

SERVICE AND PARTNERSHIPS PERFORMANCE PANEL

Minutes of hybrid webcast meeting on
9 January 2024 at 10.00 a.m.

Present
in County
Buildings: Councillors Philip Saxton (Chair); Kenneth Bell, Chris Cullen and George Weir.

Present
Remotely: Councillor Mary Kilpatrick.

Apologies: Councillors Ian Cochrane, Mark Dixon and Gavin Scott.

Attending
in County
Buildings: G. Hunter, Assistant Director – Communities; K. Briggs, Service Lead – Legal and Licensing; K. Anderson, Service Lead – Policy, Performance and Community Planning; S. MacMillan, Co-ordinator – Strategic Change Programme; C. McPhail, Co-ordinator (Economic Development); and A. Gibson, Committee Services Officer.

Chair's Remarks.

The Chair

- (1) welcomed everyone to the meeting, thanked Councillor Cullen in his duties as the previous Vice-Chair and welcomed Councillor Weir as the newly appointed Vic-Chair of this Panel; and
- (2) outlined the procedures for conducting this meeting and advised that this meeting would be broadcast live.

1. Sederunt and Declarations of Interest.

The Chair called the Sederunt for the meeting and having called the roll, confirmed that that there were no declarations of interest by Members of the Panel in terms of Council Standing Order No. 17 and the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

2. Minutes of previous meeting.

The Minutes of 21 November 2023 ([issued](#)) were submitted and approved subject to an amendment to item 7 "Complaints – Scrutiny Update" to read in the 3rd paragraph "A Member of the Panel commented on how useful the information contained in the report was and requested that the table detailing a Breakdown of Complaints by Service on pages 4 and 5 in Appendix 1 should be ordered by frequency in future." It was also agreed that, in the same item, where it was agreed that the Service Lead – Destination South Ayrshire provide clarity on the number of complaints received in connection to leisure and namely golf, this should have been added to this Panel's Action Log. The Assistant Director – Communities advised that he would ensure that the Action Log was updated accordingly and that the information requested was provided to Members prior to the next meeting of this Panel.

3. **Action Log and Work Programme**

There was submitted an update of the Action Log and Work Programme ([issued](#)) for this Panel.

The Panel heard the Assistant Director – Communities give a verbal update on the Action Log and Work Programme.

The Panel

Decided:

- (1) to agree the current position with regard to the Action Log and to note that an additional entry would be made to the Action Log, as detailed in item 2 above; and
- (2) to note the current status of the Work Programme.

4. **South Ayrshire Way Strategic Change Programme**

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 21 December 2023 by the Director of Strategic Change and Communities providing an update on the South Ayrshire Way Strategic Change Programme.

A Member of the Panel referred to paragraph 4.5 of the report where it stated “The Programme has worked with almost every Service in the Council to deliver projects since 2021.” The Co-ordinator – Strategic Change Programme indicated that this was a typing error and that the Programme had worked with all Services within the Council.

Having heard a Member of the Panel refer to the List of Projects on the Strategic Change Programme, as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report and ask why two of the projects, namely Manual Timesheet Replacement and Housing Online were marked as red, the Co-ordinator – Strategic Change Programme advised of the position of these two projects.

Having heard a Member of the Panel, it was noted that staffing posts for this Project were created to help administer this Programme. The Member then referred to the statement in the report that “to date, the Programme has identified savings equating to 16% of its financial target” and questioned whether any savings were being made, taking into consideration the outlay for the new posts. The Service Lead – Policy, Performance and Community Planning advised that he would provide Members with the details of salary costs to date. He also advised that Council’s Strategic Change agenda was not just about savings but also about business change.

A Member of the Panel advised that it would have been helpful to have had more detailed information provided in the report, particularly in relation to projects encompassed by the Programme. Following discussion, it was agreed that a Members’ Briefing Session would be organised providing the rationale on the projects that had been chosen, timelines and current progress, etc.

Having heard the Assistant Director – Communities, it was noted that the Assistant Director – Strategic Change would be overseeing work in this area over the next few years.

A Member of the Panel asked why there was only one high rated risk mentioned in the report, although Appendix1 indicated that there were two high rated risks. The Co-ordinator – Strategic Change Programme advised that the risk that had not been mentioned had been resolved. The Service Lead – Policy Performance and Community Planning advised that, in future reports, more detail would be provided.

Following a question from a Member of the Panel in relation to a project on the Programme “New Contact Platform”, the Co-ordinator (Strategic Change Programme) provided detail in relation to this individual project.

Having scrutinised the contents of the report in the context of delivering objectives of the Council’s Change Programme, the Panel

Decided:

- (1) to agree that an update be reported to this Panel prior to this year’s summer recess; and
- (2) to otherwise note the contents of the report.

5. Update on ERDF Business Support.

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 21 December 2023 by the Director of Strategic Change and Communities providing an update to the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Ayrshire Business Gateway Competitiveness Programme, as approved at Cabinet at its meeting on 15 February 2023.

Following a question from a Member of the Panel, it was noted that this Fund was allocated across all local authorities with the Council then deciding how best to allocate these funds.

Having heard a Member of the Panel enquire when the Covid grants came into play, did this have an effect on ERDF funding or did both work in tandem with each other, the Co-ordinator (Economic Development) advised that they worked in tandem but the requests for growth grants were significantly reduced at that time.

Following a question from a Member of the Panel, it was noted that small and medium sized enterprises could apply for ERDF Business support.

A Member of the Panel enquired as to how small and medium sized organisations were made aware of this funding. The Co-ordinator (Economic Development) advised that companies could apply online or through Business Gateway but would provide more information in this regard to Members by way of a Briefing Note.

Having heard a Member of the Panel enquire how a small company could employ locals to expand a business and how this would be achieved and if this would be undertaken through Thriving Communities and Business Gateway, the Co-ordinator (Economic Development) advised how this would be undertaken.

The Panel

Decided: to note the successful completion of the ERDF business support programme.

The meeting ended at 10.35 a.m.

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