

# PERFORMANCE AND REVIEW SCRUTINY FORUM

Minutes of meeting held via Confero and in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 29 November 2022

## Chair:

Councillor Joe Fagan

## Councillors Present:

Councillor John Anderson, Councillor Gerry Convery (Depute), Councillor Andrea Cowan (*substitute for Councillor John Ross*), Councillor Maureen Devlin, Councillor Richard Lockhart, Councillor Katy Loudon, Councillor Davie McLachlan, Councillor Kirsten Robb

## Councillors' Apologies:

Councillor Maureen Chalmers, Councillor John Ross

## Attending:

### Chief Executive's Service

C Sneddon, Chief Executive

### Community and Enterprise Resources

K Carr, Head of Facilities, Waste and Grounds Services; S Keating, Property Development Manager; C Park, Head of Roads, Transportation and Fleet Services; G Simpson, Development Adviser; M Wilkie, Performance and Policy Development Manager

### Finance and Corporate Resources

P Manning, Executive Director; M Gordon, Administration Assistant; T Little, Head of Communications and Strategy; S McLeod, Administration Officer; L Marshall, Finance Adviser; E Maxwell, HR Business Manager; N Reid, Improvement and Community Planning Manager; B Teaz, Head of IT Services; L Wyllie, Administration Assistant

### Health and Social Care/Social Work Resources

M Kane, Service Manager (Performance and Support)

### Housing and Technical Resources

L Hayes, Performance and Support Adviser

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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 16 August 2022 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

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

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## 3 Council Plan Connect 2022 to 2027 - Quarter 2 Progress Report 2022/2023

A report dated 16 November 2022 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the progress of 'Connect', the Council Plan 2022 to 2027, at the Quarter 2 stage of 2022/2023.

'Connect' detailed the Council's vision, values, priorities and outcomes to be delivered in the 5 year period of the Plan. Progress made on 'Connect' outcomes was summarised in the report. Of the 66 measures nominated for reporting against the Plan:-

- ◆ 2 projects had been completed
- ◆ 46 had met their timescale or target as per expectations
- ◆ 6 had minor slippage against timescale or minor shortfall against target
- ◆ 1 had major slippage against timescale or major shortfall against target
- ◆ 11 were contextual or would be reported on at a later stage

The 'Connect' Performance Report for Quarter 2, 2022/2023, covering the period to the end of September 2022, was attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

To aid scrutiny, additional analysis of the measures that had been identified as 'contextual' or 'report later' in the Quarter 4 Progress Report 2021/2022, considered by the Forum at its meeting on 16 August 2022, had been undertaken. Of the 6 measures which had been identified as 'contextual' or 'report later':-

- ◆ figures for the 4 'contextual' measures had been provided in the previous report to the Forum
- ◆ 1 measure was part of the Local Government Benchmarking Framework suite of indicators, for which the results would not be published until February 2023
- ◆ 1 measure related to the 3 year business survival rate which was published by the Office of National Statistics with the most recent published results relating to 2017 to 2020

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council had been forced to suspend or reduce a number of services that could not be continued in full due to government advice. The Council had also been obliged to redirect resources so that it could deliver vital new services and supports for individuals, communities and businesses and there remained an inevitable impact on performance in some areas.

**The Forum decided:**

- (1) that the 'Connect' Quarter 2 Progress Report 2022/2023, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, be noted;
- (2) that the progress and key achievements made in terms of the reporting measures contained in 'Connect', as detailed in the report, be noted; and
- (3) that the additional scrutiny of the updated status of those measures identified as 'report later' in the 'Connect' Quarter 4 Progress Report 2021/2022, as detailed in the report, be noted.

*[Reference: Minutes of 16 August 2022 (Paragraph 2)]*

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#### **4 Resource Plans – Red and Amber Results at Quarter 2, 2022/2023**

A report dated 14 November 2022 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on performance measures where results at Quarter 2, 2022/2023 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, 14 out of 234 measures relating to Council priorities had a status of 'amber' and 4 had a status of 'red'. The remaining 216 measures (92%) 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 2021/2022, there had been an increase 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 greater clarity when assigning measures with the appropriate status.

An explanation on progress to date, the circumstances which had determined the 'red' or 'amber' status, including unforeseen changes in timescales, circumstances, or work being underway but not yet complete, and progress updates providing revised timescales for completion, where relevant, as well as management actions, were provided in Appendix 1 to the report.

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

On points raised regarding Foundation Apprenticeships in relation to what frameworks would be available in the next academic session and what supports were being provided to employers, officers undertook to provide the information requested to the members.

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

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## **5 Audit Scotland Report – Local Government in Scotland Overview 2022**

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A report dated 16 November 2022 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted providing a summary of the information contained within the Audit Scotland Report entitled 'Local Government in Scotland: Overview 2022' which had been published in June 2022.

Audit Scotland published an annual overview report on behalf of the Accounts Commission, covering key areas of current and future activity relative to local government and providing an opinion on how those were, or should be, managed.

The Overview 2022 report was the second in a series of reports that built on last year's report and assessed the following:-

- ◆ the ongoing impact of COVID-19 and councils' progress towards recovery and renewal
- ◆ how councils were positioned to address long-term priorities including climate change, inequality and public service reform
- ◆ how effectively council leadership was managing recovery and renewal

The Overview 2022 report, which could be accessed on the Audit Scotland website, had been structured around the following 3 themes on which progress towards recovery and renewal was dependent:-

- ◆ responding to the external environment
- ◆ organising the council
- ◆ meeting local needs

A number of key messages were detailed in the Overview 2022 report and summarised in the report to the Forum. The Overview 2022 report also contained a number of recommendations and South Lanarkshire Council's position and proposed actions, where required, were summarised in the report to the Forum.

The Accounts Commission had prepared a checklist of questions for elected members to accompany the Overview 2022 report and the checklist, including sample answers from a South Lanarkshire Council perspective, was attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

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

**The Forum decided:** that the key messages and recommendations contained in the Audit Scotland Report entitled 'Local Government in Scotland: Overview 2022' be noted.

*[Reference: Minutes of 26 October 2021 (Paragraph 4)]*

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## **6 Best Value Assurance Reports (BVAR) Published by the Accounts Commission**

A report dated 17 October 2022 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the Best Value Assurance Reports (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 following councils:-

- ◆ Angus Council – published 5 July 2022
- ◆ Falkirk Council – published 13 January 2022
- ◆ Shetland Council – published 25 August 2022
- ◆ Comhairle nan Eilean Siar – published 29 September 2022

Officers responded to members' questions on the progress of the BVAR for South Lanarkshire Council which had been published in March 2019.

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

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## **7 Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.