

# PERFORMANCE AND REVIEW SCRUTINY FORUM

Minutes of meeting held via Microsoft Teams on 2 March 2021

## **Chair:**

Councillor John Ross

## **Councillors Present:**

Councillor Alex Allison, Councillor Robert Brown, Councillor Maureen Chalmers, Councillor Gerry Convery, Councillor Peter Craig, Councillor Maureen Devlin, Councillor Eileen Logan (*substitute for Councillor Joe Fagan*), Councillor Katy Loudon, Councillor Jared Wark

## **Councillor's Apology:**

Councillor Joe Fagan

## **Attending:**

### **Chief Executive's Service**

C Sneddon, Chief Executive

### **Community and Enterprise Resources**

S Clelland, Head of Fleet and Environmental Services; P Elliott, Head of Planning and Economic Development; G McKay, Head of Roads and Transportation Services; A McKinnon, Head of Facilities, Waste and Grounds Services; G Simpson, Development Adviser

### **Education Resources**

D Dickson, Education Operations Manager

### **Finance and Corporate Resources**

P Manning, Executive Director; T Little, Head of Communications and Strategy; S McLeod, Administration Officer; L Marshall, Finance Adviser; N Reid, Improvement and Community Planning Manager

### **Housing and Technical Resources**

L Hayes, Performance and Support Adviser

### **Social Work Resources**

L Purdie, Head of Children and Justice Services

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## **1 Declaration of Interests**

No interests were declared.

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## **2 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting of the Performance and Review Scrutiny Forum held on 8 December 2020 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

**The Forum decided:** that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

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## **3 Resource Plans and Council Plan 'Connect' Reporting 2021/2022**

A report dated 19 February 2021 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted providing an overview of key issues identified within the latest Resource Plans and the number and spread of measures for reporting against the Council Plan for 2021/2022.

In recent years, efforts had been made to reduce the number and improve the quality of performance measures included in Resource Plans, to enable clearer reporting and reduce the burden of reporting across the Council. Following further review, updated guidance and a revised Resource Plan template had been issued to Resources in June 2020. The new guidance had been produced to ensure that many of the key features of Resource Plans would be retained, whilst duplication and unnecessary information would be eliminated, resulting in Resource Plans that were shorter, sharper and more focused on key priorities and outcomes.

In order to achieve the appropriate focus on key areas of activity, Resources had been requested to undertake a horizon-scanning and situational awareness exercise which covered the following topics:-

- ◆ social change, legislation and policies
- ◆ areas for improvement
- ◆ other potential triggers for action

Following this exercise, Resources had selected a maximum of 10 key areas of focus for inclusion in Resource Plans for 2021/2022, as detailed in table 1 of the report.

For 2021/2022, Resources had re-cast their objectives as outcomes, focusing on outputs and results as opposed to activities and processes. This had reduced the complexity of the Resource Plans and had resulted in 40 Resource outcomes being identified, a reduction of 11 from the previous year.

A total of 245 measures had been identified within the Resource Plans, an increase of 15 from the previous year. Of those measures, 84 had been identified for reporting progress of 'Connect', a decrease of 5 reported against 'Connect' in 2020/2021. A summary of the reduction in measures to be reported against the Resource Plans and 'Connect' was provided in table 2 of the report.

The new accelerated approach taken to preparing the Resource Plans for 2021/2022 had resulted in them being developed considerably earlier than in previous years. In addition to this new approach, the approval route for the Plans had also changed from previous years which would allow them to be presented to the Executive Committee early in the financial year on 28 April 2021.

Officers responded to members' questions on various aspects of the report.

**The Forum decided:**

- (1) that the key issues and areas of interest identified within the Resource Plans for 2021/2022, as detailed in table 1 of the report, be noted; and
- (2) that the number and spread of measures to be reported against Resource Plans and 'Connect' the Council Plan in 2021/2022, as detailed in table 2 of the report, be noted.

*[Reference: Minutes of 29 September 2020 (Paragraph 6)]*

*Councillor Convery entered the meeting during this item of business*

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#### **4 IMPROVe Red and Amber Results at Quarter 2, 2020/2021**

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A report dated 19 February 2021 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on performance measures where IMPROVe results at Quarter 2, 2020/2021 had been recorded as either 'red' (there had been major slippage against timescale or major shortfall against target) or 'amber' (there had been minor slippage against timescale or minor shortfall against target).

Across all Resources, 18 out of 237 measures relating to Council priorities had a status of 'amber' and 3 had a status of 'red'. The remaining 216 measures (91%) had a status of 'blue' (project completed), 'green' (the timescale or target had been met in line with expectations) or report later (the information was not yet available to allow officers to say whether the target had been reached or not but would be reported when available).

For 2020/2021, there had been a decrease in the number of 'red' and 'amber' measures reported in comparison to the previous year. This was due, in part, to a continuing and comprehensive review of measures and targets which had resulted in fewer measures overall and greater clarity on when measures would be classed as green, amber or red.

An explanation on progress to date, the circumstances which had determined the 'red' or 'amber' status and details of any remedial or mitigating actions were provided in Appendix 1 to the report.

The information had been reported to individual Resource Committees, as appropriate, to enable more rigorous scrutiny at a Resource level to take place.

Officers responded to members' questions on various aspects of the report.

**The Forum decided:** that the report be noted.

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#### **5 The City of Edinburgh Council Best Value Assurance Report (BVAR) Published by the Accounts Commission**

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A report dated 9 February 2021 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the Best Value Assurance Report (BVAR) that had been published by the Accounts Commission since the previous meeting of the Forum.

The report provided details of the key themes and recommendations included in the BVAR in relation to The City of Edinburgh Council which had been published on 26 November 2020.

**The Forum decided:** that the report be noted.

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#### **6 Urgent Business**

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There were no items of urgent business.