

Corporate Policy Standing Sub Committee
4 October 2006

IRVINE, 4 October 2006 - At a Meeting of the Corporate Policy Standing Sub Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

Present

John Reid, John Bell, Jean Highgate, Margaret McDougall, Margaret Munn and David O'Neill.

In Attendance

I. Snodgrass (Chief Executive); J. Montgomery, Principal Performance Review Officer; S. Bale, Corporate and Democratic Support Officer; A. Todd, Community Planning Officer; M. McKeown and C. Graham, Corporate and Democratic Support Officers (Chief Executive's).

Chair

Councillor Reid in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

Richard Wilkinson.

1. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Bell declared a non-pecuniary interest in the Radio City Initiative at Item 3 on the agenda.

Councillor Munn declared a non-pecuniary interest in the 3 Towns Healthy Living Centre, Cunninghame Housing Association and One Plus Initiatives at Item 3 on the agenda.

2. Statutory Performance Indicators 2005/06

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the Council's overall Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) position for 2005/06, on proposals for public performance reporting, and on a review of the SPIs at a national level.

56 SPIs were required for 2005/06, 9 fewer than in the previous year, covering many but not all Council services. The external auditor again confirmed that all of the SPIs are 'reliable' which confirms the strength of the Council's corporate governance arrangements.

The appendix to the report set out performance against SPI measures during 2005/06, and compared performance with that in years 2004/05 and 2003/04. Comparing 2005/06 with 2003/04. The Scottish average figures for the year 2005/06 will be compiled by Audit Scotland and circulated to local authorities in due course.

The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 gave councils, subject to certain conditions, a duty of public performance reporting in terms of format, timing and frequency of reporting. SPIs require to be in the public domain by 30 September each year. In North Ayrshire, arrangements have been made to repeat last year's practices of:-

- placing a public notice in local newspapers advising of the availability of the SPIs at all public offices, libraries, and on the Council's website;
- displaying posters at the Council's public offices and libraries advising of the availability of the SPI information; and
- using the Council's 'NOW' newspaper as a vehicle for consulting and providing information to households.

The Scottish Executive has recognised that SPIs, having been in existence for a number of years, now require to be reviewed. The Minister for Finance and Public Sector Reform has established a review group, comprising a number of bodies throughout Scotland, to discuss the development of alternative performance management arrangements. Both the Chief Executive and the Principal Performance Review Officer of the Council will be actively participating in these discussions. In the meantime, SPIs will continue to feature in the scrutiny of councils.

The Sub Committee agreed to (a) note the Council's overall performance in relation to the SPIs for 2005/06; and (b) receive a report at a future meeting on the review of SPIs at a national level.

3. Progress Report on North Ayrshire's Regeneration Outcome Agreement (ROA) 2004/05-2007/08

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on progress of the North Ayrshire Regeneration Outcome Agreement (ROA) 2004/05-2007/08.

The North Ayrshire Regeneration Outcome Agreement developed by the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) in 2004/05 is supported via the Scottish Executive's Community Regeneration Fund (CRF). The CPP was awarded a total of £10.9m for financial years 2005/06-2007/08 to implement the ROA.

The appendices to the report set out the progress made against the main programmes contained in the ROA, provided details of projects funded through the Regenerating Our Community Fund in 2005/06 and 2006/07, and enclosed the ROA Annual Report for 2005. The Annual Report has been submitted to Communities Scotland and positive feedback has been received.

Members discussed examples of good practice and priorities of the Community Planning Partnership contained within the Annual Report, including:-

- the Employability Programme
- the Community Safety Programme
- Engaging Young People and
- the Improving Health Programme

In relation to the Community Safety Programme, it was confirmed that the Mobile CCTV Initiative is now up and running. Funding for the Healthy North Ayrshire Programme will be carried forward to the next financial year due to recruitment/staffing issues delaying commencement of that Programme.

Applications for funding from the Regenerating Our Community Fund had previously been considered by the 3 Area Committees of the Council. In financial year 2007/08 however, applications will be determined by the Council's Corporate Policy Committee. Copies of the applications, together with details of the appraisal criteria will be made available to Members for their consideration prior to submission to the Committee. Meantime, a Sustainability Sub Group of the CPP has been established to investigate ways and means of assisting the initiatives already in progress, particularly in light of the fact that the Scottish Executive has given no indication that funding will be extended after 2008.

The Sub Committee also discussed the relationship between the Council and the Community Planning Partners and sought clarification on arrangements for ensuring Members can input into the Community Planning process. The role of Area Committee Liaison meetings with Community Planning Partners was highlighted in this regard.

Noted.

4. Audit of Best Value and Community Planning - Improvement Plan Progress Report as at 30 June 2006

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on progress in implementing the Improvement Plan arising from the Controller of Audit report on the Best Value & Community Planning arrangements within the Council.

The report set out the position as at 30 June 2006 in relation to the 50 actions contained in the Improvement Plan. 17 of those actions were either complete or on target for completion. Revised timetables have been set for the remaining 33 actions where slippage has occurred. This slippage is, however, considered to be within acceptable parameters. Pricewaterhouse Coopers has endorsed the Council's assessment of progress in implementing the Improvement Plan.

The Sub Committee (a) noted the progress made to date in implementing the Improvement Plan; and (b) agreed to receive a further report on progress at a future meeting.

The meeting ended at 3.05 p.m.