

## SERVICE AND PERFORMANCE PANEL

Minutes of a remote Webcast meeting  
On 16 November 2021 at 10 a.m.

**Present:** Councillors Alec Clark (Chair), Andy Campbell, Douglas Campbell, Hugh Hunter, Derek McCabe and Bob Pollock.

**Apologies:** Councillors Laura Brennan-Whitefield and Iain Campbell.

**Attending:** D Hutchison, Depute Chief Executive and Director – People; M Newall, Assistant Director – People; T. Baulk, Head of Finance and ICT; W Carlaw, Service Lead – Democratic Governance; W Wesson, Service Lead – HR, Payroll and Employee Services; J Wood, Senior Manager (Planning and Performance) HSCP, L. Reid, Assistant Director – Place, S. McCall, Service Lead – ICT Enterprise Architecture, D. McVey, Team Leader (Information Governance), A. Nelson – Co-ordinator – Democratic Support, J. McClure - Committee Services Lead Officer, F. Maher – Temporary Committee Services Officer, E. Moore, Clerical Assistant – Democratic and Governance

### 1. Sederunt and Declarations of Interest

The Chair took the Sederunt and outlined the procedures for conducting this meeting and advised that this meeting would be broadcast live, until Agenda Item 5, when live broadcasting would end. The Chair also advised that, with the agreement of the Panel, the electronic voting system would be utilised. The Panel so concurred.

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 Meeting

The minutes of 14 September 2021 (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. The Assistant Director – People provided the Panel with a verbal update on the Action Log and Work Programme and confirmed that all current Actions had now been completed. The next update on the Work Programme was due in January 2022.

The Panel

**Decided:** to note the updated Action Log and Work Programme.

### 4. Complaints – Scrutiny Update - Period: 1 April to 30 September 2021

There was submitted a Report dated 5 November 2021 by the Head of Legal, HR and Regulatory Services providing complaints performance information for the period from 1 April to 30 September 2021 and comparing performance to the same reporting period in 2020/21 which reflected the statutory reporting categories required by the Scottish Public

Services Ombudsman (SPSO), as well as information on how the Council improved services following Stage 2 and Ombudsman complaints.

The Service Lead – Democratic Governance introduced the report and invited the Team Leader (Information Governance) to answer any questions raised by Members.

Comments were made by Members in relation to:

4.1 Page 8 of the Report entitled SPSO Indicator 7 – Customer Satisfaction. The Team Leader (Information Governance) was asked why there was such a drop in numbers and she advised that, as with previous surveys, members of the public could use this survey as an opportunity to raise further concerns. The Team Leader (Information Governance) acknowledged the requirement for further staff training and advised that there was currently an online training programme for refresher training for staff members.

4.2 Due to the Covid pandemic, customer service centres had closed and the question was asked if this could skew the figures. The Team Leader (Information Governance) acknowledged that feedback was required to reflect this in the comments and that there was nothing specific about members of the public not having a forum for face-to-face complaints.

4.3 Filling in the Survey – this was purely voluntary and perhaps only the unhappy members of the public were more likely to do so. It was suggested that a footnote be added to reflect the number of complaints / % of outcome.

The Team Leader (Information Governance) advised that there had been a transition to a new 'GOSS' system; that she would be looking at how surveys were used, with a greater emphasis on customer satisfaction and that the Council was working with a complaints handling network to ascertain more meaningful questions in order to get more meaningful feedback.

4.4 Page 6 – Outcome of Escalated Complaints – it was noted that the vast majority were not upheld.

The Chair advised that a process was being followed and that hopefully feedback had been given to the complainers.

The Team Leader (Information Governance) stated that in terms of escalated complaints, these numbers reflected complainers that remained unsatisfied and that when complaints were not upheld, the complainants were entitled to make an appeal to the Ombudsman.

Having heard a Member ask who investigated complaints when they went to Stage 2, the Team Leader (Information Governance) advised that Stage 1 investigation was dealt with by front line service. Stage 2 required a more senior member of staff who may, or may not, be allocated within that service area. They would review the Stage 1 complaint and consider those matters highlighted by the customer as remaining unresolved.

4.5 Customer Service Centre closures (in particular the Wallace Tower) – did we know how this had affected the Council? The Team Leader (Information Governance) advised that statistics were available on what route the customer had taken and advised that she would be happy to compile information (for the past 2-3 years) prior to the pandemic to show whether there had been an increase in online, telephone complaints, etc. Prior to the pandemic, people had been taking advantage of the online complaints systems.

A Member commented that many members of the public in the elderly age bracket missed the human contact of a Customer Service Centre.

4.6 Page 10 of the report – Breakdown of Complaints by Service. Leisure seemed higher than usual, especially when compared with previous years and the Team Leader (Information Governance) recognised this and advised that a trend had been established due to changes in the golf booking system; and that the majority of complaints in relation to this had not been upheld on the basis that it was seen by the majority of the public as an improvement.

4.7 Targeted and orchestrated complaints by some golfers – how can this be managed going forward? The Team Leader (Information Governance) advised that there was an Unacceptable Actions Policy which could be invoked if behaviours were inappropriate towards staff and services. She advised that a decision could be taken to advise complainers that the Council would be invoking the policy and, if they felt aggrieved, they could refer this to the SPSO, who were an independent body.

4.8 Staff complaints had dropped but Procedures & Policies were moving in the wrong direction. The Member commented that it was very difficult to get the public's buy-in and asked if there were any lessons learned / briefing packs that could be used any time a substantial change occurred so the Council could be ahead of the curve.

The Team Leader (Information Governance) advised that the Comms Team worked actively with the Services when changes were being made/implemented. In terms of complaints being received about, for example, the Waste Management booking system – when the Council started to see a trend, they could drill down further and a member of Waste Management could be invited along to the Panel to discuss in more detail.

The Chair welcomed this and advised that any other service area with a high number of complaints should invite an officer along to address future reports.

The Chair commented that the pandemic had affected so many services and he commended staff in the Council services areas for performing so well.

The Panel, having scrutinised the contents of the report

**Decided:** to request a further report to a future meeting of this Panel providing an update on the Council's complaints performance during the period 1 October 2021 to 31 March 2022

### **Exclusion of Press and Public**

The Panel resolved, in terms of Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, that the press and public be excluded from the remaining item of business on the agenda, on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information in terms of paragraph 14 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

## **5. 2021/36 Cyber Security Internal Audit**

There was submitted a Report dated 9 November 2021 (issued to members only) by the Head of Finance and ICT providing the Panel with information on progress made to date to deliver against the risks/actions identified in the Security Maturity Assessment carried out by an external consultant and as reported in the 2021/36 Cyber Security Internal Audit Report.

The Service Lead – ICT Enterprise Architecture talked through the report in detail, highlighted the work that had commenced and responded to Members' questions.

The Panel

**Decided:** to note the progress made to meet the actions arising from the Security Maturity assessment report, as provided in the attached Addendum (confidential) to this report.

6. **Consideration of Disclosure of the above Confidential Report**

The Panel

**Decided:** to authorise the disclosure under Standing Order 32.4 of part of the following report but that the addendum should remain confidential:-

- 2021/36 Cyber Security Internal Audit.

The meeting ended at 11:24 a.m.