

**MINUTES of MEETING of PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, KILMORY, LOCHGILPHEAD
on THURSDAY, 26 FEBRUARY 2015**

Present:

Ian M Ross (Chair)

Councillor Maurice Corry
Councillor Anne Horn
Councillor John McAlpine

Councillor Sandy Taylor
Douglas Cowan
Andrew McClure

Attending:

Douglas Hendry, Executive Director – Customer Services
Charles Reppke, Head of Governance and Law
Cleland Sneddon, Executive Director – Community Services
Pippa Milne – Executive Director – Development and Infrastructure
Jane Fowler, Head of Improvement and HR
Peter Cupples, Finance Manager
Patricia O' Neill, Central Governance Manager
Chief Superintendent Helen Swann, Police Scotland
Chief Inspector, Garry Stitt, Police Scotland
Jim Smith, Head of Roads and Amenity Services
Lesley Sweetman, Performance and Business Manager
David Clements, Programme Manager
Seona Laird, Customer Services
Shona Barton, Area Committee Manager
Fiona Ferguson, Directorate Support Officer
Helen MacLeod, Community Services

The Chair of the PRS Committee intimated that he had received an urgent Notice of Motion which he read to the Committee as follows:

“In view of the continuing public interest and the likelihood of scrutiny from external bodies, I request that, under its Terms of Reference, the PRS Committee consider the decision of A&BC to reject the offer from SCCDC to purchase Castle Toward from A&BC, particularly in the light of the very substantial support from Highlands & Islands Enterprise, the Scottish Government and the overwhelming majority of the community of South Cowal”

Proposer: Councillor Bruce Marshall

Seconder: Councillor Vivien Dance

The Chair indicated that, while satisfied that the motion fell within the Terms of Reference specified for the PRS Committee, it was not his intention to deal with the matter as an urgent item today. He ruled that that the matter would be dealt with as a substantive item on the agenda at the May meeting of the Committee to allow the appropriate input to be assembled which would enable the PRS Committee to give effect to its terms of reference.

The Committee went on to welcome Andrew McClure, Group Manager, Community Safety, Scottish Fire and Rescue to the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor Iain Angus MacDonald.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of meeting of the Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee held on 20 November 2014 were approved as a correct record.

4. SCRUTINY OF POLICE SCOTLAND

The Chief Superintendent gave a brief update on Special Constables, Strengthening Local Policing (Proposal) and Firearms Licensing in Argyll and Bute, and then went on to present the third quarterly report for Argyll and Bute for 2014/15 to the Committee.

The report detailed statistics on;

- Road Safety & Road Crime
- Violence, Disorder & Antisocial Behaviour
- Protecting Vulnerable People
- Major Crime and Counter Terrorism; and
- Acquisitive Crime

Discussion focussed on the detection of rape crime; reduction in violent, disorder and antisocial behaviour crime; road safety; terrorism and the merging of two police divisions. It was also noted that it was important for communities to be reassured that there were sufficient local police officers in Argyll and Bute to cover rural areas.

Decision

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

(Reference: Report by Local Police Commander dated 19 January 2015, submitted)

5. SCRUTINY OF SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE

The Committee considered a report, presented by Andrew McClure, Group Manager, Community Safety, Scottish Fire and Rescue, which provided an update to the Committee on the performance of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in the Argyll and Bute area from April – December 2014 inclusively.

Discussion took place on the report and also the difficulty in recruiting operational crew to key locations in Argyll and Bute. It was noted the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Board (SFRSB) was appointed nationally by the Scottish Government as set out in legislation. Local Authority Fire Boards had been in place prior to the creation of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in 2012.

Decision

The Committee;

1. noted the contents of the report; and
2. agreed that the Executive Director – Customer Services investigate making representation to the SFRSB highlighting the Council's concerns about the difficulties in recruiting operational fire staff in the Argyll and Bute area.

(Reference: Report by Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service dated February 2015, submitted)

Group Manager Andrew McClure left the meeting at this point.

6. STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

The Committee considered a report which was a review of the recently agreed Strategic Risk Register (SRR) and was prepared as per the agreed reporting 6 monthly reporting cycle.

It was commented that it would be of benefit to have a one off report at a future meeting about the composition of the SRR.

Decision

The Committee noted;

- (i) the contents of the updated Strategic Risk Register; and
- (ii) that arrangements would be put in place to hold a workshop/seminar on the Strategic Risk Register to which Members of the PRS Committee would be invited.

(Reference: Report by Head of Strategic Finance dated 26 February 2015, submitted)

7. TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING REPORT 31 DECEMBER 2014

A report setting out the Council's treasury management position for the period 1 November 2014 to 31 December 2014 was considered. The report provided information on the Council's overall borrowing position, borrowing activity, investment activity, economic background, interest rate forecast and prudential indicators.

Decision

The Committee noted the Treasury Management Monitoring report.

(Reference: Report by Head of Strategic Finance dated 26 February 2015, submitted)

8. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT AND ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY

The Committee considered a report on the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy, which sets out the strategy for borrowing and investing for the year. The types and limits on the use of investment products which would be used to manage the Council's treasury transactions for the year were included within the Annual Investment Strategy.

Decision

The Committee recommended approval of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy.

(Reference: Report by the Head of Strategic Finance dated 26 February 2015, submitted)

9. PERFORMANCE REPORT FQ3 2014 - 15

The Committee considered the Council and Departmental performance reports with associated scorecards for performance in FQ3 2015 – 15 (October – December 2014).

Each Departmental scorecard was discussed in depth, with particular attentions being paid to the reasons underlying Corporate Objectives indicators which were highlighted in red.

Decision

The Committee reviewed the reports and scorecards as presented, noting the contents thereof.

(Reference: Report by the Chief Executive dated 26 February 2015, submitted)

10. PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK - REVISION

A report which provided an updated version of the Council's Planning and Performance Management Framework (PPMF) was considered by the Committee. The framework had been updated to reflect the changes to Political Management Arrangements in the Council and the role of Strategic Committees.

Decision

The Committee;

1. noted the revised PPMF; and
2. agreed that the Health and Social Care Integration report be presented to the August meeting of the Committee.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Customer Services dated 26 February 2015, submitted)

11. LOCAL GOVERNMENT BENCHMARKING FRAMEWORK

As part of the agreement by the Committee to review the Local Government Benchmarking framework in four sections over a year, the Committee considered the third section in respect of Corporate Services and all Satisfaction data.

Decision

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Customer Services dated 26 February 2015, submitted)

12. CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME PROGRESS

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the progress of the Corporate Improvement Programme.

Decision

The Committee;

1. noted the progress made in delivering the Corporate Improvement Programme; and
2. noted that officers were currently carrying out work to develop an updated Corporate Improvement Plan

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Customer Services dated 26 February 2015, submitted)

13. MAXIMISING ATTENDANCE: COUNCIL PERFORMANCE OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2014

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the Council's performance against targets and performance indicators for Maximising Attendance during the period October – December 2014.

Discussion took place on the procedures required to ensure that an employee was accurately assessed as being unable to work; that all feasible measures were put in place to ensure that an employee was able to return to their substantive or similar post; and also the most common reasons reported for being absent on long term sickness.

Decision

The Committee;

- (i) noted the content of the report; and
- (ii) agreed that the Corporate Audit Action Plan, which had been produced following the findings of the stress audit and employee survey, be incorporated into a future report to the Committee.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Customer Services dated 26 February 2015, submitted)

14. CAPITAL ROADS RECONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME 2014/15 AND ROAD ANNUAL STATUS & OPTIONS REPORT (ASOR)

The Committee considered a report which provided an analysis of some of the data

presented in the Roads Annual Status and Options Report (ASOR). The ASOR presented a summary of the Council's road assets as at April 2014, and provided information, based upon current available data, on the condition of the asset and future options which could be considered in terms of investment.

Members noted that despite the success of the roads capital programme and the general improvement in the road conditions in Argyll and Bute, there was a continuing need to invest in order to enhance the network further.

It was also noted that any issues relating to footpaths and footways and their safety and enhancement could be raised for discussion at Area Committees.

Decision

The Committee noted;

1. the Annual Status and Options Report and the positive analytical feedback it provided with regard to the effectiveness of the Council's Roads Asset Management and Maintenance Strategy and associated Roads Reconstruction Programme; and
2. the progress of the Roads Reconstruction Programme for 2014 - 15

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Development and Infrastructure Services dated 26 February 2015, submitted)

15. PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

The Committee considered the outline work plan to facilitate forward planning of reports to the Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee.

Decision

The Committee noted the Workplan and agreed that the report on Health and Social Care Integration would be brought to the 27 August 2015 meeting.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Customer Services dated February 2015, submitted)