

SERVICE AND PERFORMANCE PANEL

Minutes of hybrid webcast meeting on
20 September 2022 at 10.00 a.m.

Present
in County
Buildings: Councillors Bob Shields (Chair), Gavin Scott and George Weir.

Present
Remotely: Councillors Kenneth Bell, Ian Cochrane and Chris Cullen.

Attending
in County
Buildings: M. Newall, Assistant Director – People; W. Carlaw, Service Lead – Democratic Governance; W. Wesson, Chief HR Adviser; G. Farrell, Service Lead - Organisational Development and Customer Services; J. Andrew, Co-ordinator (OD, Change and Improvement); D. McVey, Team Leader (Information and Governance); A. Gibson, Committee Services Officer; and C. McCallum, Committee Services Assistant.

Attending
Remotely: T. Burns, Service Lead – Asset Management and Community Asset Transfer; M. Houston, Service Lead – Trading Standards and Environmental Health; and C. McGhee, Chief Internal Auditor.

1. Chair's Remarks.

The Chair

- (1) welcomed everyone to the meeting; and
- (2) outlined the procedures for conducting this meeting and advised that this meeting would be broadcast live.

2. 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.

3. Minutes of previous meeting.

The Minutes of 23 August 2022 ([issued](#)) were submitted and approved.

4. Action Log and Work Programme

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

The Panel

Decided:

- (1) to agree that the actions in the Log had been completed; and
- (2) to note the current status of the Work Programme and that the report entitled “the South Ayrshire Way Strategic Change Programme - Preparing for the Future” to be considered at the next meeting on 25 October 2022 would now be presented by the Assistant Director – Place.

5. Council Plan 2018-22 (2020 Mid-Term Refresh/Extended – April to June 2022).

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 6 September 2022 by the Assistant Director – People to allow the Panel the opportunity to review progress made towards achieving the strategic objectives contained within the Council Plan 2018-22 (2020 Mid-Term Refresh).

The Assistant Director – People gave an update on a number of the indicators.

Having heard a Member of the Panel ask that the emergence of the developing and improved Housing Plan be tied into the necessary indicators listed, the Assistant Director - People ensured that this would be undertaken.

CPL 4.01 No of visitors to the Heritage Hub.

Having heard from a Member of the Panel, it was agreed that the Assistant Director – People would provide the Panel with information of when it was likely that the Heritage Hub would open.

CPL 6.09 Number of public electric charging points across South Ayrshire.

Having heard a Member of the Panel enquire if there was a Council Programme to install electrical car charging points in South Ayrshire, the Assistant Director – People confirmed that there was.

COPL 01.4a Develop an integrated approach to Trauma-Informed Practice in partnership with Community Planning Partners.

Members of the Panel discussed the progress of the Trauma Informed Working Group in achieving its goals.

COPL 05.1a Deliver on the Engagement Strategy and ensure meaningful engagement with our stakeholders.

Following a question from a Member of the Panel, it was agreed that the Assistant Director – People would provide the Panel with an update on the delivery of the Engagement Strategy.

SO5.3 01 Proportion of the agreed Housing Capital Programme that was delivered during the year.

After a Member of the Panel enquired why the figures were not higher, the Service Lead – Asset Management and Community Asset Transfer advised that a number of the charges were not received until later in the year and this may have impacted the figures and therefore the figures maybe did not reflect the true position.

The Panel

Decided: to note

- (1) the progress through the narrative set out within Appendix 1 of the report;
- (2) the performance indicators reported in Appendix 2 of the report;
- (3) that this report contained indicators that would be reported quarterly; and
- (4) that all performance indicators had been reported to the Service and Performance Panel on 23 August 2022.

6. Corporate Workforce Plan Update.

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 6 September 2022 by the Assistant Director – People providing an update of the Council 2018-2022 Workforce Plan.

The Panel

Decided: to agree the proposals detailing the development of the Council 2022-25 Workforce Plan, which would be submitted to this Panel in October 2022.

7. FOISA/EIR Annual Report 2021/22.

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 6 September 2022 by the Head of Legal and Regulatory Services providing an update on the Council's response times and the volume of requests made under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA) and the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 (EIRs) by subject matter and type of requester during the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022.

A Panel Member referred to the decrease of 17% in the number of EIR requests being issued within 20 working days and enquired if this was due to a lack of staff. The Team Leader (Information and Governance) advised that the lack of staff was an issue in most Scottish Local Authorities at present but that this Council was looking at Microsoft 365 to improve matters.

A Member of the Panel was of the view that the publication of more policies online would lessen the amount of information requests. The Team Leader (Information Governance) advised that work would be ongoing with the various Council Services over the next year to improve matters and also expanding on the “frequently asked questions” for various projects. It was also noted that work was ongoing with staff training.

Following a question from Members of the Panel regarding the recording of information, the Team Leader (Information Governance) advised that she would look at the number of FOI requests from the public passed on by the Customer Services Team and those which the Information Governance Team could record when the information was readily available.

Having scrutinised the contents of the report and having thanked the Team for their work, the Panel

Decided: to request a further report to a future meeting of this Panel providing an update on the Council’s FOISA/EIR performance during the period 1 July 2022 and 30 June 2023.

8. Employee Absence 2021/2022.

There was submitted a report ([issued](#)) of 28 July 2022 by the Head of Legal and Regulatory Services providing detailed information and analysis of sickness absence across Council services for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

Having heard a Member of the Panel raise the Access to Work Programme, the Chief HR Adviser outlined that it had been introduced in October last year and that she would provide the Panel with information on its take up.

A Member of the Panel advised that he was concerned with the absence statistics; and the Chief HR Adviser indicated that, in the Health and Social Care Partnership, support mechanisms were being examined.

There was discussion on COVID absences.

The Panel noted that absenteeism was being factored into the Workforce Plan.

It was also noted that the Chief HR Adviser would advise the Panel if absenteeism was being incorporated into the Risk Register.

The Panel

Decided:

- (1) to note the information presented in the context of the Local Government Benchmarking Information previously reported; and
- (2) to agree that a further update be presented to this Panel in six months time.

The meeting ended at 11.05 a.m.