

# Minute of Meeting

Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee  
Tuesday, 12 December 2023  
Item No: 4.1



## Performance, Review and Scrutiny

Date	Time	Venue
Tuesday, 7 November 2023	11.00 am	Hybrid meeting held in the Council Chamber at Midlothian House and virtually via Microsoft Teams

### Present:

Councillor Imrie (Chair)	Councillor Bowen
Councillor Pottinger	Councillor Russell
Councillor Virgo	Councillor Curran
Councillor McEwan	Councillor McCall
Councillor McKenzie (virtual)	Councillor Scott (Virtual)
Councillor Alexander (Virtual)	

### In attendance:

Grace Vickers, Chief Executive
Kevin Anderson, Executive Director Place
Derek Oliver, Chief Officer Place
Michelle Strong, Education Chief Operating Officer
Fiona Robertson, Executive Director Children, Young People & Partnerships
Nick Clater, Head of Adult and Social Care Services
Grace Cowan, Head of Primary Care and Older People's Services
Gary Leadbetter, Democratic Services Officer
Lucy Roddie, Democratic Services Assistant

## **1 Welcome, Introductions and Apologies**

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Gary Leadbetter, Democratic Services Officer, welcomed Members and Officers to the Performance, Review and Scrutiny Committee and noted that apologies were offered from the Chair, Councillor Milligan and Councillor Smail.

Due to the absence of the Chair, Gary Leadbetter enquired if there was a motion to nominate another Elected Member to be interim Chair for the purposes of this meeting. Councillor McEwan nominated Councillor Imrie. Councillor Pottinger seconded.

Councillor Virgo offered Councillor Winchester's apologies.

## **2 Order of Business**

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The Order of Business was as detailed in the agenda.

## **3 Declarations of interest**

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No declarations of interest were received.

## **4 Minutes of Previous Meetings**

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- 4.1 The Minute of the Meeting of the Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee (PRS) held on 19 September 2023 was submitted and approved as correct record.

Councillor Russell noted that, following the last meeting they had taken up the offer of attending Newbyres Care Home for a visit. Councillor Russell explained that they had met staff and had visited to hear about what was being done to bring it up to the standards expected. Councillor Russell explained that they were impressed by the "level of stewardship" and want to improve the care home. Councillor Russell asked that the Social Work Assurance Group reports back to the next PRS and any reports are signed off by Elected Members.

Councillor Russell moved the minute. Councillor Virgo seconded.

- 4.2 The Action Log was noted.

Councillor McCall, in reference to the report on Sacred Heart Primary School, queried whether this would be at the next PRS. Fiona Robertson, Executive Director Children, Young People and Partnerships, confirmed that an updated report would be received.

Fiona Robertson noted that there is an error in the Action Log in relation to an attendance analysis due April 2023, this should be April 2024. Fiona Robertson, in relation to the education reform action, explained that a report

summarising the outcomes of the national consultations has been shared with cross-party members and could be shared with the PRS.

Councillor McEwan, in relation to 5.10, queried when PRS would receive the latest medium-term plan on Newbyres. Nick Clater, Head of Adult and Social Care Services, explained that there is a plan. This will be brought to the next PRS on 12 December 2023.

Fiona Robertson, updating on behalf of Joan Tranent, Chief Social Work Officer, explained that in relation to action 5.2 there are no upper age limits for foster carers and in relation to the query about online resources for families, Joan Tranent is still liaising with CAHMS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) and will be able to provide an update at the following PRS.

## 5. Reports

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.1	Inspection of Midlothian Access Team	Nick Clater, Head of Adult and Social Care Services
<b>Outline of Report and Summary of Discussion</b>		
<p>Nick Clater, Head of Adult and Social Care Services, presented the report which advises of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The outcome of the inspection of Midlothian Community Access Team.</li> <li>2. The actions that are being progressed as a result of the inspection.</li> </ol> <p>The Committee is requested to note the outcome of the inspection of Midlothian Community Access Team by the Care Inspectorate.</p> <p>Councillor Imrie, the Chair, thanked Nick Clater for the report and opened it up to questions.</p> <p>Councillor Virgo, stating that for them the three areas of improvement are management issues, queried what is being done to help the service be managed effectively. Nick Clater explained that the manager of the service manages two services, so some deputy arrangements have been initiated to bolster the team and provide more support for the manager and also the service manager who sits above has been asked to have more regular supervision meetings.</p> <p>Councillor Pottinger commended the caring and supportive work the Midlothian Community Access Team do and thanked them for the service they provide.</p> <p>The Chair, in relation to the six action points in the report, queried whether the intention was for this to return to PRS for final sign off and to keep members up to date. Nick Clater confirmed they were happy to do this.</p>		
<b>Decision</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on the six action points relating to Midlothian Community Access Team to be brought back to PRS.</li> </ul>		

- The Committee noted the report.

#### Action

Nick Clater, Head of Adult and Social Care Services

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.2	Inspection of St Andrews RC Primary School and Nursery Class	Michelle Strong, Education Chief Operating Officer

#### Outline of Report and Summary of Discussion

Michelle Strong, Education Chief Operating Officer, presented the report. The report outlines the outcome of the above inspection as carried out by Education Scotland which was communicated in their report of 19 September 2023.

The Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee is asked to:

- (i) Note the content of the inspection report.
- (ii) Congratulate the pupils, parents and staff connected with St Andrew's Primary School and Nursery class on the key strengths highlighted in the report.

Councillor Imrie, the Chair, thanked Michelle Strong for the report and opened it up to questions.

Councillor Virgo noted that there have been a few of these reports for various schools and a recurring theme seems to be that senior leaders are not using assessment data to help ensure more children are making the best and possible progress. Councillor Virgo queried whether there was something from this that can be put into a report/paper/policy on how the Council expect school leaders to do this consistently. Michelle Strong explained that a Raising Attainment Strategy is being developed to ensure consistent approaches both for raising attainment and the assessment of learners' progress. Michelle Strong confirmed they would be happy to provide fuller details on this at a future PRS. Michelle Strong noted there is also a tracking and monitoring system being implemented across primary schools and that work is being undertaken with secondary schools to develop a consistent approach.

The Chair raised a query in relating to the grading system used by inspectors. Fiona Robertson, Executive Director Children, Young People and Partnerships, explained that the Council has a statutory duty to collect information on the quality of education within its schools and so, every year, a cycle of quality improvement activity is undertaken. Schools use the same quality indicators as inspectors do and the Council quality assure the school self-evaluation processes. Where schools have "good" as a quality indicator, the Council then work with them to move this to "very good," using a tracker to monitor this. All schools are analysed to determine if there are common themes, and this data is used from a central perspective to plan the learning and teaching and interventions for children to make sure they are achieving to the best of their ability. Fiona Robertson explained that if inspectors were to make recommendations that the Council do not agree with, then

the Council will make a case on behalf of the school.

Councillor Pottinger queried if the movement from good to very good required a lot of effort. Fiona Robertson explained that it depends on the quality indicator referred to and the actions that the school needs to implement. Councillor Pottinger also noted that historical inspection reports used to be provided. Fiona Robertson explained that attainment meetings with Elected Members are being prepared for and a briefing on secondary school attainment will be held. Meetings will also be held where Elected Members will be taken through the performance of all of the primary and secondary schools within a cluster. Fiona Robertson explained that, within the information gathered, previous inspections are tracked. Due to changes in quality indicators over time, there must be caution over comparing over a long period of time. Fiona Robertson noted that this information could be provided to Elected Members.

Councillor McEwan noted that it would be useful to compare the inspection report against the previous inspection report to see whether and how there has been development.

#### Decision

- Provide further details/information on the Raising Attainment Strategy at a future PRS.
- Going forward, include previous inspection reports for comparison with the inspection report being considered in the meeting, with caveats where applicable.
- The Committee moved the report.

#### Action

Michelle Strong, Education Chief Operating Officer

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.3	Inspection of Saltersgate School	Michelle Strong, Education Chief Operating Officer

#### Outline of Report and Summary of Discussion

Michelle Strong, Education Chief Operating Officer, presented the report. The report outlines the outcome of the above inspection as carried out by Education Scotland which was communicated in their report of 26 September 2023.

Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee is asked to:

- (i) Note the content of the inspection report.
- (ii) Congratulate the pupils, parents and staff connected with Saltersgate School on the key strengths highlighted in the report.

Councillor Imrie, the Chair, thanked Michelle Strong for the report and opened it up to questions.

Councillor Russell moved the report. Councillor Virgo seconded.

Elected Members applauded the work done at Saltersgate school.

Councillor McEwan queried if any consultation had been entered into with families of the pupils at the school considering the move to Beeslack High School. Fiona Robertson, Executive Director Children, Young People and Partnerships, confirmed that there will be further consultation. There has been initial consultation with families and staff. Staff, in particular, have played an important part in terms of the nature of the facilities of the ASN provision at Beeslack HS and families will be fully involved moving forward. A statutory consultation is still to be undertaken.

#### Decision

The Committee moved the report.

#### Action

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.4	Midlothian Council Statutory Report to Scottish Ministers on Public Bodies Climate Change Duties 2022/23	Derek Oliver, Chief Officer Place

#### Outline of Report and Summary of Discussion

Derek Oliver, Chief Officer Place, presented the report. The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet of the Council's statement of compliance with its statutory climate change reporting duties for 2022/23, a copy of which is available in the CMIS Member's Library, and to recommend its submission to Scottish Government by the due date of 30 November 2023.

It is recommended that Performance Review and Scrutiny note:

- (a) the Council's Report on Compliance with the Public Bodies Climate Change Duties for 2022/23 submitted and approved at Council; and
- (b) note the submission of the report to Scottish Ministers by 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

Councillor Imrie, the Chair, thanked Derek Oliver for the report and opened it up to questions.

Councillor McEwan queried whether there were any proposals to bring in low-emission zones within Midlothian. Derek Oliver noted that there were no plans to do so at this time, however, cognisance of developments within Edinburgh is ongoing. Councillor McEwan queried whether neighbouring areas bringing this in will have an impact on Midlothian, to which Derek Oliver confirmed a report can be brought back on this.

Derek Oliver agreed to a request from Councillor Curran that climate change duties are considered when looking at temporary road closures.

Councillor Virgo, in relation to the risk identified in paragraph 5.4 of the report

concerning the departure and subsequent replacement of an officer, noted that this does not address that this is a single point of failure within the team. Councillor Virgo further, in relation to paragraph 5.1 of the report, noted that this suggests that the Council does not have the resource to meet the requirement and asked that this be expanded on. Derek Oliver explained, in response to the former point, the review of the team is an ever-expanding and growth area in terms of energy management. In relation to the latter question, Derek Oliver noted this relates to the Climate Action Plan that will be brought forward to Elected Members to provide a suite of proposed interventions to allow them to make an informed decision, which will help address the matters outlined in paragraph 5.1 of the report.

The Chair queried when this will be put to Elected Members. Derek Oliver confirmed that the timescale was the end of the calendar year to draft the report, so a report will be presented in Quarter 4.

#### Decision

- Report on the impact on Midlothian of neighbouring Local Authorities introducing low-emission zones to be brought to PRS.
- Climate change duties to be considered when looking at temporary road closures.
- The Committee noted the report.

#### Action

Derek Oliver, Chief Officer Place

## 6 Private Reports

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No items for discussion

## 7 Date of the Next Meeting

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The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 12 December 2023 at 11:00am.

The meeting terminated at 11:45.