

Corporate Services Standing Sub Committee
27 September 2006

IRVINE, 27 September 2006 - At a Meeting of the Corporate Services Standing Sub Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

Present

Tom Barr, Gordon Clarkson, John Moffat, David Munn, Robert Rae and Ian Richardson.

In Attendance

I.T. Mackay, Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Protective); B. MacDonald, Assistant Chief Executive (Development and Promotion); J. Barrett, Assistant Chief Executive (Information Technology); G. Young, Personnel Manager (Personnel); C. McArthur, Finance Manager (Finance); G. Lawson, Head of Corporate and Democratic Support, J. Montgomery, Principal Performance Review Officer, M. Anderson and D. McCaw, Corporate and Democratic Support Officers (Chief Executive's).

Chair

Councillor Barr in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

Jack Carson, Margaret McDougall and Elizabeth McLardy.

1. Service Performance Reports for year ended 31 March 2006

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the performance for each of the main services areas for the year to 31 March 2006.

The appendices to the report set out service performance for Chief Executive's Services, Development and Promotion, Financial Services, Information Technology Services, Legal and Protective Services and Personnel Services. The reports detailed the performance highs and lows and the immediate priorities for each of these Service areas.

The Sub Committee discussed each of the Performance Reports in turn and asked questions of the officers present.

Clarification was provided on points raised by Members as follows:-

Chief Executive's Services

- the lower than expected number of pro-active press releases issued.
- the implementation of e-procurement across the Council and measures to address the issue of invoice processing.

- the preparation of a draft Economic Development Strategy which will be presented to a meeting of the Corporate Management Team.
- the audit of services being undertaken to inform development of a sustainability strategy.
- the possibility of the 3 Ayrshire Local Authorities merging their emergency planning services as part of a future shared services programme and current arrangements to fill the Emergency Planning Officer post within the emergency planning section of the Council.

Development and Promotion

- the establishment of the Irvine Bay Urban Regeneration Company.
- the regeneration of the Lochshore, Kilbirnie, including an area of ground opposite the Golf Club, while considering issues such as land contamination and funding resources.
- the significant increase in industrial/commercial rent arrears from 6.9% to 8.9% as an inter-service issue involving Legal Services, Development and Promotion and Financial Services.
- the Asset Management Strategy which will be considered by the Corporate Management Team on 11 October 2006 and thereafter by the Council.

Financial Services

- the cost per dwelling for the collection of Council Tax and the contact centre recharge.
- the fall in the percentage of business rates collected, mainly due to utility companies' rates being collected by nominated authorities.
- the completion of the job evaluation project which will require the implementation of new pay scales by the payroll section.
- the increase in the average time for processing a change of circumstance for benefit claimants, due in part to a redefinition of the statutory performance indicator.
- e-procurement as a priority for the newly appointed Procurement Manager.

Information Technology Services

- the re-designing of the Council's website to offer more on-line facilities and improved presentation.
- the 12% turnover of staff within the Applications Section.
- accommodation issues for the service which will be considered as part of a proposed wider Accommodation Strategy.

Legal and Protective Services

- difficulties associated with the recruitment and retention of staff.
- the introduction of the mobile CCTV unit, funded through the Regeneration Outcome Agreement.
- the Scottish Executive's payment of the one-off cost of hardware needed to provide the e-planning service and the ongoing staffing costs which will require to be met by the Council.

Personnel Services

- the HR Strategy looking at skill shortages within the Council which will be presented to the Corporate Management Team on 18 October 2006.
- the changes required due to the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations which will come into effect from 1 October 2006.

The Sub Committee agreed to approve the immediate priorities identified within the Appendices to the report.

The Meeting ended at 3.35 p.m.