

Scrutiny and Petitions Committee
18 May 2016

IRVINE, 18 May 2016 - At a Meeting of the Scrutiny and Petitions Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

Present

John Hunter, Robert Barr, Matthew Brown, Alex Gallagher, Grace McLean and Catherine McMillan.

In Attendance

E. Murray, Chief Executive; L. Friel, Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support); K. Yeomans, Executive Director (Economy and Communities); R. McCutcheon, Head of Service (Commercial Services) (Place); S. Quinn, Head of Service (Schools) (Education and Youth Employment); and A. Fraser, Head of Democratic Services, L. Cameron, Policy and Performance Officer and M. Anderson, Committee Services Team Leader (Chief Executive's Service).

Chair

Councillor Hunter in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

Alan Munro.

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest by Members in terms of Standing Order 10 and Section 5 of the Code of Conduct for Councillors.

2. Minutes

The accuracy of the Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Committee held on 9 March 2016 will be confirmed and the Minutes signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

Noted.

3. Directorate Plans 2016/17 Update

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the Council's 2016 update on the 2015/18 Directorate Plans. Appendices 1-5 set out the Directorate Plan for Democratic Services, Finance and Corporate Support, Education and Youth Employment, Economy and Communities, and Place, respectively. The 2015/18 Strategic Plan for the Health and Social Care Partnership, which was approved on 2 April 2015, is currently being refreshed prior to publication in summer 2016.

In introducing the report, the Chief Executive also advised of a Member Seminar on the subject of performance planned for the end of June 2016.

Members asked questions, and received further information, on the following:-

Democratic Services

- fees from taxi and private hire care operator and driver licences
- work to prepare for next year's local government elections and new Administration

The Head of Democratic Support also undertook to provide Members with confirmation of the number of full time equivalent staff across his Service.

Finance and Corporate Support

- factors affecting the time taken to administer Housing Benefit payments, Council Tax reductions and overpayments

Education and Youth Employment

- the circumstances surrounding the £1m investment in teachers' pensions and its funding mechanism
- plans to merge Additional Support Needs (ASN) educational provision via the construction of a new ASN school
- target setting in relation to SCQF Level 5 in Numeracy

The Head of Service (Schools) also undertook to provide Members with further information on the current attainment targets and the transition from previous attainment measures.

Economy and Communities

- work in respect of the Council Plan priority of growing our economy, increasing employment and regenerating towns
- funding levels from the European Social Fund
- whether town centre regeneration work would cover the whole of North Ayrshire
- arrangements for the distribution of community funds arising from Landfill Tax

The Executive Director (Economy and Communities) also undertook to provide Members with a briefing note on the arrangements associated with the distribution funding from the Scottish Landfill Communities Fund.

Place

- Waste services costs
- the Central Establishment Cost element of school meal costs.

The Head of Service (Commercial Services) also undertook to provide Members with a breakdown of the costs associated with Waste services;

The Committee agreed to (a) note the 2016 updates of the 2015/18 Directorate Plans as approved by the Cabinet on 26 April 2016; and (b) receive 6-monthly progress reports.

The meeting ended at 2.45 p.m.