

MINUTES of MEETING of the MIDLOTHIAN COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the Council Chambers, Midlothian House, Buccleuch Street, Dalkeith on Tuesday, 21 October 2014 at 11.00 am.

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

Apologies for Absence:- Councillors Baxter, Coventry and de Vink.

1. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were intimated.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of Meetings of 2 September and 3 September (2 No.) 2014 were submitted and approved as correct records.

3 Summary Report of Professional Update Validation Process

With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minutes of the Cabinet of 7 October 2014, there was submitted report, dated 14 October 2014, by the Director, Resources, incorporating a report, dated 16 September 2014, by the Head of Education, outlining the outcome of a validation process carried out by the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) in June 2014. The report advised that the assessment panel had validated Midlothian Council's strategy and plans in full without qualification, although recommendations had been made to assist in building on and continuing to enhance the existing provision.

Decision

- (a) To note the content of the inspection report;
- (b) To note that the Council would continue to challenge, support and monitor the service in relation to achieving excellence through further improving performance; and
- (c) That an update be provided to Elected Members in respect of the screening of the Education, Communities and Economy Improvement Plan for equalities implications.

(Action: Head of Education)

4 Planning Performance Framework Annual Reports for 2012/13 and 2013/14

With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minutes of the Planning Committee of 7 October 2014, there was submitted report, dated 14 October 2014, by the Director, Resources, incorporating a report, dated 18 July 2014, by the Head of Communities and Economy, providing an update on the progress of work undertaken on the Planning Performance Framework for Midlothian. Specifically, the report summarised the comments of Scottish Government on the Council's submitted Planning Performance Framework (PPF) for 2012/13, and the content of the recently submitted PPF for 2013/14. The report detailed the feedback on the Planning Performance Framework (PPF) for 2012/13 and advised that in respect of the 15 performance related areas, four had been rated as "green" i.e. there was no cause for concern; eight were rated "amber" i.e. where areas of improvement had been identified; and three had been rated "red" i.e. where specific attention was required. In respect of those areas rated "red", the report provided details of the remedial actions taken or gave explanations how these ratings had been determined. The report also incorporated the executive summary of the PPF for 2013/14 which had been submitted to Scottish Government on 26 September 2014.

Decision

- (a) To note the report; and
- (b) That reports of this nature, which had already been submitted to the Planning Committee, need only be submitted to the Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee, where the Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee so requested.

(Action: Head of Communities and Economy; All others to note)

5 Street Sweeping Review

With reference to paragraph 8 of the Minutes of 29 April 2014, there was submitted report, dated 8 October 2014, by the Head of Commercial Operations, providing an update on the points weighting system; dog fouling penalty notices; and cross working arrangements between Waste Services, Road Services and Land Services.

The report (i) incorporated a revised weighting system for the provision of waste/dog waste bins, which detailed the assessment criteria to be used in determining whether bins should be provided; (ii) detailed the work involved in processing Dog Fouling Penalty notices, including the identification of areas of greatest concern; the establishment of Green Dog Walkers as a co-production project; the introduction of a sticker campaign publicising that dog waste could be deposited in any municipal litter bin; continued education initiatives; and action under the control of dogs legislation; and (iii) advised that there were currently no viable combined street sweeping/gully cleaning vehicles on the market; a regime had been introduced that ensured parks and green spaces were maintained to the highest possible standard; and that new bins installed on areas such as cycleways, would henceforth be the responsibility of the Waste Management Services Unit; and (iv) the Land Services Unit had adopted the weighting system being used by the Waste Management Services Unit.

Decision

- (a) To note that there was a presumption against providing litter bins in newly constructed housing estates;
- (b) That officials investigate the possibility of incorporating litter bin emptying along with regular domestic waste uplifts, particularly in rural areas;
- (c) That officials investigate the uplift of leaves during the Autumnal period, with a view to preventing difficulties with flooding, dangerous underfoot conditions etc;
- (d) That Elected Members be provided with a monthly record of drainage investigations and gully cleaning undertaken;
- (e) To note that gully cleaning, was on average, carried out every 18 months;
- (f) To note that litter bins were emptied on a regular frequency;
- (g) That the criteria for the assessment of litter bin requests, no longer carry any weighting in respect of matters referred by Elected Members or Community Councils;
- (h) That Elected Members be provided with statistical information in respect of enforcement actions taken under the Dangerous Dogs Act; and
- (i) To note the obligation of hot food outlets situated adjacent to highways to undertake litter clearing work as a condition of their licence granted under the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982.

(Action: Head of Commercial Operations).

The meeting terminated at 11.36 am.