

**MINUTES of SPECIAL MEETING of the MIDLOTHIAN COUNCIL CABINET** held in the Council Chambers, Midlothian House, Buccleuch Street, Dalkeith on Tuesday, 19 November 2013 at 09.00 am.

**Present:-** Councillors Thompson (Depute Leader), Beattie, Bryant and Johnstone.

**Apology for Absence:-** Mr V Bourne (Religious Representative).

**1 Chair**

Councillor Thompson assumed the Chair.

**2 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were intimated.

**3 2012/13 SPI Results and Revised National Dataset**

There was submitted report, dated 21 October 2013, by the Executive Officer, Business Transformation, presenting the Statutory Performance Indicator comparison results for 2012/13. The report advised that overall, in 2012/13, the Council's performance had improved with a higher percentage of indicators in the top two quartiles than in 2011/12 (31% and 33% respectively).

**Decision**

- (a) To note that, whilst the Council's performance in relation to the benchmark of the number of Homecare hours per 1000 population was in the bottom quartile, this was a reflection on the Council's initiatives to reduce homecare need through investment in preventative and rehabilitative services and the increased use of telecare services; and
- (b) To otherwise note the report.

**4 2013/2014 Performance Reports – Quarter 2**

There were submitted Performance Reports for 2013/14 in respect of Midlothian Council and the Plans for Education; Children and Families; Communities and Support; Adult and Community Care; Housing and Community Safety; Customer Services; Commercial Operations; Property and Facilities Management; Planning and Development and Finance and

Human Resources. Each report contained a summary of the progress in delivering Strategic Outcomes and a summary of emerging challenges and risks. Thereafter, the Cabinet received verbal updates in respect of each of the reports.

### **Decision**

- (a) To note the continued challenges in respect of Welfare Reform; Funding and Demographics; Health and Social Care; and the continued constraints on public expenditure;
- (b) To note the continued drive to improve further, results in SQA national qualifications;
- (c) To note the staff support provided via the Council's People Strategy;
- (d) To note that a recent inspection by the Care Inspectorate indicated that clear leadership was being provided in respect of Children's and Families issues;
- (e) To note the statistics in respect of complaints handling in Housing and Community Safety and that steps were being taken to improve performance;
- (f) To note that issues regarding a gas converter needed to provide a gas supply at Dewartown, had been resolved;
- (g) To note that options other than gas were being investigated in respect of fuel supply to Cousland;
- (h) To note that the "Cool Down Crew" project operated by the Scottish Fire Service worked closely with secondary schools and that referrals thereto were welcomed from sources other than schools;
- (i) To note that a progress report on joint working between Midlothian and East Lothian Councils in respect of Environmental Health and Trading Standards services was scheduled for May 2014;
- (j) To note the introduction of new services introduced for people with a learning disability in respect of welfare benefits and debt management;
- (k) To note that the preliminary report from the Care Inspectorate on Child Protection had indicated that they had no concerns over the Council's performance on this issue, although they had regarded the leadership of Adoption Services as weak, which matter was being addressed;
- (l) To note that six children were in residential care and two in secure accommodation;

- (m) To note that a review of Fostering and Adoption Services had been undertaken and that the TOPS and PAVE services would similarly be reviewed;
- (n) To note that the response to complaints from the Parent Council of Lasswade Primary School in respect of refurbishment works there was unsatisfactory and that steps had been taken to improve communication in this regard;
- (o) To note the initiative of pupils at Lasswade High School to address bullying;
- (p) To note that the transfer of land at Shawfair was now complete;
- (r) To note the improved performance in respect of the processing of planning applications;
- (s) To note that revenue received from the sale of recyclable materials was variable depending on the level of demand at any given point in time;
- (t) To note that the reduction in performance in respect of street lighting repairs had arisen from staff shortages but that the situation had now been rectified; and
- (u) To otherwise note the reports.

The meeting terminated at 10.36 am.