitted a report by the Head of Corporate Business Change and Information Technology (11/469) (1) detailing the progress made in embedding risk management across the Council in 2010/11 and (2) outlining priorities for 2011/12.

The Committee heard a presentation by Fiona Mackay, Partnership and Improvement Manager, Education and Children's Services on the annual review of service risks and risk management activity. F Mackay, T Yule, J Gilchrist and J Walker responded to questions from members for additional information on (1) the identified risks and the controls which had been put in place to mitigate those risks; (2) the level of risk embedded within Council Services and; (3) how new risks are identified.

**Resolved:**

The progress made in implementing the Council's risk management strategy during 2010/11 be noted.

**522. SHARED PROCUREMENT SERVICE – ANNUAL REPORT 2010-11 (Art 364)**

There was submitted a report by the Depute Director (Housing and Community Care) (11/470) summarising the Council's progress towards procurement reform for the financial year 2010/11 against the objectives set in the approved Procurement Strategy 2008-2011. The information contained in report 11/470 had been noted by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 15 June 2011.

J Walker was present to answer members' questions on the report in relation to (1) the background to the procurement capability assessment scoring figures for Contract and Supplier Management which are based on the level of evidence available rather than the level of compliance; (2) the reasons for the reduction in this measure; (3) the action being taken to provide evidence of compliance; and (4) the extent of use of external competition in testing the value provided by collaborative contracts.

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
14 SEPTEMBER 2011

**Resolved:**

- (i) The contents of Report 11/470 submitted in accordance with the Council's approved procurement objectives as defined in the Procurement Strategy 2008-11 be noted.
- (ii) The Depute Director (Housing and Community Care) provide information for circulation to members of the Committee following the meeting on the reasons for the capability assessment for Contract / Supplier Management having moved from 14% to 11% between 2009 and 2010.

M COCHLAN LEFT THE MEETING AT THIS POINT.

**523. THE SOCIAL WORK INSPECTION AGENCY (SWIA) REPORT ON PRISON BASED SOCIAL WORK SERVICE AT HMP PERTH AND HMP OPEN ESTATE IMPROVEMENT PLAN (Art 491)**

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Housing and Community Care) (11/450) updating the Committee on the improvement plan developed in response to the Social Work Inspection Agency's report on prison based social work service at HMP Perth and HMP Open Estate, which had been approved by the Community Safety Committee at its meeting on 7 September, 2011.

J Newton, Improvement Manager, Criminal Justice Service, was present to answer members' questions on the report in relation to (1) the position on the provision of one-to-one offence focussed work to assist in reducing re-offending, which required to be balanced against the priorities of the Scottish Prison Service as set out in the Service Level Agreement in relation to the statutory enquiries and parole reports; (2) negotiations on the terms of the new Service Level Agreement to take effect from April 2012; (3) the delay in the response from the Scottish Prison Service to the SWIA inspection report; and (4) whether feedback was gathered from service users after release.

C Mailer provided information on action taken by Housing and Community Care to assist integration back into the community following release.

**Resolved**

- (i) The content of the improvement plan attached as Appendix I to Report 11/450 be approved.
- (ii) An update report be submitted to both the Community Safety Committee and Scrutiny Committee in three months time.

**524. IMPROVEMENTS TO HOMELESS SERVICES FOLLOWING RE-INSPECTION BY THE SCOTTISH HOUSING REGULATOR (Art 473)**

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Housing and Community Care) (11/471) advising on progress against the areas identified for improvement by the Scottish Housing Regulator following its inspection of homeless services in June 2010. The information contained in report 11/471 had been noted by the Housing and Health Committee at its meeting on 31 August 2011.

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
14 SEPTEMBER 2011

C Mailer, Allocations and Homeless Manager, Housing and Community Care, was present to answer members' questions on the report in relation to users' attitudes to the location of local area offices for access to homeless services.

**Resolved:**

The contents of Report 11/471 and the improvements made since the re-inspection of the homeless service in June 2010, be noted.

**525. REGISTRATION OF BIRTHS, DEATHS, MARRIAGES AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS – INSPECTION REPORTS BY REGISTRAR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (Art 526/10)**

There was submitted a report by the Head of Democratic Services (11/472) commenting on the annual inspection reports from the National Records of Scotland (General Register Office for Scotland until March 2011) on the provision of registration services in the Perth and Kinross local government area in 2010.

G Taylor, Head of Democratic Services, was present to answer members' questions on the report and in particular to address members' concerns on the performance levels of the agency provider at Coupar Angus and the need for this to be addressed.

**Resolved:**

- (i) The contents of Report 11/472 with regard to the annual inspection reports by the National Records of Scotland (General Register Office for Scotland until March 2011) on the provision of registration services in the Perth and Kinross local government area be noted.
- (ii) The Head of Democratic Services be requested to continue to progress options for the provision of registration services in Coupar Angus.

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