

MINUTES of SPECIAL MEETING of the MIDLOTHIAN PERFORMANCE REVIEW

AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the Council Chambers, Midlothian House,

Buccleuch Street, Dalkeith on Wednesday 5 June 2013 at 11.00 am.

Present: Councillors Milligan (Chair), Baxter, Bennett, Muirhead, Pottinger, Rosie, Russell de Vink and Wallace.

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Boyes, Imrie and Montgomery.

1. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of Interest were intimated.

2. 2012/13 Performance Reports

There were submitted Performance Reports for 2012/13 in respect of the Corporate Plan for the Council and the Plans for Customer Services; Commercial Operations; Property and Facilities Management; Planning and Development and Finance and Human Resources. Each report contained a summary of the major successes; the major challenges and the actions to address them; and the budget position and the impact of efficiencies. Thereafter, the Committee received verbal updates in respect of each of the reports.

Decision

(a) To note the increase in sickness absence levels and the actions being taken to address this issue, which would be kept under review by the CMT;

(b) To note that 93% of all invoices were now paid within 30 days of receipt;

(c) To note that following the application of the Systems Thinking process in the Homeless Unit, the numbers of clients placed in bed and breakfast accommodation had been substantially reduced resulting in an estimated saving of £180,000;

(d) To note that improvements in the Council's performance in respect of positive destinations for young people was being addressed by the CMT as a priority;

(e) To note the Council's improved PCA score in respect of procurement and that whilst the Council was obliged to comply with all relevant legislation, there was still scope to structure contracts which could benefit Midlothian contractors or groups;

(f) To note that the provision of a food recycling plant was still on schedule to be operative by December 2015;

(g) To note that remedial works to the A6106 at Lugton, Dalkeith, were scheduled to commence on 15 June 2013 for a period of 40 weeks and that local residents were being kept apprised of progress;

(h) To note that remedial works on the B6372 at Temple, Gorebridge, were scheduled to be completed in July 2013;

(i) To note that supplies of Welfare Reform handbooks were available at all public offices ; Leisure Centres; Libraries etc;

(j) To note that approximately 50% of applications for Crisis Grants had been rejected on the basis of failing to meet the qualifying criteria;

(k) To note that it was anticipated that local authorities would be expected to identify further land for housing development once the Strategic Plan had been approved by Scottish Ministers;

(l) To note that it was anticipated that all the land and planning agreements in respect of Shawfair would be completed by the end of 2013, thus allowing a planning consent to be issued and for housing development to commence in 2014;

(m) To note that following Scottish Coal having gone into receivership, the Council may be obliged to call in the bonds required from them to secure reinstatement of the site at Shewington/Newbigging ; the bonds may be insufficient to meet the cost of reinstatement works; a ministerial task force had been established to review the situation on a Scotland wide basis part of whose remit was to examine options to address the funding gap across many of the Scottish coalfields; that, if Scottish Coal's operations were secured by a successor, it may not be necessary to call in the bonds; and the reinstatement of future opencast coal developments may need to be protected by different financial arrangements funded by the operator;

(n) To note that all companies looking to invest or re-locate to Midlothian were offered the maximum level of assistance and guidance and that planning and economic development teams would continue to work closely with such companies;

(o) That, in reporting on the public consultation on the Midlothian Local development Plan main issues Report, particular reference was made to potential transport infrastructure constraints, most notably in the A701/A702 corridor;

(p) To note that to date no extension of Danderhall Primary School was planned; and

(q) To receive a report on the ongoing discussions with HubCo in respect of the replacement/redevelopment of primary schools at Gorebridge; Roslin and Rosewell.

(Action: (o) Head of Planning and Development; (q) Head of Properties and Facilities Management).

The meeting terminated at 12.47 pm.

