

MINUTES of SPECIAL MEETING of the MIDLOTHIAN COUNCIL

PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the Council Chambers, Midlothian House, Buccleuch Street, Dalkeith on Wednesday 26 November 2014 at 2.00 pm.

Present: Councillors Baxter, Muirhead, Pottinger and Wallace.

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Milligan (Chair) and de Vink.

1. Chair

In the absence of Councillor Milligan, Councillor Muirhead was appointed to the Chair.

2 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were intimated.

3 2013/14 Performance Reports – Quarter 2

There were submitted Performance Reports for 2013/14 in respect of Adult Social Care; Customer and Housing Services; Children's Services; Communities and Economy; and Education. Each report contained a summary of the progress in delivering Strategic Outcomes and a summary of emerging challenges and risks. Thereafter, the Committee received verbal updates in respect of each of the reports.

Decision

- (a) To note that there were no additional cost pressures arising from the introduction of Self Directed Support;
- (b) To note that there had been no identifiable increase in the demand for carers respite since the respite introduction of Self Directed Support;
- (c) To note that there were a number of technical obstacles to fitting solar panels to older Council housing properties but that notwithstanding this, officials would seek to secure funding for such projects where this was practical;
- (d) To note the increase in the usage of the Travelling People's site at the former Dalkeith Colliery, following its upgrading and that any increase in charges would be implemented from 1 April in any financial year;
- (e) To note the continued challenges arising from Welfare Reform and the impending introduction of Universal Credit;

- (f) To note the success of the Family Resilience project which had resulted in 17 children remaining in a family environment and who may otherwise have been placed in residential establishments and the subsequent cost savings across the public sector;
- (g) To note the increased pressure on the public transport network arising from developments at the Bush Estate;
- (h) To note that a report on the pilot scheme of joint working between Midlothian and East Lothian Councils in respect of Trading Standards and Environmental Health Services would be the subject of a report to both Councils in early course;
- (i) That officials investigate and report to the Planning Committee on the possibility of planning consents and Section 75 Agreements requiring developers to ensure that housing developments had broadband access;
- (j) To recommend to the Planning Committee that the provision allowing Elected Members to call in applications for planning permission within their Electoral Ward, for consideration by the Planning Committee, be extended to all 18 Elected Members in respect of applications which related to “Fracking”;
- (k) To note that the Neighbourhood Planning Process would need to be reviewed having regard to the provisions of the Community Empowerment Act and that this would be the subject of a report to the Council in due course;
- (l) To note that fees and charges now faced by voluntary organisations which had heretofore been granted the free use of facilities would require to form part of their submission for grant funding;
- (m) To note that School Improvement Plan funding required to be utilised solely for the purpose for which it was awarded and that Schools and associated groups therefore worked in partnership to ensure that maximum benefit was derived from the funding; and
- (n) To otherwise note the reports and information provided.

(Action: (i) and (j) Head of Communities and Economy)

The meeting terminated at 3.25 pm.