

Minute of Meeting

Cabinet
Tuesday 24 October 2023
Item No: 4.1



Cabinet

Date	Time	Venue
Tuesday 5 September 2023	11.00 am	Council Chambers, Midlothian House, Buccleuch Street, Dalkeith

Present:

Councillor Parry (Convener)	Councillor Alexander
Councillor Cassidy	Councillor McKenzie
Councillor Scott	

Religious Representatives:

Ms Elizabeth Morton	
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In attendance:

Dr Grace Vickers, Chief Executive
Kevin Anderson, Executive Director Place
Fiona Robertson, Executive Director, Children, Young People and Partnerships
Morag Barrow, Joint Director Health and Social Care
Nick Clater, Head of Adult Services
Derek Oliver, Chief Officer Place
Saty Kaur, Chief Officer Corporate Solutions
Michelle Strong, Education Chief Operating Officer
Lorrette Nicol, Service Manager, Children's Services, Partnerships and Communities
Janet Ritchie, Democratic Services Officer
Hannah Forbes, Democratic Services Assistant

1 Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

Councillor Parry welcomed those in attendance to the meeting of Cabinet.

Apologies were then noted on behalf of Councillor McManus and Anne-Theresa Lawrie

2 Order of Business

The Order of Business was as detailed within the agenda.

3 Declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were received.

4 Minutes of Previous Meetings

4.1 The Minute of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on the 30 May 2023 was submitted and approved as a correct record.

4.2 The Action Log of Cabinet was submitted and noted.

5. Reports

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.1	Adult Health and Social Care Q1 Performance Report 2023/24	Head of Adult Services

Outline of report and summary of discussion

Nick Clater, Head of Adult Services provided an overview of the Q1 Performance Report 2022/23 highlighting the progress of key sections and some of the main challenges as contained within the report and thereafter responded to questions and comments raised by Elected Members.

The Head of Adult Health Services in responding to a question raised with regards to alcohol deaths advised that the substance misuse workers have spent so long managing the drug issues that they feel less skilled in managing alcohol issues but attention is now focussed on alcohol harm as it is now getting greater prominence and training will be provided to staff for managing this issue. In responding to further questions, he also provided an update on the drug deaths and the age group this mainly affects now and the issues with prescribed drugs and the main problems being benzodiazepines.

Councillor McKenzie on behalf of Councillor McManus expressed his congratulations on the hard work of the team and especially the Dementia team in Danderhall who had been nominated for Team of the Year in the NHS Lothian Celebrating Success Awards.

The Chair expressed congratulations to the staff at No 11 for all their hard work and also expressed her condolences to the families of the 4 people who died this year.

Morag Barrow, Joint Director Health and Social Care highlighted that in celebrating success there were two other teams also nominated as part of the health side and the award ceremony will be held this week.

Decision

The Cabinet noted the content of the report and progress made and agreed to forward the report to the Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee.

Action

Democratic Services

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.2	Children's Services Partnerships and Communities Q1 Performance Report 2023/24	Service Manager, Children's Services Partnerships and Communities.

Outline of report and summary of discussion

Lorrette Nicol, Service Manager presented this report on behalf of Joan Tranent, providing an overview of the Q1 Performance Report 2022/23, highlighting the progress of the key sections and the challenges as contained within the report and thereafter responded to questions and comments raised by Elected Members.

In responding to a question from the Chair with regards to child protection and any rise in domestic abuse cases, the Service Manger advised that this is not a new or increasing issue but there is an increased awareness and services are responding more robustly to it.

Councillor Scott expressed her thanks for all the work to support families in remaining together but raised concerns with regards to the number of children with ASN and complex and enduring needs on the waiting list and if there was anything that could be done with regards to resources. In responding the Service Manager highlighted that if children and young people are referred, an assessment can be undertaken which is not dependent on a formal diagnosis and highlighted the importance of ensuring that this was a shared responsibility in going forward.

In responding to a further question raised by Councillor Scott with regards to unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and the number of mandated places to fill the quota, the Service Manager advised that this was difficult to estimate but highlighted the significant rise and that this will have an impact on resources going forward.

Decision

The Cabinet noted the content of the report and progress made and agreed to forward the report to the Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee

Action

Democratic Services

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.3	Corporate Solutions Q1 Performance Report 2023/24	Chief Officer Corporate Solutions (Acting)
Outline of report and summary of discussion		
<p>Saty Kaur, Chief Officer (Acting) provided an overview of the Q1 Performance Report 2022/23 highlighting the progress in the key sections and outlined some of the main challenges as contained within the report and thereafter responded to questions and comments raised by Elected Members.</p> <p>Councillor Cassidy expressed his thanks for the in-depth report and the positive move in adapting to the customer's needs, however he noted that there was slippage in local procurement. Ms Kaur in responding advised that this was an annual figure and that this was calculated on a local government benchmarking framework indicator and calculated around post coding and provided an explanation on to the reasons why these figures are not accurate. Ms Kaur did advise that the number was low and that there was ongoing work to improve this and provided a brief update on some of the work in progress.</p> <p>In responding to a question raised by Councillor McKenzie regarding sent mail. Ms Kaur provided a brief update on the work ongoing in the revenue department and that work will progress to be done mainly online and that this was all part of the wider transformation work, so we are much more efficient in providing our services.</p> <p>Councillor Cassidy raised that there had only been one Midlothian Enterprise meet the buyer this year and how do we reach out to local businesses, it was agreed this would be taken away as an action by the Chief Officer Place.</p>		
Decision		
The Cabinet noted the content of the report and progress made and agreed to forward the report to the Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee. It was agreed that reaching out to small local businesses would be taken away as an action.		
Action		
Chief Officer, Place/Democratic Services		

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.4	Education Q1 Performance Report 2023/24	Education Chief Operating Officer
Outline of report and summary of discussion		
<p>Michelle Strong, Education Chief Operating Officer provided an overview of the Q1 Performance Report 2023/24 highlighting the progress in positive destinations, staff absence, invoice payments, audit actions and delivery of the strategic outcomes. Ms Strong also outlined the work undertaken with regards to attendance, exclusions, complaints and attainment and thereafter responded to questions and comments raised by Elected Members.</p> <p>Councillor Scott expressed her thanks on the report and acknowledged the low attendance but was pleased that actions were taking place to resolve this and also the positive changes taking place with regards to exclusions.</p>		

The Chair commented on the percentage of care experienced school leavers entering positive destinations and expressed her congratulations to the team on the results for 2021/22.

In responding to a further question with regards to pupils not attending school and the reasons for this, Ms Strong advised that it is very complex and where there is anxiety they are working with the families to reduce the barriers; and referenced there are situations of financial concerns raised with pupils at high school who were holding down full time jobs during this cost of living crisis and advised that each case is looked at individually to ascertain the reasons for non-attendance and working with families and the school to try to resolve any issues. In responding to a further question Ms Strong highlighted the 1:1 device given to each child which helped to bridge the gap but that was no substitute to physically being in the building engaging with the teachers.

The Chair expressed her concerns on the figures on the S6 pupils and the impact the cost-of-living crisis has had on the young people.

Decision

The Cabinet noted the content of the report and progress made and agreed to forward the report to the Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee

Action

Democratic Services

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.5	Place Q1 Performance Report 2023/24	Chief Officer Place
Outline of report and summary of discussion		
<p>Derek Oliver, Chief Officer Place provided an overview of the Q1 Performance Report 2023/24 highlighting some of the key sections in Building Services; Housing Services, Neighbourhood Services, Planning Sustainable Growth & Investment, Property & Facilities Management and Protective Services as contained within the report and thereafter responded to questions and comments raised by Elected Members.</p> <p>Councillor Alexander expressed her congratulations to the road team for their hard work and commented positively on the ongoing work with regards to the potholes, the benefit of collecting food waste, school meals uptake, energy efficiency in Midlothian and the work with the Rangers service and young people.</p> <p>The Chair expressed her congratulations with regards to the time reduction with homelessness and temporary accommodation. Councillor Cassidy and Councillor McKenzie also expressed their congratulations to Wayne Clark and his team in the response time regarding pothole repairs and the attendance of Robbie Beattie in attending the Community Council and the fantastic work he has done.</p>		
Decision		
The Cabinet noted the content of the report and progress made and agreed to forward the report to the Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee		
Action		

Democratic Services

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.6	Midlothian Council Q1 Performance Report 2023/24	Chief Executive
Outline of report and summary of discussion		
<p>Chief Executive, Grace Vickers in presenting this report advised that this report provides a summary of the actions in line with the Single Midlothian Plan and compliments the individual service reports presented by Officers today. The Chief Executive further advised that there were 5 indicators which were off target, one relating to performance against revenue budget, one relating to invoices and 3 relating to complaints.</p>		
Decision		
<p>The Cabinet noted the content of the report and progress made and agreed to forward the report to the Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee</p>		
Action		
Democratic Services		

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.7	Lawfield Primary School Inspection Report	Education Chief Operating Officer
Outline of report and summary of discussion		
<p>The purpose of this report was to outline the outcomes of the inspection of Lawfield Primary School carried out by Education Scotland in January 2023.</p> <p>In presenting this report the Education Chief Operating Officer, Michelle Strong outlined the background to the inspection and highlighted the main sections as contained within the report. Ms Strong further advised that in summary the Inspectors felt that the school had made insufficient progress since the original inspection and that they would visit again within a 12-month period. An action plan has been put in place from January 2023 – January 2024 by the head teacher, in partnership with the Midlothian Council education team and a range of officers are supporting the school in implementing the plan. Ms Strong also advised that weekly progress meetings are taking place and interim reviews took place in April and June this year. Due to a change in a leadership over the summer a temporary experienced head teacher is leading the school in the interim until a new head teacher has been appointed. Ms Strong further advised on the additional supports that have been put in place and that an updated report could be provided regarding progress made.</p> <p>Councillor Scott commented on the good relationships and nurturing approach and was really pleased on the additional deputy put in Lawfield Primary school and hoped that this would give a boost to the parents and pupils of the school highlighting that the Council wants the best outcomes for all our children especially by providing extra resources and all the actions put in place are greatly appreciated.</p>		

The Chair advised that it would be helpful to receive a further report back to Cabinet within the next 6 months.

Decision

The Cabinet agreed:

- To forward the report to the Performance Review and Scrutiny for its consideration.
- That a further report would be presented to Cabinet within 6 months on the progress made.
- To otherwise note the contents of the report.

Action

Democratic Services

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.8	Moorfoot Primary School Inspection Report	Education Chief Operating Officer

Outline of report and summary of discussion

The purpose of this report was to outline the outcomes of the inspection of Moorfoot Primary School as carried out by Education Scotland which was communicated in their report of December 2022.

In presenting this report the Education Chief Operating Officer, Michelle Strong outlined the background to the inspection and highlighted the key strengths noted by the inspectors. Ms Strong advised that the inspectors were confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and will make no more visits in connection with this inspection.

Councillor Scott expressed her thanks to Moorfoot Primary School and positively commented on the work they have done and also for the foresight of the Council to give these digital devices to pupils and the rewards for these children being very digitally aware in the future.

Decision

The Cabinet agreed:

- To pass this report to the Performance, Review and Scrutiny committee for its consideration.
- Congratulated the pupils, parents and staff connected with Moorfoot Primary School on the key strengths highlighted in the report.
- To otherwise note the content of the inspection report.

Action

Democratic Services

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.9	Care Inspectorate Inspections of Day Care of Children August 2022 – April 2023	Education Chief Operating Officer

Outline of report and summary of discussion

A range of funded providers were inspected including private nurseries and local authority settings and this report provides a summary of the outcomes of the undernoted inspections in Early Learning and Childcare settings for three and four year olds as carried out by the Care Inspectorate.

In presenting this report the Education Chief Operating Officer, Michelle Strong advised that this report provides details 12 care inspections and 4 HMiE inspections that took place between August 2022 and April 2023. Ms Strong further advised that the care inspector inspect unannounced and issue requirements and recommendations. Ms Strong further advised on the National Standard settings must be evaluated as good or above and where a setting does not receive this, the local authority places that setting in a service improvement period which allows officers to closely monitor progress within an agreed period of time and if no improvement the time can be extended and in rare circumstances delivery is ceased. Ms Strong highlighted that Midlothian are grateful for the funded providers for their ongoing support and delivery for provision to 3 and 4 year olds and well as the eligible 2s.

Councillor Scott acknowledged the number of reports and inspections over a short period of time and passed on congratulations to all staff involved, the Chair also expressed her congratulations.

Decision

The Cabinet agreed:

- To pass this report to the Performance, Review and Scrutiny committee for its consideration.
- Congratulated the pupils, parents and staff connected with these reports.
- To otherwise note the content of the summary of the inspection reports.

Action

Democratic Services

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.10	Newbyres Care Home: Care Inspectorate Report	Joint Director, Health and Social Care

Outline of report and summary of discussion

This report provides an overview of the recent Care Inspectorate report for Newbyres Village Care Home from 5 May 2023, and the subsequent unannounced follow up visit on 4 August 2023.

The Joint Director, Health and Social Care, Morag Barrow presented this report advising that this report was for noting and provided a brief overview of the unannounced inspection and subsequent inspection of Newbyres Care Home advising on April 2023 inspection and the grades given. Ms Barrow advised that within 12 weeks they had achieved all the requirements set and raised the grades from one 4 and four 2s to one 4 and four 3s. Ms Barrow also commented on the number inspections across the service and highlighted the complexity of the residents in Newbyres and the challenges in the workforce and the need to keep residents safe, has also meant high agency costs.

The Chair acknowledged the amount of work within the 12-week period and the progress made and expressed her thanks to the team.

Councillor McKenzie on behalf of Councillor McManus thanked Ms Barrow and her team for all their hard work and looking forward to more positive outcomes.

Decision

The Cabinet agreed:

- To note the content of the report and to thank the staff for the positive progress made.
- To forward onto Performance, Review and Scrutiny Committee.

Decision

Democratic Services

6 Private Reports

No Items for discussion

7 Date of the Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was noted as Tuesday 24 October 2023 at 11 am.

The meeting terminated at 12.25 pm.