PERFORMANCE AND REVIEW SCRUTINY FORUM

Minutes of meeting held in Committee Room 2, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 18 May 2010

Chair:
Councillor Edward McAvoy

Councillors Present:
Jim Docherty, Ian Gray, Graeme Horne, Anne Maggs, Alex McInnes, John Murray

Councillors' Apologies:
Eileen Baxendale, Michael McCann

Attending:
Chief Executive's Service
A Strang, Chief Executive; H McNeil, Head of Improvement
Community Resources
S Kelly, Head of Facilities and Cultural Services
Corporate Resources
R McIlwain, Executive Director; G Bow, Administration Adviser
Finance and Information Technology Resources
L Hardie, Executive Director, P Manning, Head of Finance Services; L O'Hagan, Finance Manager (Accounting and Budgeting)
Education Resources
S Fellows, Head of Education (Resources); D Hinshelwood, Support Services Manager
Housing and Technical Resources
L Freeland, Executive Director; K Downes, Customer Services Development Manager

Also Attending:
S Smellie, UNISON

1   Declaration of Interests
No interests were declared.

2   Minutes of Previous Meeting
The minutes of the meeting of the Performance and Review Scrutiny Forum held on 2 March 2010 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

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

3   Member/Officer Task and Finish Groups
A report dated 11 May 2010 by the Chief Executive was submitted on the Terms of Reference and membership for the Member/Officer Task and Finish Groups.

Following feedback from individual political groups, it was proposed that the membership of the Task and Finish Groups be as follows:-

♦   Community Councils – Councillors Carmichael, Filshie, Malloy, McDonald, Scott, Stewart and J Wardhaugh

- ♦ Fixed Play Areas – Councillors Anderson, Baxendale, Campbell, Clark, McKeown, McNamee and McLachlan
- ♦ School Transport - Councillors Cairney, Filshie, Lawson, McCaig, A M Mitchell, Simpson and Sutherland

Terms of Reference for each of the Task and Finish Groups had been developed by the appropriate Executive Directors and Lead Officers and were detailed in an appendix to the report.

Lead Officers would set up a schedule of meetings to take the projects forward and a progress report would be submitted to this Forum in January 2011.

The Forum decided:

(1) that the proposed Terms of Reference for each of the Task and Finish Groups be endorsed;

(2) that the membership of each of the Groups be noted;

(3) that Chairs be appointed at the first meeting of each of the Task and Finish Groups; and

(4) that a progress report on the establishment of the Task and Finish Groups be submitted to the Executive Committee for noting.

[Reference: Minutes of 2 March 2010 (Paragraph 4)]

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4 Homeworking - Incorporating Flexible and Mobile Working

A report dated 9 February 2010 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on:-

- ♦ progress made by the Leadership Development Group reviewing Homeworking incorporating flexible and mobile working
- ♦ the outcomes of the studies carried out by British Telecom following the award of the contract to develop a Workstyle Management Business Case
- ♦ the evaluation process carried out to assess the feasibility of adopting Alternative Workstyles including flexible, mobile and homeworking within the Council
- ♦ recommendations on how the implementation of Alternative Workstyles would be taken forward

The study carried out by British Telecom had been fully evaluated in conjunction with a number of other studies and evidence from other public sector organisations. The main conclusion was that there were a number of potential benefits to be gained from the implementation of Alternative Workstyles including the potential to realise some efficiency savings and service improvements. Detailed recommendations arising from the evaluation of the various studies were provided.

The Business Case put forward by British Telecom would involve considerable financial risk for the Council and, for the financial reasons outlined in the report, it was not proposed to develop the Alternative Workstyles project as a stand-alone initiative. The key issues when implementing Alternative Workstyles would be considered and incorporated into other review processes which were already in place such as property, employee, Best Value and Lean Thinking reviews.

The Forum decided:	that the progress made by the Leadership Development Group on Homeworking, incorporating flexible and mobile working, be noted.

5 National Diagnostic - Finance Review

A report dated 4 May 2010 by the Executive Director (Finance and Information Technology Resources) was submitted on:-

♦ the outcome of the National Diagnostic Finance Review which highlighted a number of recommendations for developing the finance function within the Council
♦ a review of the wider structure within Finance Services including personnel and policy issues

The Executive Director (Finance and Information Technology Resources) gave a presentation on the:-

♦ background and scope of the review
♦ approach adopted during the review
♦ key findings of the review
♦ main recommendations arising from the review including:-

    ♦ the retention of the current finance staffing structure across the Resources
    ♦ proposals to pursue a strategy that would result in efficiency savings of £1.3 million over the next 3 years

The Forum decided:

(1) that the retention of the existing finance staffing structure across Resources be endorsed;

(2) that the proposals to pursue potential efficiencies totalling £1.3 million over the next 3 years be endorsed; and

(3) that the progress made with the review and the overall approach to devolved support services, including the opportunity for future savings, be noted.

6 Efficient Government - National Diagnostic, Alternative Service Delivery, and "Working Towards 2011" Projects Update

A report dated 6 May 2010 by the Executive Director (Finance and Information Technology Resources) was submitted providing an update on the following National Diagnostics, Alternative Services and "Working Towards 2011" projects:-

♦ Administration/Clerical	♦ SEEMIS
♦ Asset Management	♦ Arts and Culture Services
♦ Customer Contact	♦ Property Needs Solution
♦ Finance Service Review	♦ Fleet Services
♦ Flexible Working	♦ Energy Forward Strategy
♦ ICT	♦ Review of Overtime
♦ Management Structures	♦ Asset Management in the 4 Geographical Areas
♦ Procurement	

Projects were currently proceeding satisfactorily and further updates would be provided to this Forum and the Executive Committee as appropriate.

The Forum decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 2 March 2010 (Paragraph 8)]

7 Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) 2008/2009 - Update on Declining SPIs and Proposed Future Approach

A report dated 26 April 2010 by the Executive Director (Finance and Information Technology Resources) was submitted providing:-

♦ an update on improvement measures put in place to improve those Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) which had shown a decline in performance from 2006/2007 to 2008/2009
♦ some additional context through a comparison of the Council's relative position and ranking against other local authorities
♦ details of a refreshed approach to managing and monitoring SPIs to reflect the Council's position and to take account of the reduction in the number of SPIs from 58 to 25 as recently directed by Audit Scotland

In the period 2006/2007 to 2008/2009, 16 indicators had shown a decline of more than 15%. Of those 16, 14 had also declined in ranking relative to other Scottish councils. A summary of the Council's overall SPI performance for the last 3 years was provided.

It was proposed that a more strategic and planned approach to the Council's management of SPIs was taken including a requirement to categorise the Council's SPIs relative to the Council's key priorities and to identify targeted improvements on a more proportionate and risk based basis.

The outcomes from the work to develop improved monitoring and management of the SPIs would be reported to a future meeting of this Forum.

The Forum decided: that the proposed future approach to prioritise SPIs of most importance to the Council and to align those against targets for improvement be endorsed.

[Reference: Minutes of 2 March 2010 (Paragraph 5)]

8 Empower Update

A report dated 5 May 2010 by the Executive Director (Finance and Information Technology Resources) was submitted on developments relating to the Public Sector Improvement Framework (PSIF) including assessments carried out on the 3 Empower pilots undertaken in the following areas:-

♦ Administration Services
♦ Risk and Audit Services
♦ Social Work Resources

All 3 pilots had assisted in achieving an increased level of self-awareness and had resulted in the creation of a prioritised Action Plan. A detailed assessment of each pilot was provided in the report. To develop the Framework further, approval had been given for the training of 2 employees from each Resource to facilitate future assessments.

Quality Scotland and the Improvement Service had advised of further developments proposed in relation to PSIF and the Council would take an active part in future discussions regarding those developments.

Arrangements for the continued rollout of Empower would be managed within Resources and the Corporate Improvement Advisory Board would monitor progress.

The Forum decided:

(1)   that the progress made in relation to the 3 pilots and the planned outline for Council-wide assessments be noted; and

(2)   that the arrangements in place for the next phase of training be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of Executive Committee of 18 November 2009 (Paragraph 16)]

9	**Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.