

Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee

10.00 am, Tuesday, 6 August 2013

Present

Councillors Burns (Convener), Cardownie (Vice-Convener), Burgess, Child, Nick Cook, Edie, Godzik, Ricky Henderson, Hinds, Lewis, Main (substituting for Councillor Chapman), Mowat, Rankin, Rose and Ross.

1. Welfare Reform – Further Update

(a) Deputation - Unite

The deputation expressed concerns in regard to the financial consequences of growing and uncollectable rent arrears; the pressure put on housing officers to pressurise tenants and their families to pay rent; increased hardship of clients who were often vulnerable and disabled; and the consequences for clients of the multiple impact of welfare benefit changes.

They asked the Council to consider developing a method of measuring hardship across a whole range of affected tenants

The deputation urged the Council to call for reports on relevant data from Housing Associations; useful measurements of hardship to be developed; and to amend some of the DHP 'may be paid' criteria. They further asked the Council to ensure that all affected tenants be properly informed.

(b) Report by the Director of Corporate Governance

The Committee had agreed a number of recommendations as part of the Council's actions to mitigate the impact of Welfare Reform.

An update was provided on the progress being made by the Council and partners to develop arrangements to mitigate, where possible, the negative impact of the UK Government's welfare reforms.

Details of the City of Edinburgh's allocation of additional funding announced by the DWP were provided.

Decision

- 1) To note the continuing progress on assessing the impact of welfare reforms and actions for developing partial mitigation strategies.
- 2) To agree to refer reports on continuing financial pressures and associated risks arising out of implementation of Welfare Reform to the Finance and Budget Committee.

- 3) To note the next progress update report would be 1 October 2031.
- 4) To note that information on Housing Association data, and specific points raised by the deputation and members would be included in the next report to the Committee.
- 5) To re-circulate the policy on how DHP was being applied, to all members of the Committee.
- 6) To welcome the provision of further transitional and discretionary funding from the UK Government as reported in the Supplementary Information to the report.
- 7) To agree that the Welfare Reform Working Group receive a briefing about how DHP applications were assessed and give initial consideration to the issues raised by the deputation.

(References – Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee 4 December 2012 (item 4); report and Supplementary Information by the Director of Corporate Governance, submitted.)

Declaration of Interests

Councillor Cardownie declared a non-financial interest in the above item as a member of Unite.

2. Minute

Decision

To approve the minute of the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee of 11 June 2013 as a correct record.

3. Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee Key Decisions Forward Plan August to October 2013

The Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee Key Decisions Forward Plan for August to October 2013 was presented.

Decision

To note the Key Decisions Forward Plan for August to October 2013.

(Reference – Key Decisions Forward Plan August to October 2013, submitted.)

4. Corporate Health and Safety Policy

Details were provided on a proposed new Health and Safety Policy which provided clear direction and accountability for the management of health and safety within the Council.

Decision

- 1) To approve the new Corporate Health and Safety Policy for implementation.

- 2) To note that health and safety governance and compliance arrangements would continue to be developed as part of the efficient, effective transformation programme.

(Reference – report by the Director of Corporate Governance, submitted.)

5. Agreement on Time Off and Provision of Facilities for Trade Union Representatives

The Council had noted that the Corporate Management Team would consider introducing measures to accurately quantify trade union costs and the implementation of a new agreement on time off for trade union duties and the provision of facilities.

Details were provided of a new Local Collective Agreement which consolidated arrangements for the three current Agreements which had been successfully negotiated.

Motion

- 1) To note the report by the Director of Corporate Governance.
- 2) To approve the Local Collective Agreement.

- moved by Councillor Burns, seconded by Councillor Cardownie

Amendment

- 1) To note the report by the Director of Corporate Governance.
- 2) To approve the Local Collective Agreement.
- 3) To call for a report on the accuracy of union membership figures included in the report within 2 cycles.

- moved by Councillor Rose, seconded by Councillor Mowat

Voting

The voting was as follows:

For the motion - 11 votes

For the amendment - 4 votes

Decision

To approve the motion by Councillor Burns.

(References – Act of Council No 9 of 15 March 2012; report by the Director of Corporate Governance, submitted.)

6. Review of Events Governance

Details were provided of the commencement of a short review of the governance and management of events together with an indication of the emerging scope of the review.

Decision

- 1) To note the intention to carry out a review of events governance as set out in the joint report by the Directors of Corporate Governance and Services for Communities.
- 2) To note that the outcome of the review would be reported back to Committee on 5 November 2013.

(Reference – joint report by the Directors of Corporate Governance and Services for Communities, submitted.)

7. Public Protection in Edinburgh – Annual Reports

Annual reports were presented for each of the five committees/partnerships that together oversaw the main multi-agency public protection activity in the city. These were:

- The Edinburgh Child Protection Committee
- The Edinburgh Adult Protection Committee
- The Edinburgh Offender Management Committee
- The Edinburgh Drug and Alcohol Partnership
- The Violence Against Women Partnership

Decision

- 1) To note the annual reports from each of the ‘public protection’ Committees.
- 2) To note the importance of ensuring an integrated approach across the Council and between the Council and its key partners NHS Lothian, Police Scotland and voluntary sector organisations, to allow for effective, shared prioritisation for resource allocation.
- 3) To note the areas of improvement identified for each committee.

(Reference – report by the Chief Social Work Officer, submitted.)

Declaration of Interests

Councillor Edie declared a financial interest in the above item as the Chair of the Care Inspectorate and left the room during its consideration.

8. Response to Scottish Government Consultation on Draft Statutory Guidance and Regulations Linked to Self-Directed Support

Details were provided on the Council’s draft responses which had been submitted in response to the Scottish Government consultations in connection with the implementation of the Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013.

Decision

- 1) To approve the draft responses and request that the Director of Health and Social Care confirm the Council's decision to Scottish Government.
- 2) To note that any financial implications in the final Regulations would be brought to the Committee's attention.

(Reference – report by the Director of Health and Social Care, submitted.)

Declaration of Interests

Councillor Edie declared a financial interest in the above item as the Chair of the Care Inspectorate and left the room during its consideration.

9. Health Inequality Framework and Action Plan – referral from the Health, Wellbeing and Housing Committee

The Health, Wellbeing and Housing Committee had referred a report detailing the strategic and integrated approach to reducing health inequality which had been developed through community planning.

Decision

To note the report by the Director of Health and Social Care.

(References – Health, Wellbeing and Housing Committee of 18 June 2013 (item 13); report by the Head of Legal Risk and Compliance, submitted.)

Declaration of Interests

Councillor Edie declared a financial interest in the above item as the Chair of the Care Inspectorate and left the room during its consideration.

10. Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Bill

(a) Executive Summary

An executive summary was provided of the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Bill together with an outline of Edinburgh's 'readiness' with regard to its provisions. The Bill provided a framework which would support the improvement of the quality and consistency of health and social care services in Scotland.

Decision

- 1) To note the introduction of the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Bill to the Scottish Parliament on 28 May 2013.
- 2) To note the main provisions, issues and risks associated with the Bill.
- 3) To note that further regulations and statutory guidance would need to accompany the provisions of the Bill in future.
- 4) To note the current position in Edinburgh with respect to the provisions and that written evidence would be submitted to the Scottish Parliament Health and Sports Committee (item 10(b) refers).

(Reference – report by the Director of Health and Social Care, submitted.)

Declaration of Interests

Councillor Edie declared a financial interest in the above item as the Chair of the Care Inspectorate and left the room during its consideration.

(b) City of Edinburgh – Proposed Response

Details were provided of the Council's proposed response to the Scottish Parliament's call for written evidence on the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Bill.

Decision

- 1) To note the main provisions, issues and risks associated with the Bill.
- 2) To note the support for the policy ambitions of the Bill and the areas of concern.
- 3) To approve the response for submission to the Scottish Parliament, Health and Sports Committee.
- 4) To note it would be submitted alongside the NHS Lothian response with a cover note indicating to the Health and Sports Committee that the organisations were in agreement on the substantive points.

(Reference – report by the Chief Executive, submitted.)

Declaration of Interests

Councillor Edie declared a financial interest in the above item as the Chair of the Care Inspectorate and left the room during its consideration.