

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 4 June 2014 at 2.00 pm.

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

Apologies for Absence: Councillors, Coventry, Beattie, Boyes and Montgomery.

1. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were intimated

2 2013/14 Annual Performance Reports

There were submitted Performance Reports for 2013/14 in respect of Adult and Community Care; Housing and Community Safety; Children and Families; Communities and Support; Education; and Planning and Development. 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 the conclusion of the Section 75 agreement in respect of the developments at Shawfair;
- (b) To congratulate all involved in the success of the Dalkeith Town Centre Heritage project;
- (c) To note that the Council continued to meet its statutory obligations in respect of bio-Diversity despite the fact that there were no specialist staff to perform this function;
- (d) To note the processes followed in respect of the review of Grants to External organisations and that this would be subject to a report to the Council on 24 June 2014;
- (e) To note that (i) the project and housing management functions under the Empty Homes Scheme in Midlothian would be undertaken by the Dunedin Canmore Housing Association; and (ii) the rents payable would be regulated by the level of the Local Housing Allowance, determined by the Department of Work and Pensions;
- (f) To note that no children had been placed in care outwith

Midlothian for over 18 months;

- (g) To note the diversity of criteria being applied in local authorities in measuring performance in respect of childcare issues and to accordingly recommend to the Cabinet that it make representations to Scottish Ministers to secure the use of consistent criteria across all local authorities to allow a more accurate record of performance to be produced;
- (h) To note the specific work being undertaken to raise numeracy and literacy levels in 2-3 year old children;
- (i) To note the increase in the numbers of Data Subject Access Requests from former pupils and looked after children;
- (j) To note the success of the library Service in securing the “library of the Year” award for 2014 and to congratulate the service on its achievement;
- (k) To note that a report on the provision of a minimum of 600 hours per annum for 3-4 year old children would be submitted to the Council on 24 June 2014 and would require to be tailored to meet the “school year”;
- (l) To note that there had been a number of Learning Assistants on fixed term contracts which had not been renewed and that greater and more flexible use of Learning Assistants was being made; and
- (m) To otherwise note the reports

(Action: (g) Head of Children and Families/ Legal and Secretariat Manager)

The meeting terminated at 3.20pm.