

Cabinet
29 April 2014

Irvine, 29 April 2014 - At a Meeting of Cabinet of North Ayrshire Council at 2.30 p.m.

Present

Willie Gibson, Marie Burns, John Bruce, Anthea Dickson, Tony Gurney, Alan Hill and Ruth Maguire;

Also Present

Donald Reid.

In Attendance

E. Murray, Chief Executive; I. Colvin, Director (North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership); L. Friel, Corporate Director (Finance and Property), T. Reaney, Procurement Manager (Finance and Corporate Support); C. Hatton, Corporate Director, J. Miller, Senior Planning, Transportation and Regeneration Manager and A. Adrain, Interim Head of Housing (Development and Environment); A. Sutton, Head of Service (Community and Culture), S. Quinn, Head of Service (Development) and R. Arthur, Manager (Information and Culture); and A. Fraser, Head of Democratic and Administration, A. Todd, Policy and Performance Officer, M. Adams, Programme Manager (Early Intervention and Prevention); A. Woodison, Communications Officer and A Little, Committee Services Officer (Chief Executive's Service).

Also In Attendance

Donald Reid

Chair

Councillor Gibson in the Chair.

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest by Members in terms of Standing Order 16 and Section 5 of the Code of Conduct for Councillors.

2. Minutes

The accuracy of the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2014 was confirmed and the Minutes signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

3. Service Plans 14/15

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the Council's Service Plan for 2014/15.

Services have produced their Service Plans for 2013/14 in accordance with the Service Planning and Budgeting Guidance. There are six Service Plans in total, as

set out in the Appendices to the report.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to:-

Democratic Services

- the introduction of Lean Six Sigma technologies to support future process optimisation projects; and
- why the capacity for improvement was "good".

Education and Skills

- methods in place to measure performance in schools, including inspections and exam performance results;
- changes at Arran Outdoor Resource Centre, including the appointment of an Interim Manager, supporting the leadership development of young people and teaching staff, extending the range of partners involved and reviewing the timetable for use by schools;
- a number of KPIs that are historical and are recorded for benchmarking purposes; and
- the very positive report following an inspection of learning and development in the Irvine Royal North Ayrshire learning community.

Social Services and Health

- more work that requires to be done to increase the take up of respite care; and
- the establishment of CareNA, a web-based service for service users and carers, that won a Cosla Gold award for service innovation and improvement.

Finance and Corporate Support

- Integration of Health and Social Care and changes in respect of financial and resource management systems, staffing structures and governance

The Cabinet agreed to (a) approve the six Service Plans 2014/15 as set out in Appendices 1 - 6 to the report; (b) receive 6-monthly progress reports; and (c) refer to the report to the Scrutiny and Petitions Committee for its information.

4. Council Plan Action Plan 14/15

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the proposed Council Plan Action Plan for 2014/15 which sets out the Council's aims and ambitions over the next five years and its vision for North Ayrshire. It provides information on the Council's response to the Christie Review on Public Service Reform and on its links to the Single Outcome Agreement. Progress on the Council Plan has been reported through the Action Plan on a six monthly basis to Cabinet and the Scrutiny and Petitions Committee.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) approve the Council Plan Action Plan 2014/15; and (b) refer the report to the Scrutiny and Petitions Committee for its consideration.

5. Performance Management Update 14/15

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on an update of Performance Management arrangements and work plan developed to focus on key performance areas.

A Performance Management Forum (PMF) has been established to support the vision and comprises membership from all Directorates. The key role of the PMF is to embed a high performance culture in North Ayrshire Council. The PMF developed a work plan that was attached as an appendix to the report. A review of the current Performance Management Strategy will be undertaken by the PMF and is part of the work plan. As a result of the establishment of the PMF, its associated work plan and the review of the Performance Management Strategy, there is no longer a requirement for a Performance Management Strategy Action Plan for 2014/15.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to the work that will continue to ensure the quality and quantity of performance management information is appropriate.

The Cabinet agreed (a) that the Performance Management Forum Work Plan will replace the annual Performance Management Strategy Action Plan; (b) notes the progress with the Corporate PSIF Improvement Plan, Recognised for Excellence and PSIF self-assessments; and (c) refers the report to the Scrutiny and Petitions Committee for its consideration.

6. Improving Children's Outcomes

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on proposals to participate in a Scottish Government project to improve children's outcomes.

The Dartington Social Research Unit is an independent charity that seeks to increase the use of evidence of what works in designing and delivering services for children and their families. It is also a strong advocate of prevention and early intervention based approaches and has experience of working in improving children's outcomes across education, health, social care and criminal justice systems. The Dartington Social Research Unit (SRU) has been working with the Scottish Government to develop this work across Scotland. As a result, the "Improving Children Outcomes" project has been established to support work on gathering evidence on the needs of the child population locally and how services meet that need.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) participate in the Scottish Government's Improving Children's Outcomes project; (b) contribute £46,000 towards the implementation of the project in North Ayrshire in 2014/15; (c) note that the CPP's Children's Services Strategic Partnership will manage this project; and (d) note that a Elected Members' briefing will be held on the project.

7. Council Vehicle Advertising

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the use of Council vehicles for advertising campaigns to promote the work and services of North Ayrshire Council.

Certain types of North Ayrshire Council's vehicles have the capacity to carry promotional messages on side and rear panels, offering services an alternative to other more expensive forms of outdoor advertising.

Members asked questions and were provided with information in relation to work that could be undertaken to examine whether this could be developed into a commercial venture.

The Cabinet agreed (a) that relevant Council vehicles are used to support promotion and marketing of North Ayrshire Council campaigns/services/events; and (b) to otherwise not the report.

8. Largs and District Historical Society

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the Society's proposals in relation to their collection.

The Trustees for Largs and District Historical Society established a Charitable Trust in 1993 called the Largs Museum Trust for the purpose of safeguarding their collection of artefacts. This collection was transferred by the Society to the Trust. The report outlined issues experienced by the Society and Trust and the proposal to bring the Trust and the Society together in one body. It is proposed that the Society membership will be transferred to the new Limited Company and at the same time the Trust will be wound up and the assets therein including Kirkgate House and the museum artefacts transferred to the new Limited Company.

The original Trust Deed contained a condition that in the event that Largs Museum Trust comes to an end, the Trustees were to transfer the assets to the Local Authority failing which the assets were to be transferred to a charity having similar purposes to the Original Trust. There is nothing binding upon the Council requiring it to accept the collection. As the new Company has the same purposes as the Trust and is charitable in nature and registered with OSCR, it is more appropriate for the collection to be transferred to the new Company.

The Cabinet agreed (a) to note the creation of the Largs and District Museum and Historical Society Limited; and (b) that the Council does not wish to accept the collection formerly belonging to Largs Museum Trust which will allow it to be transferred to the Limited Company.

9. Procurement Overview

Submitted report by Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on progress and information on relevant procurement issues, including the national Procurement agenda and the annual Procurement Capability Assessment within the Council.

Members asked questions and were provided with information in relation to:-

- work by the Council to encourage and support local businesses in how to do business with the Council and the procurement processes.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note the report; and (b) receive a further report in six months.

10. Irvine Cycle Friendly Town Study

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Development and Environment) on progress made in relation to the Irvine Cycle Friendly Town Study, recommendations and projects identified from extensive public and stakeholder consultation, the development of a three year Action plan for the implementation of improvements and funding applications submitted to a range of agencies.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) consider the range of recommendations proposed by the study; (b) note the grant funding applications submitted to date for the implementation of the recommendations; and (c) remit to the Corporate Director (Development and Environment) to submit further funding applications to implement the recommendations.

11. Award of Framework Agreement: Painting and Decorating Works

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on the results of the tender exercise for the framework agreement for the provision of Painting and Decorating works.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the award of the framework agreement to Bell Decorating Group, Mitie Property Service, Wm. Paterson Decorators and Dumbreck Decorators.

12. Award of Contract: Walker & Imperial Halls, Kilbirnie

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on the result of the tender exercise for the works and the award of the contract

The Cabinet agreed to approve the award of the contract to Laing Traditional Masonry (LTM), at a contract value of £409,057.

13. Icelandic Bank Investments

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on the updated position regarding the Council's investments in Icelandic Banks.

The Council had investments of £5m and £10m respectively in the Icelandic banks Landsbanki hf and Glitnir hf when they collapsed in October 2008. Since the banks' collapse, the Council has been working alongside COSLA and the Local Government Association (LGA) to obtain the best possible outcome in respect of recovery of the deposits.

All repayments due to the Council in respect of Glitnir have now been made, with £1.908m of funds now being held in an Icelandic escrow account, pending resolution of Icelandic capital restrictions, with the remaining risk relating to foreign exchange rate fluctuations. In January 2014, following receipt of independent advice, the Council sold its claim in the insolvent estate of Landsbanki through a competitive auction process. The proceeds of the sale mean that the Council has recovered 95.68% of the £5m that was originally deposited with Landsbanki and is no longer a creditor. The recovery of the deposit much earlier than anticipated, offset by recovery of less than 100%, means that there will be a net benefit to the Council in 2013/14 of £0.130m. The sum of £0.130m will be credited proportionately between the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account and will be reflected in the Council's annual accounts for the year to 31 March 2014. Sale of the final component of the Landsbanki investment brings the significant issues around the Council's investments in the Icelandic Banks to a conclusion. The return of the Glitnir investment, currently held in an escrow account, will be managed via the Council's mainstream treasury activity.

Noted.

14. An Overview of Local Government in Scotland 2013: Update

Submitted report by Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on progress made on implementing actions in relation to the Audit Scotland report.

The report provided details of the main issues that were identified for North Ayrshire in relation to the key finding of the report. Appendix 1 to the report outlined progress in implementing each of the actions.

Noted.

15. Understanding and Tackling Domestic Abuse: Progress Update

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Development and Environment) on an update on tackling domestic abuse in North Ayrshire.

The report provided information on the current approach and a number of services currently operating in North Ayrshire to address the issue of domestic abuse, including Violence Against Women Partnership, Multi-Agency Domestic Abuse Response Team (MADART), Break the Silence, Caledonian Programme, ASSIST, Home Security Project, Sacro, North Ayrshire Women's Aid (NAWA) and the Daphne III Programme.

The Cabinet noted (a) the current approach to tackling domestic abuse in North Ayrshire and the positive impact it is having; and (b) that a review of domestic abuse services will be undertaken as part of the development of the 2014/17 Violence Against Women Strategy.

16. Gaelic Language Plan

Submitted report by the Head of Service (Community and Culture) (Education and Skills) on feedback from Bòrd na Gàidhlig's Panel and proposed amendments to the Gaelic Language Plan.

North Ayrshire Council is developing its response to meeting statutory commitments in adopting its first Gaelic Language Plan. A cross-council working group has drafted the plan and consultation with the public has taken place. Appendix 1 to the report outlined changes to the Plan as a result of feedback from the Screening Panel.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note the feedback from Bòrd na Gàidhlig; and (b) approve amendments to the Gaelic Language Plan for consideration by the Bòrd na Gàidhlig Board for approval.

17. South West Hub Territory Partnership Board held on 30 January 2014

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on the minutes of the South West Hub Territory Partnership Board held on 30 January 2014

Noted.

18. Corporate Equality Group : 3 March 2014

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the minutes of the Corporate Equality Group held on 3 March 2014

Noted.

19. Physical Environment Advisory Panel : 10 March 2014

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Development and Environment) on the minutes of the Physical Environment Advisory Panel held on 10 March 2014

Noted.

20. Urgent Items

The Chair agreed that the following item be considered as a matter of urgency to allow the matter to be actioned without delay.

21. Arran Homes

At its meeting on 24 April 2104, the Ardrossan and Arran, Saltcoats and Stevenston Area Committee had discussed the announcement by Trust Housing Association of planned changes to services delivered on Arran. The Committee agreed to request the Chief Executive write to Trust Housing Association expressing their concerns at the proposed closure of the Arran office, their disappointment at the lack of consultation with local Members, tenants and partner agencies and to request Trust Housing Association meet with local Elected Members and other interested parties.

The Cabinet agreed that the Chief Executive write to Trust Housing Association in the terms expressing concerns at the proposed closure of the Arran office, the disbanding of the local committee, disappointment at the lack of consultation with local Members, tenants and partner agencies and to request Trust Housing Association meet with local Elected Members and other interested parties to discuss the planned changes to the service delivery.

The meeting ended at 4.45 p.m.