

MINUTES of MEETING of the MIDLOTHIAN COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the Council Chambers, Midlothian House, Buccleuch Street, Dalkeith on Tuesday, 29 April 2014 at 11.00 am.

Present:- Councillors Milligan (Chair), Baxter, Bennett, Imrie, Muirhead Montgomery, Pottinger, Russell, and Wallace.

Apologies for Absence:- Councillors Coventry and de Vink.

1. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were intimated.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of Meeting of 4 March and 5 March (2 No.) 2014 were submitted and approved as correct records.

3 Inspection of Tynewater Primary School Nursery Class

With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minutes of the Cabinet of 22 April 2014, there was submitted report, dated 22 April 2014, by the Director, Resources, incorporating a report, dated 12 February 2014, by the Director, Education, Communities and Economy, outlining the outcome of an unannounced inspection carried out at Tynewater Primary School Nursery by the Care Inspectorate in November 2013.

The evaluations were as follows:-

Quality of Care and Support -	Good (Grade 4)
Quality of Environment -	Good (Grade 4)
Quality of Staffing -	Good (Grade 4)
Quality of Management and Leadership -	Good (Grade 4)

The Care Inspectorate had concluded that the Nursery provided a caring and supportive learning environment for children.

Decision

- (a) To note the content of the inspection report;
- (b) To congratulate the management and staff connected with Tynewater Primary School Nursery on the good work being carried out at the nursery, particularly given the fact that the staff team had only recently been appointed at the time of the inspection; and
- (c) To note that, whilst acknowledging the very good work being carried out at the Nursery the Council would continue to challenge, support and monitor

the service in relation to achieving excellence through further improving performance.

(Action: Director, Education, Communities and Economy).

4 Inspection of Lasswade High School Centre

With reference to paragraph 5 of the Minutes of the Cabinet of 22 April 2014, there was submitted report, dated 22 April 2014, by the Director, Resources, incorporating a report, dated 25 March 2014, by the Director, Education, Communities and Economy, outlining the outcome of a follow through inspection, carried out at Lasswade High School Centre by Education Scotland in January 2014.

The report explained that Centre was inspected in January 2013 and the visit in January 2014 was to assess the extent to which the school was continuing to improve the quality of its work, and to evaluate progress made in responding to the main points for action in the initial report. The Inspectors had concluded that the school had successfully made improvements in its approaches to self-evaluation and that leadership across the school was improving. The Council would provide Education Scotland with a progress report within one year at which point they would decide whether a further inspection was required.

Decision

- (a) To note the content of the inspection report;
- (b) To congratulate the pupils, parents and staff connected with Lasswade High School Centre on the very good progress made since the inspection visit of January 2013;
- (c) To note that officers within the Directorate would continue to challenge, support and monitor the service in relation to achieving excellence through further improving performance; and
- (d) To note that officers within the Directorate would liaise with Education Scotland's Area Lead Officer to monitor progress and prepare a progress report within one year.

(Action: Director, Education, Communities and Economy).

5 Inspection of Penicuik High School

With reference to paragraph 6 of the Minutes of the Cabinet of 22 April 2014, there was submitted report, dated 22 April 2014, by the Director, Resources, incorporating a report, dated 25 March 2014, by the Director, Education, Communities and Economy, outlining the outcome of an inspection, carried out at Penicuik High School by Education Scotland in February 2014.

The evaluations were as follows:-

Improvements in Performance – Very good

Learners Experiences - Good

Meeting Learning Needs – Very Good

The Curriculum – Good

Improvement through Self evaluation – Good.

Education Scotland had indicated that they were confident that the school's evaluation processes were leading to improvements. As a result, they would make no further visits in connection with this inspection.

Decision

- (a) To note the content of the inspection report;
- (b) To congratulate the pupils, parents and staff connected with Penicuik High School Centre on the key strengths highlighted in the report; and
- (c) To note that, whilst acknowledging progress reflected in this report, the Council would continue to challenge, support and monitor the service in relation to achieving excellence through further improving performance;
- (d) To note that the Cabinet had instructed the Director, Education, Communities and Economy to ensure that the School Improvement Plan incorporates the recommendations of Education Scotland; and
- (e) That future reports of this nature, provide details of the numbers of pupils on the school roll.

(Action: Director, Education, Communities and Economy).

6 Inspection of the Learning Community Surrounding Penicuik High School

With reference to paragraph 7 of the Minutes of the Cabinet of 22 April 2014, there was submitted report, dated 22 April 2014, by the Director, Resources, incorporating a report, dated 25 March 2014, by the Director, Education, Communities and Economy, outlining the outcome of an inspection, carried out in respect of the Learning Community Surrounding Penicuik High School by Education Scotland in February 2014.

The evaluations were as follows:-

Improvements in Performance – Weak

Impact on Participants – Good

Impact on Local Community – Good

Improving Services – Weak.

Education Scotland had therefore indicated that significant improvements were needed and that partners did not yet have a good understanding of their strengths and areas for improvement. As a consequence a further visit would be made within one year of the publication of their report to check progress. Accordingly, the Director was preparing a Service Improvement Plan, in consultation with Education Scotland.

Decision

- (a) To note the content of the inspection report;
- (b) To congratulate those involved in the learning community surrounding Penicuik High School on the key strengths highlighted in the report;
- (c) To note that, whilst acknowledging the positive aspects of this report, the Council would challenge, support and monitor the service in relation to achieving excellence through further improving performance;
- (d) To note that the Cabinet had instructed the Director, Education, Communities and Economy to ensure that the Service Improvement Plan incorporated the recommendations of the inspection team; and
- (e) That elected members be provided with a copy of the Service Improvement Plan once it had been finalised.

(Action: Director, Education, Communities and Economy).

7 Follow-through Evaluation of the Educational Psychology Service

With reference to paragraph 8 of the Minutes of the Cabinet of 22 April 2014, there was submitted report, dated 22 April 2014, by the Director, Resources, incorporating a report, dated 18 March 2014, by the Director, Education, Communities and Economy, outlining the outcome of a follow through inspection, carried out in respect of the Council's Educational Psychology Service, by Education Scotland. Previous inspections had been undertaken in June 2010; September 2011; and April 2013. The outcome of the inspection was that as a result of the significant improvements since the initial inspection in 2010, Education Scotland would make no further visits in this connection.

Decision

- (a) To note the content of the follow-through evaluation report;
- (b) To congratulate the Principal Educational Psychologist and her staff on the progress made since the initial inspection visit of June 2010;
- (c) To note that officers within the Directorate would continue to challenge, support and monitor the service in relation to achieving excellence through further improving performance; and
- (d) To note that the Cabinet had instructed the Director, Education, Communities and Economy ensure that the School Improvement Plan incorporates the recommendations of the inspection team.

(Action: Director, Education, Communities and Economy).

8 Street Sweeping Review

With reference to paragraph 2 of the Minutes of 8 October 2013, there was submitted report, dated 3 March 2014, by the Head of Commercial Operations, providing the Committee with an update relating to the specific service areas of Street Sweeping and Litter/dog fouling bins. The report detailed the current street sweeping arrangements and the plant available to support this service and proposed the following changes to street sweeping arrangements, viz:-

- **High density housing** – To introduce a street sweeping regime whereby the dry recycling routes would be mirrored and which would allow an increase of physical sweeping within these areas to fortnightly as opposed to the current four/six weekly cycle;
- **Lower Density Housing** - To introduce a street cleaning regime whereby the dry recycling routes would be mirrored and operated by one mobile street cleansing team;
- **Town Centres** - That town centres i.e. Dalkeith, Bonnyrigg and Penicuik have new schedules established to allow these areas to be maintained over a wider time frame. Dalkeith and Bonnyrigg would have two dedicated staff and Penicuik one . Additionally and where necessary, staff and a vehicle would be deployed to assist within town centres in addition to the vehicle and driver rostered to uplift bagged sweeping material.
- **Small Shopping Areas** - i.e. outwith town centres, would be cleansed by a mobile street cleansing team (SSV) initially on a daily basis but would be subject to review; and
- **All other Areas** - That these areas be litter picked/swept by a mobile street cleansing team, on a reactive basis.

In respect of litter/dog bin collection service the report proposed to increase the number of bins but highlighted that this would necessitate the introduction of an additional collection vehicle. The cost of purchasing 300 additional bins was £60,000 for which there was no financial provision in the General Services Capital plan for 2014/15. The report further proposed that any request for additional bins be assessed in accordance with a points scoring system which was detailed in the report.

Decision

- (a) To note that the Cleansing service continued to pursue initiatives with schools in respect of litter issues;
- (b) That the points weighting system, be introduced in principle but that the number of points allocated to requests from elected representatives, be reconsidered;
- (c) To welcome the use of “multi bins” and to therefore recommend to the Cabinet, that it approve the revised bin emptying timetable outlined in the

report the proposal to increase the number of litter/dog fouling bins and; that it recommend to the Council approval of the cost of providing these from the General Services Capital Plan for 2014/15;

- (d) To receive further reports in respect of (i) Dog Fouling – Fixed penalty Notices; and (ii) cross working between the Cleansing Services and both the Road Services unit and Landscape Services; and
- (e) That officials investigate the adoption of the procedure for the consideration of requests for litter bins, being similarly adopted by Landscape Services.

(Action: Head of Commercial Operations: (di) Head of Housing and Customer Services).

9 Council House Building Programme Phases 1 and 2 - Progress Report

With reference to paragraph 2(l) of the Minutes of Meeting of 5 March 2014 (1), there was submitted report, dated 28 April 2014, by the Heads of Property and Facilities Management and Customer and Housing Services, providing an update on the progress made of the Council's Housing Building Programmes. The report advised that 1,347 new affordable rented housing units had been completed in Midlothian since 2006; provided details of other initiatives to meet housing demand, including the Council acting as a lender to local housing associations; the National Housing Trust model; various Low Cost Home Ownership (LCHO) Schemes; and the establishment of an Empty Homes Loan Fund. The report also showed that there were 4,242 applicants for housing (including applicants to Melville Housing), 58% of whom qualified for a one bedroom property and 31% for a two bedroom property. The preferred housing mix for Phase 2, therefore had a target of 44% of one bedroom housing to take account of demographic change and the implications of welfare reform.

The report also provided detailed information on the framework tender process which had resulted in bids being received from two contractors; the tender evaluation process; the construction delivery programme; Houses for Heroes, in respect of which discussions were ongoing; and Complex Care provision.

Decision

- (a) To note the information contained in the report; and
- (b) To establish a short life Working Group, to (i) review information on the Council House Building programme; (ii) consider initiatives other than the straightforward building of houses to let and to invite the Cabinet to be represented thereon; and
- (c) That officials report at the earliest opportunity on the possible remit of a working group and the scope of its activities.

(Action: Director, Resources).

Sederunt

Councillor Bennett left the meeting during discussion of the foregoing item of business (12. 30 pm).

The meeting terminated at 12.58 pm.