

STANDARDS AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minute of Meeting of the Standards and Scrutiny Committee held in the Council Chambers, Fourth Floor, Council Building, 2 High Street, Perth on Wednesday 14 June 2006 at 2.00pm.

Present: Councillors Barrett, Coburn, Jack, Lennie and Lloyd, Mr I Jackson, Mr C Mackie and Mr F Shewan.

In Attendance: B Malone (Chief Executive) (from Art 432-434(i)), P Kyle (for Art. 434(i)), M Cochlan (from Art. 434(i)), J Dean (Art. 431(iv) to 434(iv)), P Wallace (from Art. 434(i)) (all Chief Executive's Service); I Innes, G Taylor and K Lawrie (from Art. 434(i) to 434(ii)), H Mackenzie and J Symon (from Art. 434(i)), R Thomson (from Art. 434(i) to 434(iv)), A Nairn, M Kay, J McLuckie, M McLeish (all Corporate Services); B Renton and W Kirkpatrick (to Art 432), F Patton and L Mason (to Art 431) (all Education & Children's Services); I Sleith and E Coyle (from Art. 434(i) (Environment)); D Roberts, Executive Director (Housing & Community Care) (from Arts. 434(i) to 434(v)(b)) and L Cameron (from Art. 434(i)) (Housing & Community Care).

Apology for Absence: Councillors Ellis and Mair.

Councillor Lloyd, Convener, Presiding.

429. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

430. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

(i) Standards and Scrutiny Committee – 3 May 2006

The Minute of Meeting of the Standards and Scrutiny Committee of 3 May 2006 (Arts. 301-304) was submitted, approved as a correct record and authorised for signature.

(ii) Audit Sub-Committee – 30 March 2006

The Minute of Meeting of the Audit Sub-Committee of 30 March 2006 was submitted and noted (**Appendix I**).

THE COMMITTEE AGREED THAT THE FOLLOWING TWO ITEMS BE TAKEN AT THIS POINT.

431. HMle, CARE COMMISSION AND EDUCATION AUTHORITY REPORTS ON STANDARDS AND QUALITY IN SCHOOLS, PRE-SCHOOL CENTRES AND OTHER ESTABLISHMENTS

There was submitted a report by the Interim Executive Director (Education and Children's Services) (06/456) advising the Committee of the key findings and progress made with the main points for action as set out in the ten summary reports (Appendices 1-10 to Report 06/456) from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMle), the Care Commission and the Education Authority, relating to Inchtute Primary School, Stanley Primary School Nursery Class, St John's RC Primary School Nursery Class, Perth College Nursery, Methven Under Fives, The Kindergarten, Methven, Inchtute Primary School Nursery Class, Glenlyon Primary School Nursery Class, Dunning Stepping Stones and Breadalbane Academy.

Officers from Education and Children's Services were present to answer members' questions on the following, particularly in relation to the action being taken to address issues raised within the reports.

(a) Inchtute Primary School

Resolved:

The findings of the HMle Inspection Report on the standards and quality in Inchtute Primary School, and the action being taken to address issues of concern raised, be noted.

- (b) **Stanley Primary School Nursery Class**
Resolved:
The findings of the HMle/Care Commission Integrated Inspection Report on the standards and quality in Stanley Primary School Nursery Class be noted.
- (c) **St John's RC Primary School Nursery Class**
Resolved:
The findings of the HMle/Care Commission Integrated Inspection Report on the standards and quality in St John's RC Primary School Nursery Class be noted.
- (d) **Perth College Nursery**
Resolved:
The findings of the HMle/Care Commission Integrated Inspection Report on the standards and quality in Perth College Nursery be noted.
- (e) **Methven Under Fives**
Resolved:
The findings of the HMle/Care Commission Integrated Inspection Report on the standards and quality in Methven Under Fives be noted.
- (f) **The Kindergarten, Methven**
Resolved:
The findings of the HMle/Care Commission Integrated Inspection Report on the standards and quality in The Kindergarten, Methven be noted.
- (g) **Inchture Primary School Nursery Class**
Resolved:
(i) The findings of the HMle/Care Commission Integrated Inspection Report on the standards and quality in Inchture Primary School Nursery Class be noted.
(ii) HMle be requested to make clear in reports to which member of staff (substantive head teacher/acting head teacher) the Inspectorate is referring.
- (h) **Glenlyon Primary School Nursery Class**
Resolved:
The findings of the HMle/Care Commission Integrated Inspection Report on the standards and quality in Glenlyon Primary School Nursery Class be noted.
- (i) **Dunning Stepping Stones**
Resolved:
The findings of the HMle/Care Commission Integrated Inspection Report on the standards and quality in Dunning Stepping Stones be noted.
- (j) **Breadalbane Academy**
Resolved:
The findings of the HMle Inspection Report on the standards and quality in Breadalbane Academy be noted.

432. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT – EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

There was submitted a report by the Interim Executive Director (Education & Children's Services) (06/450) reviewing the performance of Education & Children's Services for the period 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006.

Officers from Education and Children's Services were present to answer members' questions on the report in relation to behaviour targets as they related to the achievement strategy; the improvements made since the community learning and development Inspection, further development of pupil tracking, target setting and reporting process and an explanation of figures relating to attainment in English and Mathematics for looked after children.

Resolved:

The contents of Report 06/450 be noted.

MR JACKSON, MR MACKIE AND MR SHEWAN LEFT THE MEETING AT THIS POINT.

433. SCOTTISH PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN REPORT

There was submitted a report by the Depute Director (Corporate Services) (06/457) presenting a recent report into a complaint against Perth and Kinross Council from the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

The Chief Executive and the Council's Standards and Compliance Officer were present to answer members' questions on the report in relation to response times to complaints, the possibility of extending these to all incoming mail being addressed through the Council's proposed customer care policy and the procedures in place for Freedom of Information requests.

Resolved:

- (i) The investigation report and implications arising from its findings be noted.
- (ii) Consideration be given to developing a protocol for elected members on responses to correspondence and complaints as part of the customer care policy being produced.

434. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORTS

(i) Chief Executive's Service

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive (06/449) reviewing the performance of the Chief Executive's Service for the period 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006.

The Chief Executive and Officers from her Service and the Head of Legal Services were present to answer members' questions on the report in relation to the corporate governance framework, developments at Perth Harbour, public perception of the brand strategy, the need to communicate success and the possibility of setting up a civic forum.

Resolved:

The contents of Report 06/449 be noted.

(ii) Corporate Services

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Corporate Services) (06/460) reviewing the performance of Corporate Services for the period 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006.

Officers from Corporate Services were present to answer members' questions on the report in relation to Legal Services' case management system; and the impact on staff of service reviews.

Resolved:

The contents of Report 06/460 be noted.

(iii) The Environment Service

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Environment) (06/458) reviewing the performance of Planning & Transportation (Appendix A) and Environment Services (Appendix B) for the period 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006.

Officers from The Environment Service were present to answer members' questions on the report relating to the significant workload and public interest in relation to the revision of the Perth Area and Perth Central Area Local Plans, emergency response times of contractor, the excellence of public transport and staffing of the health and safety team carrying out planned inspections.

Resolved:

The contents of Report 06/458 be noted.

(iv) Housing & Community Care

(a) Housing & Building Services

(i) Housing

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Housing & Community Care) (06/459) reviewing the performance of Housing and Building Services for the period 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006.

The Executive Director (Housing & Community Care) was present to answer members' questions on the report relating to securing sites for affordable housing, time taken to process council house sales due to new legislation and staffing issues, the need to provide comparisons in estate management information for community warden and action to be taken on alcohol and drug issues.

Resolved:

The contents of Report 06/459 be noted.

(ii) Building Services Performance Report 2004/05

There was submitted a joint report by the Executive Director (Housing & Community Care) and the Executive Director (Corporate Services) (06/455) submitting for approval the results of the Building Services monitoring against targets in the Business Plan for the financial year 2004-2005.

Resolved:

The annual performance report detailed in Report 06/455 for Building Services be approved.

(b) Community Care

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Housing & Community Care) (06/451) reviewing the performance of Community Care for the period 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006.

The Executive Director (Housing & Community Care) was present to answer members' questions on the report relating to employee review and development targets, capacity for care homes for older people and the increase in those taking up the integrated drug and alcohol service.

Resolved:

- (i) The contents of Report 06/451 be noted.
- (ii) The Executive Director (Housing and Community Care) provide members of the Committee with additional information on the review of work force issues across the care home sector.

435. IMPROVEMENTS TO THE PLANNING SERVICE (ART. 928/05)

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (The Environment Service) (06/452) informing of progress made on the Improvement Plan approved by the Standards and Scrutiny Committee on 7 December 2005.

Resolved:

- (i) The progress made on implementing various measures identified in the report submitted to this Committee on 7 December 2005 be noted.
- (ii) The improved statistical performance relating to Development Management and Building Standards in 2005/2006 be noted.

436. OVERVIEW OF THE 2005 LOCAL AUTHORITY AUDITS

There was submitted a joint report by the Chief Executive and Executive Director (Corporate Services) (06/453) providing a summary of the Overview of the 2005 Local Authority Audits published by Audit Scotland in March 2006.

Resolved:

- (i) The contents of Report 06/453 be noted.

- (ii) It be ensured that any issues arising for individual services be taken forward and reported to the appropriate Committee for consideration.

437. STATUTORY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2004/05 SUMMARY OF AUDIT SCOTLAND'S COMPARISON OF SCOTTISH COUNCILS

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive (06/454) providing information on the following key areas: (a) a summary of Perth & Kinross Council SPI results for 2004/2005 in comparison with other Scottish Councils; (b) how Audit Scotland measured performance; (c) where Perth and Kinross Council had improved; (d) how Perth and Kinross are improving in comparison with other Scottish Councils; and (e) what steps were required to ensure further improvement.

Resolved:

- (i) The performance of Perth and Kinross Council in comparison with other Scottish Councils be noted.
- (ii) Any relevant improvement actions identified in Report 06/454 be taken forward.

438. COUNCIL COMPLAINTS SIX MONTHLY REPORT

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Corporate Services) (06/461) outlining the performance of the Council Complaints Procedure for the period 1 October 2005 to 31 March 2006 and highlighting some issues raised by the analysis of this data.

Resolved:

- (i) The contents of Report 06/461 be noted.
- (ii) The importance of staff training in customer care standards be recognised.