

**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 25
November 2015 at 11.00 am.

Present: Councillors Milligan (Chair), Muirhead, Imrie, Pottinger and Young.

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Baxter, Beattie, Bennett, Montgomery, Russell, de Vink and Wallace.

1 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were intimated.

2 Order of Business

In respect of the submitted reports, the Director, Education , Communities and Economy, advised that the submitted report (which had also been considered by Cabinet on November 2015) in respect of Education Services contained an error and a corrected copy was therefore tabled.

Decision

To give consideration to the replacement paper and to refer it to Cabinet for their consideration in due course.

3 Performance Reports 2015 – 16 – Quarter 2

There were submitted Performance Reports for 2014/15 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 in relation to "legal highs" the long term effects of such usage were as yet unclear and that a lead role was being taken by MELDAP in supporting carers; and the Council had been able to make changes to service provision without as yet any financial impact;
- (b) To note that delayed discharges from hospitals could be affected by several factors including possible re-housing; the need for aid or adaptations to property; and clients care home choice;

- (c) To note that there was a wide range of services available to persons with learning disabilities and that the challenge facing the Council was to “future proof” these to cater for the anticipated reduction in the number of patients to be catered for in the Royal Edinburgh Hospital;
- (d) To note that the delays in installing video conferencing facilities in Care Homes had been as a result of security issues relating to confidential information but these had now been resolved and it was anticipated that this would be operational in early course;
- (e) To note that the issue of General Practitioners charging for non medical services would need to be referred to the Integration Joint Board;
- (f) To note that the recently appointed Development Worker to MELDAP was scheduled to submit proposals for future support to clients to a meeting of MELDAP on 8 December 2015 and that Elected Members be provided with a copy of these proposals when available;
- (g) To note the need to improve the public profile of carer posts and their importance to the community;
- (h) To receive a report at their next meeting on staff absence levels in Care Homes and the cost to the Council thereof;
- (i) To note that following environmental improvements at McNeill Terrace, Loanhead, there were no longer any void properties and that measures were in place to ensure that the current high standards were maintained ;
- (j) To note that the number of Housing Officers had been increased to eight as a result of the priorities identified by the last tenants survey;
- (k) To note that the tenants survey had identified Anti Social Behaviour; dog Fouling; and neighbour nuisance as the main concerns of tenants;
- (l) To note that feedback from clients utilising the Mayfield Hub would be utilised to improve service at that location and to influence the design of any future hubs to be provided;
- (m) To note the participation of Housing Associations in initiatives to support young people to avoid homelessness;
- (n) To note the improvement in the percentage of Council Tax collected;
- (o) To note that 48 of 55 tenants who were in receipt of Universal Credit had opted for that element thereof relating to rent payment to be paid direct to the Council;
- (p) To note that the number of children on the Child Protection Register remained below the National average;

- (q) To note the positive feedback from the Care Inspectorate on the operation of Children's Units;
- (r) To note the possibility of the funding bid in respect of the Edinburgh City Deal being submitted during the first quarter of 2016;
- (s) To note the successful outcome of the Tyne Leader funding bid which had secured £3m over five years and which would be available in respect of projects throughout Midlothian and East Lothian;
- (t) To note the imminent combination of Midlothian and East Lothian Trading Standards Services;
- (u) To note that the provision of an Arts Centre in Newtongrange could be assisted via support and possible funding from the Blueprint Group for the Borders Railway and possibly the Edinburgh City Deal;
- (v) To note that a report on the issue of dog fouling was scheduled to be submitted to the Cabinet and notwithstanding that regular quarterly reports be submitted to the Committee providing details of the numbers of penalties imposed and staff resources employed to address this issue and that the initial report give comparable figures over the last five years;
- (w) To note that , with the opening of the Borders Railway, a number of sites earmarked for economic development, would be more actively marketed, including that at Hopefield, Bonnyrigg;
- (x) To note the higher number of pupils from deprived areas leaving school after fourth year although an improvement in this statistic was anticipated; and
- (y) To otherwise note the reports.

(Action: (f); (h) Head of Adult and Social Care; (v) Head of Communities and Economy;

The meeting terminated at 1.01pm.