

**MINUTES of MEETING of the MIDLOTHIAN COUNCIL CABINET** held in the Council Chambers, Midlothian House, Buccleuch Street, Dalkeith on Tuesday, 16 April 2013 at 11.00 am.

**Present:-** Councillors Constable (Convener), Beattie, Bryant and Thompson.

**Religious Representatives Present:-** Mr V Bourne and Mrs M Harkness.

**Apologies for Absence:-** Councillor Johnstone and Mr P Hayes.

## **1 Audio Recording**

Before the commencement of the business the Convener reminded members that the proceedings were being audio recorded.

## **2 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **3 Minutes**

The Minutes of Meetings of 25 and 26 February 2013, were submitted and approved as a correct record.

## **4 Inspection of Hawthorn Children and Families Centre**

There was submitted report, dated 6 March 2013, by the Director, Education and Children's Services, advising of the outcome of the unannounced inspection of Hawthorn Children and Families Centre carried out by the Care Inspectorate in November and December 2012.

The Care Inspectorate is the independent scrutiny and improvement body for care and children's services and they inspect every registered care service, local authority social work departments and child protection teams on a regular basis to make sure that providers are meeting standards required and are working to improve the quality of care for everyone. Every time they inspect these services they produce an inspection report.

Based on the findings of this inspection the Care Inspectorate awarded the following grades:

Ensure that Service Users Health and Wellbeing Needs are met	Grade 6 - Excellent
Quality of Care and Support	Grade 6 – Excellent
Quality of Environment	Grade 5 – Very Good
Quality of Staffing	Grade 6 – Excellent
Quality of Management and Leadership	Grade 5 – Very Good
Service Users Participate in Improving Services	Grade 6 – Excellent

The report and grades represent the Care Inspectorate assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during the unannounced inspection.

The Inspection Team noted the following strengths:

- The Centre worked effectively in providing Early Intervention for vulnerable children and assistance to their families.
- The staff team worked hard to ensure that families were given a warm welcome into the Centre. The Inspectors found children and families were respected and valued.
- The staff team were found to be committed to their own personal development and the undertaking of training to allow them to provide effective support for the children and the families they work with.
- The Centre continued to evaluate the service they provided and use their findings to further develop and improve the quality for the support provided to children and families.

The Inspection Team reported that the authority could do better in the following area:

- Hawthorn Children and Families Centre should continue with their improvement plans which included the need to upgrade and refurbish the children's toilets and changing areas.

The Care Inspectorate concluded that management and staff at Hawthorn Children and Families Centre were committed to ensuring they met the aims and objectives of the Centre. The level of forethought and dedication to the support needs of new and existing families evidenced the high quality care and support provided.

## **Decision**

- (a) To note the content of the inspection report;
- (b) To pass the report to the Performance, Review and Scrutiny Committee for its consideration;
- (c) To congratulate the Management and staff connected with Hawthorn Children and Families Centre on the excellent work being carried out at the Centre; and
- (d) To note that, whilst acknowledging the excellent work being carried out at the Centre, the Council would continue to challenge, support and monitor the service in relation to achieving excellence through further improving performance.

(Action: (b) Legal and Secretariat Manager (c) & (d) Director, Education and Children's Services)

## **5 Minutes of Meetings of Education Appointment Committee**

The Cabinet noted and approved the Minutes of Meetings of the Education Appointment Committees of 1 March, 7 March and 13 March 2013, as shown in **Appendix I** hereto, thereby approving the appointments of S Lavery as Head Teacher at Rosewell Primary School, L Walker as Head Teacher at St Luke's RC Primary School, S Bowen as Head Teacher at Cornbank St James Primary School and M Mathews as Head Teacher at St Andrew's RC Primary School.

(Action: Director, Education and Children's Services)

## **6 Education Convenor Advisory Group**

There was submitted report, dated 22 March 2013, by the Director, Education and Children's Services, advising of a proposed Education Convenor Advisory Group. The proposed forum would be used informally as a platform for the Education Convenor to help inform and explore developments in relevant policy, incorporating the principles of the Christie report.

The report outlined the key elements of the Group including its composition, scope and objectives. The group would not have any formal governance status.

### **Decision**

- (a) To agree the establishment of the Education Convenor Advisory Group;
- (b) To authorise Council Officers and the Convenor to engage further with the identified stakeholders to form the Group;
- (c) That a Memorandum of Understanding for Group Members be established; and
- (d) To update Cabinet in August with progress made

(Action: Director, Education and Children's Services)

## **7 Scotland's Climate Change Declaration: Annual Statement to Convention of Scottish Local Authorities**

There was submitted report dated 21 March 2013, by the Head of Planning and Development, presenting for endorsement the Council's latest statement to CoSLA on climate change action being undertaken by the Council.

The report highlighted that in order to meet CoSLA's end of March deadline for submission of the annual report, the statement provided in the Appendix to the report (in the prescribed template format) had been submitted as this Council's draft response for ratification by Cabinet.

## Decision

- (a) To endorse the submission of the completed template, as appended to the report, as the Council's latest (Year 5) statement to CoSLA under Scotland's Climate Change Declaration; and
- (b) To refer the report to the Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee for its information.

(Action, (a) Head of Planning and Development and (b) Legal and Secretariat Manager)

## 8 Midlothian Empty Homes Loan Fund

There was submitted report dated 25 March 2013, by the Acting Head of Communities and Wellbeing, seeking agreement to provide loans to owners of empty homes in Midlothian to bring them back into use as affordable rented housing

The report highlighted that given the current financial and economic climate, the Government was encouraging Councils to make better use of available houses in addition to building new houses. To help councils and their partners pursue work to bring private sector empty homes back into use, the Scottish Government funded Shelter Scotland to establish the Scottish Empty Homes Partnership. In 2012 it announced an Empty Homes Loan Fund of £4M to support organisations to bring homes back into use.

In December 2012, Midlothian Council was awarded £125,000 from the Empty Homes Loan Fund project to help bring back at least 10 long term empty homes back into use. A long term empty home was one that had been vacant for 6 months or more. Owners of empty homes would be able to access an interest free loan of up to £12,500 to help bring the property up to the repairing standard. Empty home owners who were successful in applying for a loan would be required to sign a 5 year lease agreement in order that the home was used for affordable rented housing during this period. Properties would be let at a Mid Market Rent, which was usually a maximum of 85% of the Local Housing Allowance for Midlothian, and would be prioritised. The owner would receive a reduced rental income whilst they repaid their loan. A similar scheme currently operates in South Ayrshire.

## Decision

- (a) To note the content of the Report, and
- (b) To approve the Council working with Dunedin Canmore Housing Association to provide an Empty Homes Loan Fund which increased the number of affordable rented homes in Midlothian.

(Action, Acting Director, Communities and Wellbeing)

## 9 Finalised Local Housing Strategy 2013 – 2017 and Action Plan

There was submitted report dated 12 February 2013, by the Acting Head of **Communities and Wellbeing, outlining how Midlothian's Local Housing Strategy(LHS) 2013 – 2017** would address key housing challenges over the **next five years in Midlothian and seeking formal approval of the Strategy.**

The report highlighted that the key outcomes of the LHS were:

- Households had improved housing options across all tenures.
- Homeless households and those threatened with homelessness were able to access support and advice services and all unintentionally homeless households would be able to access settled accommodation.
- The condition of housing across all tenures was improved.
- The needs of households with particular needs would be addressed and all households would have equal access to housing and housing services.
- Housing in all tenures would be more energy efficient and fewer households would live in, or be at risk of, fuel poverty.

### Decision

- (a) To note the contents of the Report and its Appendices; and
- (b) To agree for the Local Housing Strategy 2013 - 2017 to be submitted to the Scottish Government.

(Action, Acting Director, Communities and Wellbeing)

## 10 Redesigning the Community Justice System – a Consultation on Proposals

There was submitted report dated 3 February 2013, by the Acting Head of Communities and Wellbeing, outlining the rationale for Midlothian Council to respond to the Scottish Government's consultation on the future structure of community justice services by favouring option B as detailed below. The completed questionnaire was attached as an Appendix to the report.

The report highlighted that there were 3 options with this regard namely,

- Option A (enhanced CJA model). This option would maintain the CJAs as the main strategic body responsible for reducing reoffending with these key changes:
  1. A chair for each CJA would be appointed by Scottish Ministers and membership would be widened to include an appointed member from the Health Board.

2. A statutory duty would be placed on all partner bodies to develop a local plan for reducing reoffending and engage it its delivery.
  3. The statutory functions of the CJA would be expanded to include strategic commissioning of services.
  4. There is mention of the possibility of the CJAs assuming operational responsibility for criminal justice social work but this is not developed in the consultation paper.
- Option B (local authority model)
    1. This option would involve CJAs being abolished and local authorities would assume strategic and operational responsibility for the planning, designing and delivery of community justice services in their area.
    2. A statutory duty would be placed on local authorities to work in consultation with partner bodies to produce and deliver a strategic plan for reducing reoffending in their area.
    3. There would be a direct relationship between the Scottish Government and local authorities in relation to allocation of funding and accountability/performance requirements.
    4. The Risk Management Authority (RMA) would take on responsibility for some of the improvement functions currently undertaken by the Community Justice Division of the Scottish Government including performance management and workforce development.
  - Option C (single service model)
    1. Under this option CJAs would be abolished and a national service would be established with strategic and operational responsibility for the planning, management and delivery of community based offender services. The single service would incorporate the RMA and would be separate from, but sit alongside, the SPS.
    2. The new service would be a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) headed by a Chief Executive. Scottish Ministers would set the strategic framework but the NDPB would be able to take decisions at some distance from Government.
    3. All local authority criminal justice social work staff would transfer to the new service.
    4. Community justice services would continue to be delivered locally (but this is not expanded on in the consultation document).

## **Decision**

- (a) To agree that Midlothian Council respond to the Scottish Government's consultation on Community Justice Services by favouring option B as detailed above;
- (b) To agree that option B was best placed to develop community justice services which offered local accountability and focus on outcomes; and
- (c) To arrange for the submission of Appendix A to the report as the Council's Consultation Response.

(Action, Acting Director, Communities and Wellbeing)

## **11 Exclusion of Members of the Public**

In view of the nature of the business to be transacted, the Cabinet agreed that the public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of the undernoted items, as contained in the addendum hereto, as there might be disclosed exempt information as defined in paragraphs 6 and 11 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973:-

- (a) Minutes of Midlothian Negotiating Committee for Teachers of 28 November 2012 - Noted; and
- (b) Proposed Offender Recovery Service; Approve the recommendations

The meeting terminated at 11.55am.

**APPENDIX 1**  
**(relevant to paragraph 5)**

**MINUTES of MEETING of the EDUCATION APPOINTMENT COMMITTEE** held in the Committee Room, Midlothian House, Buccleuch Street, Dalkeith on Friday 1 March 2013 at 9.45am.

**Councillors Present:-** Beattie (Chair), Thompson and Russell.

**Rosewell Primary School Parent Representatives Present:-** Mrs L Adams, Mrs A Allan and Mrs H Thomson.

**In Attendance:-** Mr A Wait (Schools Group Manager).

**Exclusion of Members of the Public**

In view of the nature of the business to be transacted, the Committee agreed that the public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of the undernoted item, as contained in the Addendum hereto, as there might be disclosed exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973:-

Appointment of Head Teacher, Rosewell Primary School.

The meeting terminated at 12.45pm.



**MINUTES of MEETING of the EDUCATION APPOINTMENT COMMITTEE** held in the Committee Room, Midlothian House, Buccleuch Street, Dalkeith on Thursday 7 March 2013 at 9.45am.

**Councillors Present:-** Beattie (Chair), Muirhead and Rosie.

**St Luke's RC Primary School Parent Representatives Present:-** Mr G Beveridge, Mrs E Wilson and Mrs C Woodward.

**In Attendance:-** Mrs S Dawe (Head of Education) and Ms S Thayne (Observer)

**Exclusion of Members of the Public**

In view of the nature of the business to be transacted, the Committee agreed that the public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of the undernoted item, as contained in the Addendum hereto, as there might be disclosed exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973:-

Appointment of Head Teacher, St Luke's RC Primary School.

The meeting terminated at 12.25pm.



**MINUTES of MEETING of the EDUCATION APPOINTMENT COMMITTEE** held in the Committee Room, Midlothian House, Buccleuch Street, Dalkeith on Thursday 7 March 2013 at 1.45pm.

**Councillors Present:-** Beattie (Chair), Montgomerie and Rosie.

**Cornbank St James Primary School Parent Representatives Present:-** Mrs K Cartwright, Mrs S Vick and Mrs C Wylie.

**In Attendance:-** Ms S Thayne (Schools Group Manager).

**Exclusion of Members of the Public**

In view of the nature of the business to be transacted, the Committee agreed that the public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of the undernoted item, as contained in the Addendum hereto, as there might be disclosed exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973:-

Appointment of Head Teacher, Cornbank St James Primary School.

The meeting terminated at 2.55pm.



**MINUTES of MEETING of the EDUCATION APPOINTMENT COMMITTEE** held in the Committee Room, Midlothian House, Buccleuch Street, Dalkeith on Wednesday 13 March 2013 at 9.45 am.

**Councillors Present:-** Beattie (Chair) and Muirhead.

**Religious Representative Present:-** Mr Vic Bourne.

**St Andrew's RC Primary School Parent Representatives Present:-** Ms L Allan, Ms Y Ruthven and Mr M Wilson.

**In Attendance:-** Ms S Thayne (School Groups Manager)..

**Exclusion of Members of the Public**

In view of the nature of the business to be transacted, the Committee agreed that the public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of the undernoted item, as contained in the Addendum hereto, as there might be disclosed exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973:-

Appointment of Head Teacher, St Andrew's RC Primary School.

The meeting terminated at 12.35pm.



