

MINUTES of MEETING of the MIDLOTHIAN COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the Council Chambers, Midlothian House, Buccleuch Street, Dalkeith on Tuesday, 2 September 2014 at 11.00 am.

Present:- Councillors Milligan (Chair), Baxter, Bennett, Imrie, Muirhead, Montgomery, Russell, and Wallace.

Apologies for Absence:- Councillor de Vink.

1. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were intimated.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of Meetings of 29 April and 4 June (2 No.) 2014 were submitted and approved as correct records.

3 Inspection of Midlothian Residential Service for Young People

With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minutes of the Cabinet of 27 May 2014, there was submitted report, dated 26 August 2014, by the Director, Resources, incorporating a report, dated 6 May 2014, by the Director, Education, Communities and Economy, outlining the outcome of an unannounced inspection of the Midlothian Residential Service for Young People carried out by the Care Inspectorate in March 2014.

The evaluations were as follows:-

Quality of Care and Support -	Good (Grade 4)
Quality of Environment -	Good (Grade 4)
Quality of Staffing -	Good (Grade 4)
Quality of Management and Leadership -	Adequate (Grade 3)

The Care Inspectorate had concluded that the Council continued to demonstrate that they were committed to improvement of the services for accommodated children and had aspirations to providing an excellent service.

Decision

- (a) To note the content of the inspection report;
- (b) To acknowledge the positive and ongoing work by management and staff connected with the Midlothian Residential Service for Young People;

- (c) To note that much of the innovative work being undertaken to improve the lives of young people was not recognised by the Care Inspectorate as this fell outwith the terms of their remit; and
- (d) To note that the Council would continue to challenge, support and monitor the service in relation to achieving excellence through further improving performance.

4 Inspection of Midlothian Adoption Service

With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minutes of the Cabinet of 26 August 2014, there was submitted report, dated 26 August 2014, by the Director, Resources, incorporating a report, dated 18 July 2014, by the Head of Children's Services, outlining the outcome of an announced inspection of the Midlothian adoption Service, carried out by the Care Inspectorate in May 2014.

The evaluations were as follows:-

Quality of Care and Support -	Good (Grade 4)
Quality of Staffing -	Good (Grade 4)
Quality of Management and Leadership -	Adequate (Grade 3).

The Care Inspectorate had concluded that the Council had made significant developments in the year to May 2014 and recognised that the Council was committed to improving and developing the service for Midlothian's children.

The report also highlighted that the Adoption Service was still developing and that the Inspectorate's report reinforced and legitimised the "direction of travel". The report also drew attention those actions taken since the inspection with a view to improving the service.

Decision

- (a) To note the content of the inspection report;
- (b) To note that officers within the Directorate would continue to challenge, support and monitor the service in relation to achieving excellence through further improving performance; and
- (c) To note that considerable proactive work was undertaken to avoid children being subjected to the adoption process.

5 Inspection of Midlothian Fostering Service

With reference to paragraph 5 of the Minutes of the Cabinet of 26 August 2014, there was submitted report, dated 26 August 2014, by the Director, Resources, incorporating a report, dated 28 July 2014, by the Head of Children's Services the outcome of an announced inspection of the Midlothian adoption Service, carried out by the Care Inspectorate in May 2014.

The evaluations were as follows:-

Quality of Care and Support - Weak (Grade 2)
 Quality of Staffing - Good (Grade 4)
 Quality of Management and Leadership - Adequate (Grade 3).

The Care Inspectorate had concluded that within the Fostering Service the staff team were knowledgeable, skilled and experienced and committed to improving outcomes for all service users of the fostering service. Whilst it was acknowledged that there were areas for improvement in ensuring that proper processes were followed, overall there was a clear recognition that foster carers were being provided with regular support, access to training and that there was a robust panel system in place for approving and reviewing carers.

In respect of the marking of “weak” in respect of Quality of Care and Support , the Director, Education, Community and Economy explained that a procedural error in respect of one case had resulted in this grading, which consequently had lead to a detrimental effect on the grading for Quality of Management and Leadership. The Inspectorate had been invited to return and conduct a further inspection and were now satisfied that the service were operating efficiently.

Decision

- (a) To note the report; and
- (b) To note that officers within the Directorate would continue to challenge, support and monitor the service in relation to achieving excellence through further improving performance.

6 LED Street Lighting - Update

With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minutes of 4 June 2014, there was submitted report dated 30 June 2014, by the Head of Commercial Operations outlining progress to date in respect of the LED lighting replacement programme including details of the financial savings anticipated and the possible areas for the investment of these savings. The report explained that the replacement LED programme has resulted from internal capital funding and external borrowing from SALIX Finance Limited as part of a government initiative. The replacement programme intended to replace 4,944 lanterns by the end of 2017/18 and a bid for further SALIX borrowing had been made which , if accepted, would allow a further 1697 lanterns to be changed in 2015/16. The report drew attention to the fact that SALIX funding was used to replace only the lanterns where columns were in a sound condition, whereas the capital programme involved not only the replacement of the lantern but also the columns as they were at the end of their serviceable life. The current project had a payback period of 7 years. The financial savings made were from a 65% reduction in energy costs and lower maintenance costs. Savings on revenue budgets would not be available until after current and future loans had been repaid.

Decision

- (a) To note that the complete street lighting replacement/upgrading programme would take 10 years to complete;

- (b) To receive further information detailing how the estimated savings were calculated; a comparison of existing and estimated future costs; and the carbon savings the replacement programme were expected to achieve; and
- (c) To otherwise note the report.

(Action: Head of Commercial Operations).

The Meeting Terminated at 11.45 am.

