

**MINUTES of MEETING of PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, KILMORY, LOCHGILPHEAD
on THURSDAY, 20 NOVEMBER 2014**

Present: Ian M M Ross (Chair)

Councillor Maurice Corry	Councillor Sandy Taylor
Councillor Anne Horn	Paul Connelly
Councillor Iain MacDonald	Douglas Cowan
Councillor John McAlpine	

Attending: Cleland Sneddon, Executive Director – Community Services
Bruce West, Head of Strategic Finance
Jane Fowler, Head of Improvement and HR
Patricia O’Neill, Central Governance Manager
Chief Superintendent Helen Swann, Police Scotland
Chief Inspector Marlene Baillie, Police Scotland
Graham Houston, Scottish Police Authority
David Clements, Programme Manager
Lesley Sweetman, Performance and Business Manager
Helen MacLeod, Community Services
Shona Laird, Customer Services

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Gordon Blair and Christina West, NHS Highland.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee held on 28 August 2014 were approved as a correct record.

4. SCRUTINY OF POLICE SCOTLAND

The Chair welcomed Chief Superintendent Helen Swann, Local Police Commander, Police Scotland to the meeting.

The Chief Superintendent gave a brief outline of senior staff posts and their key priorities for policing in Argyll and Bute, and then went on to present the second 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
- Public Protection; and
- Major Crime and Counter Terrorism

A new drink drive limit was to be introduced in Scotland on 5 December 2014 and a national media campaign to raise public awareness on this was being promoted by the Scottish Government. Police Scotland supported the campaign and confirmed that Officers were equipped to implement new procedures arising from the changes. It was anticipated that 88% of the adult population in Scotland would be reached by the implementation date.

Councillor Anne Horn joined the meeting at this point.

A National Child Abuse Investigation Unit was being set up, and the Chief Superintendent informed members that it had been a priority in Argyll and Bute to improve Police attendance at child case conferences. As a result there had been full police attendance at all recent cases.

Recommendations from a recent HMICS and crime register report were being addressed. The Chief Superintendent pointed out that there had been shortcomings in auditing and technical recording procedures only and not in the methods used to help victims of crime.

Members praised those involved in community policing, and also the use of unmarked cars to help improve public confidence and reduce road traffic incidents. It was noted however that in some instances due to the severity and location of a road traffic accident, long diversions would continue to be imposed to enable attendance by emergency services and to ensure public safety.

Chief Inspector Marlene Baillie informed Members that a report on local area policing was to be submitted to the Community Planning Partnership meeting in December 2014 which would contain more local operational detail. An update would be provided at a future meeting.

Members were also reassured that Police Scotland had procedures in place, in conjunction with multi-agency operations, to deal with any terrorism threats.

Decision

The Committee;

1. noted the contents of the report; and
2. agreed that Chief Superintendent investigate whether future reports could include more detailed traffic statistics to include incidents on the use of mobile phones and non use of seatbelts; the percentage of special constables in Argyll and Bute; and also figures on anti-social behaviour.

(Reference: Report by Local Police Commander dated November 2014, submitted)

At this point the Chair ruled and the Committee agreed that Item no. 6 on the Agenda (Scottish Police Authority Policing Performance Report) be taken as Item no. 5.

5. SCOTTISH POLICE AUTHORITY POLICING PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Scottish Police Authority (SPA) has a Performance Framework in place which includes the preparation and presentation of national police performance information.

The Chair welcomed G Houston, Scottish Police Authority to the meeting to speak to a report which provided strategic level performance information at a national level and the comparative information for Argyll and Bute for the period April to June 2014.

G Houston introduced himself to the Committee as being a Board member of the SPA and contact on the Authority for the areas of Argyll and Bute and East and West Dunbartonshire. He explained the role and make up of the SPA which also included the Forensic Service and was independent of Police Scotland.

The SPA role included;

- holding the Chief Constable to account
- scrutiny of Police Scotland to ensure that any decisions taken were accountable to the budget and population
- administering independent custody visitors
- protecting human rights
- securing best value balanced against the cost of the police service
- engagement

Police Scotland faced financial and budgetary challenges with significant savings having to be met by 2026. A 5 - 10 year strategy and strategic reform programme was being put in place which included scrutiny programmes, working with local partners and a review of the standing firearms authority. The introduction of a new computer system, voluntary severance and early retirement packages were underway to help meet savings.

The delivery of services by Police Scotland would have to be reviewed to take into account external factors such as changes in demographics and an aging population. Police Scotland would also have to be more proactive rather than re-active to concerns of local areas. Operating with consent of the community to get the right balance of skills and powers for preventative policing, value for money and engaged policing with shared local and national interests and shared governance. The SPA would be concentrating on police accountability, ensuring local needs were being met and provide sufficient information to local authorities and

organisations on how local priorities were to be met and delivered.

Referring to the savings having to be met by Police Scotland, Members noted that there was no risk in the foreseeable future for front line posts as there were a range of options to be addressed including the development of an estates strategy.

Members went on to query as to why use and costs of specialist services were no longer being recorded as a KPI in the report. G Houston explained that as Police Scotland was now a national force these figures were consolidated. The Chief Superintendent informed Members that any requests for specialist services were dealt with by local commanders through access to Fair Share and mutual aid. This highlighted where the need for resources was required rather than having requests recorded as a target indicator.

Responding to a query on Violence, Disorder and Anti-Social behaviour G Houston confirmed that licensing policies would continue to be dealt with on a local basis. The Chief Superintendent highlighted that prevention of disorder in town centres was a priority, and that trends related to the Argyll and Bute area were carefully monitored.

The Chair thanked representatives from the Police Authority and Police Scotland for their informative reports.

Decision

The Committee;

1. noted the report;
2. agreed that G Houston ask the Chief Constable where information relating to formal requests for specialist services may be recorded in a report;
3. agreed that the narrative of future reports include local performance rates in addition to national performance rates for the same time period; and
4. Noted that the Chief Superintendent and G Houston would pass on to their respective organisation Members praise for the work being carried out by community police in Argyll and Bute.

(Reference: Report by Scottish Police Authority dated 27 August 2014, submitted)

Councillor John McAlpine left the meeting at this point.

6. SCRUTINY OF SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE

The Committee considered a report, presented by Paul Connelly, Local Senior Officer, 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 to September 2014 inclusively. It outlined the progress in the delivery of local priorities as set out within the Local Fire and Rescue Plan and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service framework document.

Members noted the overall trend as being one of a reducing fire risk profile. Referring to the LPI8 Members were informed that consideration was being given to bringing staff in from a Community Action Team in central Scotland to enable all visits being generated by the ongoing media campaign for free Home Fire Safety Visits initiative to be carried out. The Local Senior Officer also confirmed that new build houses located some way from a water appliance were required to have 50,000 litres of water available nearby. This was being addressed by encouraging the creation of "duck ponds" close to houses.

Decision

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

(Reference: Report by Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue dated 20 November 2014, submitted)

7. TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING REPORT 31 AUGUST 2014

A report setting out the Council's treasury management position for the period 1 July 2014 to 31 August 2014 was considered. The report provided information on the Council's overall borrowing position, borrowing activity, investment activity and prudential indicators.

Decision

The Committee noted the content of the report.

At this point the Chair on behalf of the Committee thanked Bruce West, Head of Strategic Finance for his contribution to the Committee over the years and wished him all the best in his new role.

(Reference: Report by the Head of Strategic Finance dated November 2014, submitted)

8. PERFORMANCE REPORT FQ2 2014-15

The Committee considered the Council and Departmental performance reports with associated scorecards for performance in FQ2 2014-15 (July – September 2014).

Following a query on the Community Services Scorecard, the Executive Director of Community Services agreed to send a request to ACHA, Home Argyll and all Registered Social Landlords asking them to provide further information on their housing allocation system and would respond to Councillor Maurice Corry and Councillor Anne Horne.

Discussion then took place on the difficulties being experienced both in the public and private sectors to recruit to particular professions and the steps being taken by the Council to address these.

L Sweetman confirmed that arrangements be put in place to bring a report to the next meeting of the Committee on feedback received from the Argyll and Bute Economic Summit held on 29 October 2014.

Members also noted that a report would be brought to a future meeting of the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee which would include information relating to planning consents on the basis of scale, their prospective developments and any underlying issues as to lack of development. The Head of Economic Development and Strategic Transportation could update Members on this at the next PRS Committee.

Decision

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

(Reference: Report by Chief Executive dated November 2014 and Council and Departmental Performance Reports and associated scorecards for FQ2 2014 – 15 (July – September 2014), submitted)

9. MAXIMISING ATTENDANCE: COUNCIL PERFORMANCE (JULY - SEPTEMBER 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 July – September 2014.

The Head of Improvement and HR stated disappointment in the attendance figures shown in the report. Responding to a query she explained the processes and procedures involved in the reporting of absences and return to work interviews. Members expressed dissatisfaction with the fact that the Council's target for 100% return to work interviews was not being met.

Decision

The Committee noted the contents of the report and registered their concern at the lack of progress in maximising attendance despite the excellent effort in systems and support.

(Reference: Report by Head of Improvement and HR dated November 2014, submitted)

10. CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME PROGRESS

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

Decision

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

(Reference: Report by Head of Improvement and HR dated November 2014, submitted)

Councillor Iain Angus MacDonald left the meeting at this point.

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 second section in respect of Culture & Leisure, Environmental Services, Corporate Assets and Economic Development.

Members expressed serious concerns over the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF). It was noted however that this was a statutory framework from which the Council could benefit by sharing information with and learning from other similar sized local authorities, but greater clarity was required to inform the Committee on the comparability of that data.

Lesley Sweetman confirmed that she would investigate; how the Councils capital investment on road maintenance over the last three years compared to other local authorities; how their road conditions had improved in relation to Argyll and Bute Council's 3%; the actual amounts invested and actual improvements by local authorities and feed this information back to the Committee.

Decision

The Committee noted the contents of the report and recognised it as a work in progress.

(Reference: Report by Head of Improvement and HR dated November 2014, submitted)

Douglas Cowan left the meeting at this point.

12. PUBLIC PERFORMANCE REPORTING FRAMEWORK

As part of the statutory duty relating to Public Performance Reporting (PPR) the Council publishes performance information. The Committee considered the updated findings of a recent review of PPR, a draft Framework for PPR, and an action plan for improvement in line with the Account Commission's report and recommendations.

Decision

The Committee noted the:-

1. findings of the PPR review;
2. proposed PPR framework as part of the Planning and Performance Management Framework; and
3. proposed PPR improvement Action Plan.

(Reference: Report by Head of Improvement and HR dated November 2014, submitted)

Councillor Sandy Taylor left the meeting at this point.

13. PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE DEVELOPMENT DAY AND WORK PLAN

The Committee considered a report on the Committee Development Day and the outcomes including a draft work plan.

Decision

The Committee:-

1. noted the report;
2. address the improvement actions in paragraph 4.6 and agreed the actions at 4.6 as follows;
 - 4.6.1 to recommend to Council the appointment of a Vice-Chairman;
 - 4.6.2 to audit the performance review activity of other Council Committees prior to any other re-consideration of the Committees' terms of reference;
 - 4.6.3 to prepare a scrutiny work plan/programme ensuring co-ordination with Audit Committee work plan;
 - 4.6.4 not to create any additional management positions in regard to Performance Review and Scrutiny;
 - 4.6.5 to prepare a training and development plan for PRS (to include training on scrutiny of Police and Fire);
 - 4.6.6 to review the lead-in time for reports/papers to Committee to enable greater time for consideration prior to the meeting;
 - 4.6.7 to consider a pre-meeting of Members immediately prior to the Committee, noting that there is already facility for Committee Members to have supported access to Pyramid data in the hour prior to the Committee;
3. agreed the draft work plan; and
4. agreed that the Health and Social Care Integration policy paper shown in the PRS Workplan for February 2015 be moved to the August 2015 meeting.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director – Customer Services dated

November 2014, submitted)