

Minute of Meeting



Cabinet

Date	Time	Venue
08 March 2022	11.00 am	Held via Microsoft Teams

Present:

Councillor Milligan (Convener)	Councillor Curran
Councillor Hackett	Councillor Imrie
Councillor Muirhead	

Religious Representatives:

Mrs Elizabeth Morton	
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Also Present:

Councillor Parry	
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In attendance:

Dr Grace Vickers, Chief Executive
Kevin Anderson, Executive Director Place
Fiona Robertson, Executive Director Children, Young People and Partnerships
Gary Fairley, Chief Officer Corporate Solutions
Derek Oliver, Chief Officer Place
Joan Tranent, Chief Officer Children's Services, Partnerships and Communities
Myra Forsyth, Quality and Scrutiny Manager
Nick Clater, Head of Adult Services
Grace Cowan, Head of Primary Care & Older People's Services
Elaine Johnston, Policy and Scrutiny Officer
Saty Kaur, Executive Business Manager
Marco Reece-Heal, Business Analyst
Andrew Henderson, Democratic Services Officer

1 Apologies

Apologies for absence had been received on behalf Vic Bourne (Religious Representative).

2 Order of Business

The Order of Business was as detailed within the Agenda.

3 Declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were received.

4 Minutes of Previous Meetings

- 4.1 The Minute of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on 30 November 2021 was submitted and approved as a correct record.
- 4.2 The Action Log of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 30 November 2021 was submitted, Councillor Muirhead highlighted that the dates for action points 1-4 were incorrect and that they should read 18/01/2022, it was agreed that these would be amended and the document was otherwise approved as a correct record.

Councillor Milligan (Chair) took the opportunity to express his gratitude to Councillor's Hackett and Muirhead who were attending their last cabinet meeting.

5. Reports

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.1	Environmental Health Food Safety Enforcement Policy and Revised Food Safety Service Plan	Chief Officer: Place
Outline of report and summary of discussion		
Derek Oliver provided an overview of the report outlining its purpose and provided further details with regard to the food safety enforcement policy and the food safety service plan. Following this Derek Oliver opened to members questions.		
In response to a question regarding how the policy would be adjusted to fit the current food market, including pop up businesses, events and festivals Derek Oliver acknowledged that businesses were encouraged to engage with environmental health and that the one stop shop approach allowed for closer work with trading standards and licencing. With regard to the availability of licencing application forms on the council website, Derek Oliver agreed to ensure that these were easily available and made reference to the work of the safety advisory group.		
Decision		
A) Cabinet agreed to approve the Environmental Health Service Food Safety Enforcement Policy and Revised Food Safety Service Plan (October 2021 – March 2022).		
B) That all licencing application forms be available on the council website.		

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.2	Adult Health and Social Care Q3 Performance Report 2021/22	Head of Adult Health and Social Care

Outline of report and summary of discussio3

The Adult Health and Social Care Performance Report Quarter Three 2021/22 was submitted. The Head of Adult Services Care highlighted the progress in the delivery of strategic outcomes and summary of the emerging challenges as detailed within and thereafter answered questions raised by Elected Members.

With regard to Gorebridge leisure centre's future as a vaccination centre, Grace Cowan confirmed that the decommissioning phase was ongoing with the intention of being off site by the 3rd of April and that by the 4th of April vaccinations would be administered from Midlothian Community Hospital. Grace Cowan acknowledged ongoing work to find future vaccination hubs. Derek Oliver highlighted that once the election team had concluded its use of the gym and sports hall, work would be done to ensure they were both ready for community use as soon as possible.

Grace Cowan clarified that with regard to attaining a 100% vaccination rate, work was being conducted to ensure that members of the public were given ample opportunity to get vaccinated but acknowledged that there was an element of choice.

In response to a question regarding the possibility of staff who had been seconded to different teams as a result of the COVID pandemic being able to continue working in their seconded roles, Derek Oliver clarified that this would depend on services requirement and that any new roles would be subject to the normal recruitment process.

In relation to publicity aimed at preventing illicit substance use, Nick Clater confirmed that this was largely driven through Police and public health but that this could be taken back to public health colleagues and ADP, and agreed to pick this up.

Decision

- A) Nick Clater to discuss options regarding options for publicity aimed at prevention of illicit substance use with public health colleagues and the ADP.
- B) To otherwise note the report.

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.3	Children Services, Partnership and Communities Q3 Performance Report 2021/22	Chief Officer: Children's Services, Partnerships and Communities

Outline of report and summary of discussion

The Children's Services, Partnership and Communities Performance Report Quarter Three 2021/22 was submitted. The Chief Officer Children's Services, Partnerships and Communities highlighted the progress in the delivery of strategic outcomes and provided a summary of the emerging challenges as detailed within

the report and thereafter answered questions raised by Elected Members.

With regard to possible action that could be taken by the council to assist with the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine and the possible requirement for delegated powers, Joan Tranent advised that financial support to organisations such as the Red Cross was being considered that she is awaiting updates with regard to refugee settlement requests. Kevin Anderson later confirmed that a report was being drafted for March Council with respect to delegated powers to ensure timely provisions could be made with regard to the Ukraine crisis.

In response to a question regarding the increasing trend of social work referrals and the possibility of increased referrals as a result of future financial pressures, Joan Tranent acknowledged that there was a yearly increase for the number of referrals noting the fact that Midlothian was a growing local authority. Joan Tranent acknowledged that two income maximisation officers had been recruited in addition to planned distribution of additional winter funding. Joan Tranent highlighted the need for services to work in a smart and coordinated fashion. With regard to the flexibility of Services and the ability to prioritise tasks, Joan Tranent highlighted ongoing work into the progression of holistic family support as a form of Early Intervention, making reference to the work conducted at Hawthornden and that was for this to be rolled out across the council with resources being redirected as required.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.4	Corporate Solutions Q3 Performance Report 2021/22	Executive Director: Place

Outline of report and summary of discussion

The Corporate Solutions Performance Report Quarter Three 2021/22 was submitted. With reference to the slide deck included as an appendix to the report, the Executive Director: Place highlighted the progress in the delivery of strategic outcomes and summary of the emerging challenges as detailed within the report and thereafter answered questions raised by Elected Members.

Kevin Anderson confirmed that the current supporting guidance for social welfare fund grants are available online and that the average contact centre call took 20 minutes with further contact points being available to allow for early intervention as appropriate. Kevin Anderson acknowledged that although not every service was accessed through the contact centre at this time services were in the process of being phased in and Kevin Anderson acknowledged that to ensure data analysis was more complete it was important to ensure that all services were joined up through a single customer service platform.

Following a question regarding the future of COVID self-isolation grants and the profile of applicants, Kevin Anderson acknowledged that applicants would no longer receive the validation that directed them to approach their local authority in order to apply for their self-isolation grant but that this service had been publicised across the council's welfare pages. Kevin Anderson agreed to write to the Scottish government and COSLA for clarity on the matter.

Decision

- A) Kevin Anderson to write to Scottish Government and COSLA in relation to the future of COVID self-isolation grants.
- B) To otherwise note the content of the report.

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.5	Education Q3 Performance Report 2021/22	Executive Director: Children, Young People and Partnerships

Outline of report and summary of discussion

The Education, Performance Report Quarter Three report 2021/22 was submitted. The Executive Director: Children, Young People and Partnerships highlighted the progress in the delivery of strategic outcomes and summary of the emerging challenges as detailed within the report and thereafter answered questions raised by Elected Members.

In relation to the equipped for learning program and the provision for children who may not have access to the internet at home and were required to use their digital devices at home, Fiona Robertson acknowledged that connections were currently provided and that the service contract was currently under review.

With regard to the flexibility to cover potential school closures, Fiona Robertson advised that she was awaiting updated national guidance and that everything was being done to ensure that young people could attend school. In addition Fiona Robertson confirmed that should future school closures be required, that best efforts would be made to ensure that vulnerable children and children of key workers were still able to attend.

Following a question in relation to school roll projections, school capacity and student demographics, Fiona Robertson advised a roll projection exercise had been completed and that future housing developments and those that had been completed had been factored, with ASN data currently in the process of being added in to allow for future incorporation into plans. Fiona Robertson confirmed that these would be shared once they had been approved by the cross party group and that this would then be tied into the learning estates strategy.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.6	Place Q3 Performance Report 2021/22	Executive Director: Place

Outline of report and summary of discussion

The Place, Performance Report Quarter Three 2021/22 was submitted. With reference to the slide deck included as an appendix to the report, the Executive Director: Place highlighted the progress in the delivery of strategic outcomes and summary of the emerging challenges as detailed within the report.

Following this there was a general discussion amongst the members and in

response to concerns in relation to sessional staff in schools who were unable to attain the 2% increase of the local government pay award as they were not full time, Kevin Anderson agreed to look into this before submitting a response.

Decision

- a) Kevin Anderson to provide a response in relation to sessional school staff who were unable to realise the local government pay award.
- b) To otherwise note the content of the report.

Agenda No.	Report Title	Presented by:
5.7	Midlothian Council Q3 Performance Report 2021/22	Chief Executive

Outline of report and summary of discussion

The Chief Executive Officer was heard in amplification of the Midlothian Council Quarter Three report 2021/22. Making reference to the strategic outcomes and summary of the emerging challenges as detailed within the report and took the opportunity to thank staff for their outstanding work during quarter 3 and the unprecedented period resulting from the global pandemic that had included two lockdown periods and had started just short of two years prior, thereafter Grace Vickers opened to comments raised by Elected Members.

Councillor Milligan (Chair) took the opportunity to thank the religious representatives for the time they had dedicated to work with the cabinet and made further comments in commemoration of former Councillor Adam Montgomery. Councillor Milligan also took the opportunity to thank the staff of Midlothian Council for the work over the last 5 years and echoed the sentiments of the Chief Executive thanking staff for their work throughout the pandemic period and asked that a message be forwarded on behalf of the cabinet thanking staff across the board for their work during this period.

Decision

- a) Grace Vickers to issue a message to staff thanking them on behalf of cabinet for their work throughout the pandemic period.
- b) To otherwise note the contents of the report.

6 Private Reports

6.1 Irrecoverable Debt Write-Off - Chief Officer Corporate Solutions

7 Date of the Next

To be announced

The meeting terminated at 12:47