

PERFORMANCE AND REVIEW SCRUTINY FORUM

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

Chair:

Councillor Edward McAvoy

Councillors Present:

Eileen Baxendale, Jim Docherty, Ian Gray, Graeme Horne, Anne Maggs, Michael McCann, Alex McInnes, John Murray

Attending:

Chief Executive's Service

A Strang, Chief Executive; H McNeil, Head of Improvement

Corporate Resources

R McIlwain, Executive Director; G Bow, Administration Adviser

Finance and Information Technology Resources

L Hardie, Executive Director; L O'Hagan, Finance Manager (Accounting and Budgeting)

Housing and Technical Resources

J Hayton, Executive Director

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 8 December 2009 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

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

3 Repairs and Maintenance Service - Policy Review

A report dated 1 February 2010 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on the review being carried out in relation to the Repairs and Maintenance Services Policy.

The draft Repairs and Maintenance Services Policy had been developed and issued to tenants and a number of other stakeholders in June 2009 as part of a wide ranging consultation exercise. The consultation process had been completed and the finalised Policy would be submitted to the Housing and Technical Resources Committee in June 2010 for approval and implementation.

Changes which had been made to the service following the last Best Value Review in 1998 were detailed in the report together with information on savings achieved to date totalling £784,000.

As well as the submission of the finalised Policy to Committee in June 2010, a number of other key improvement areas were being progressed. Details of the progress made on each of those key areas were provided.

The Forum decided: that the report be noted.

4 Member/Officer Task and Finish Groups

A report dated 17 February 2010 by the Chief Executive was submitted on topics which had been identified as suitable for detailed consideration by short-life Member/Officer Task and Finish Groups.

On 8 July 2009, the Executive Committee had approved a number of revisions to the Council's Member Scrutiny Forums including the facility for this Forum to establish short-term Member/Officer Task and Finish Groups to undertake a review of identified areas. The following areas had been identified by Executive Directors as potential areas for consideration by Task and Finish Groups:-

- ◆ Community Councils (Corporate Resources)
- ◆ Play Areas (Community Resources)
- ◆ School Transport (Education Resources)

A pro-forma had been developed to identify terms of reference and anticipated outcomes for the Groups and this was attached as an appendix to the report. In order to progress the establishment of the Groups, the next steps would be to:-

- ◆ request that political Group Leaders nominate members to serve on each of the Groups on the basis of 3 from the Labour Group, 2 from the SNP Group and 1 from each of the Conservative and Independent/Liberal Democrats Groups and who were not members of the Executive Committee
- ◆ nominate Chairs, who were not members of this Forum, from the members identified to serve on each of the Groups
- ◆ authorise the lead Executive Director and nominated Chair to complete the pro-forma for consideration at the next meeting of this Forum

The Task and Finish Groups would be able to invite other representation as considered appropriate, for example Trade Unions.

As general guidance, each Group should aim to complete its work within 6 months.

The Forum decided:

(1) that the following areas be reviewed by a Task and Finish Group:-

- ◆ School Transport
- ◆ Community Councils
- ◆ Play Areas

(2) that the terms of reference arising from the completion of the pro-forma by the lead Executive Director and nominated Chair be considered at the next meeting of this Forum; and

(3) that political groups give consideration to their representation on the Groups and report back to the next meeting of this Forum.

[Reference: Minutes of Executive Committee of 8 July 2009 (Paragraph 11)]

5 Statutory Performance Information for Scottish Councils 2008/2009

A report dated 16 February 2010 by the Executive Director (Finance and Information Technology Resources) was submitted on performance information contained in Audit Scotland's Council Profiles and Data Compendium 2008/2009 and, where appropriate, providing comparisons with other local authorities and explanations on the Council's performance over the past 3 years.

A full list of Statutory Performance Indicators for the Council was provided in an appendix to the report, together with details of indicators which showed an improvement or decline of over 15% over the 3 year period 2006/2007 to 2008/2009.

The key areas arising from the Council Profiles were that:-

- ◆ 21 of the Council's SPIs had improved by more than 15% since 2006/2007
- ◆ 16 of the Council's SPIs had declined by more than 15% since 2006/2007
- ◆ 4 SPIs for the Council were ranked 1st in Scotland in 2008/2009
- ◆ 22 SPIs for the Council were ranked in the upper quartile for 2008/2009
- ◆ 13 SPIs for the Council were ranked in the lower quartile for 2008/2009
- ◆ 5 SPIs had entered the upper quartile
- ◆ 9 SPIs had entered the lower quartile

Overall, the Council's relative rate of improvement had slowed in comparison with other councils.

In the case of the 16 indicators which had declined by over 15%, underlying issues had been identified and those were being addressed by Resources as appropriate.

Details of all SPIs relating to the Council would be submitted to the Executive Committee on 10 March 2010.

The Forum decided: that a detailed report covering the underlying reasons for declining performance in some areas and the plans in place to address the decline be submitted to a future meeting of this Forum.

[Reference: Minutes of Executive Committee of 25 February 2009 (Paragraph 16)]

6 Best Value 2 - Shared Risk Assessment

A report dated 3 February 2010 by the Chief Executive was submitted on:-

- ◆ the Shared Risk Assessment process being developed by the Accounts Commission as part of Best Value 2
- ◆ the submission prepared by the Council drawing from its existing practices and demonstrating what differences the Council's approach had made to local communities, customers and employees

The Shared Risk Assessment process had commenced in December 2009 and, although guidance on how to complete the Shared Risk Assessment was not available, Audit Scotland had provided general advice on the main areas which would require to be covered.

The Council had provided its submission detailing its current processes and procedures to the Local Area Network. A detailed review of the submission would take place and an Assessment and Improvement Plan would be prepared by the Local Area Network for further discussion with the Council.

The Forum decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of Executive Committee of 10 February 2010 (Paragraph 16)]

7 Overview of the Audits of Best Value and Community Planning 2004 to 2009

A report dated 18 February 2010 by the Executive Director (Finance and Information Technology Resources) was submitted on a report by the Accounts Commission entitled "Making an Impact: an Overview of the Audits of Best Value and Community Planning 2004 to 2009".

The report provided:-

- ◆ a summary of the key points arising from the audits
- ◆ the impact of Best Value on local government including the main issues arising from individual Audit Reports
- ◆ the key messages arising from the audit process along with South Lanarkshire Council's position at the end of the Best Value 1 process
- ◆ the key areas which would be the focus as BV2 was developed

The Corporate Improvement Unit would continue to progress the Best Value agenda and would continue to provide relevant advice and support to officers and elected members.

The Forum decided that the actions underway or planned to respond to the findings of the Audit of Best Value and Community Planning be noted.

8 Efficient Government - National Diagnostic/Alternative Service Delivery Projects Update

A report dated 19 February 2010 by the Executive Director (Finance and Information Technology Resources) was submitted providing an update on the following National Diagnostic Projects:-

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| ◆ Administration/Clerical | ◆ Flexible Working |
| ◆ Asset Management | ◆ ICT |
| ◆ Customer Contact | ◆ Management Structures |
| ◆ Finance Service Review | ◆ Procurement |

Following a report to the Executive Committee on 16 December 2009, indicative reporting timescales for Alternative Service Delivery projects had been determined and those timescales were provided.

Projects were considered to be progressing satisfactorily, with no significant slippage or issues raised.

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 Executive Committee of 16 December 2010 (Paragraph 8)]

9 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.