

Item 4.1 - Minutes

Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee

10.00 am, Tuesday, 3 October 2017

Present

Councillors McVey (Convener), Day (Vice-Convener), Aldridge, Burgess, Duggart, Macinnes, Main, McLellan, Perry, Rankin and Rust (substituting for Councillor Whyte).

1. Deputation

The Committee agreed to hear a deputation from Michael Vallance and Johan Collins from the Power to the People group.

The main points raised by the deputation were:

- The deputation raised concerns about the effect that the benefits cap was having on families in Edinburgh and reiterated the proposals set out in previous deputations.
- Concerns were raised about the under spend in the Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) budget. The deputation confirmed that they had been in correspondence with officers to coordinate attendance at an event to raise awareness of DHP and to ensure that eligible individuals understood the application process.
- During discussion, it was confirmed that the Council would be running a pilot to waive the initial access fee for individuals accessing any possessions that had been put into storage.

The Convener thanked the deputation and invited them to remain for the Committee's consideration of the report by the Executive Director of Resources.

(References – Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee, 8 August 2017 (item 1); letter from the Power to the People Group to the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee, 2 October 2017, submitted.)

2. Welfare Reform – Update

An update was provided on Welfare Reform, including an outline of the work underway to support the rollout of Universal Credit and to respond to the issues raised by the Power to the People deputation. It was confirmed that Welfare Reform issues would be taken forward by the Committee's Welfare Reform Working Group.

Decision

- 1) To note the ongoing work to support Universal Credit and Welfare Reform, in particular the extension of the benefit cap in Edinburgh.
- 2) To note the current spend projections for Discretionary Housing Payments, Council Tax Reduction Scheme and the Scottish Welfare Fund.

- 3) To note the Members Briefing detailed at Appendix 4 to the report in response to Power to the People deputation at Full Council on 29 June 2017.
- 4) To agree that officers would provide Power to the People with the Homelessness and Housing Council Policy.
- 5) To note that the Homelessness and Housing Senior Support Manager would arrange to meet with people experiencing temporary accommodation issues.
- 6) To agree that the Customer Manager would liaise with the Advice Services Team about the restructure of the service and the impact of a reduction on resources and the capacity of the service to give advice, and whether the 70% success rate of people appealing against the benefits decisions was being fed back to the Department of Work and Pensions.
- 7) To provide Councillors with a projection of the number of Universal Credit claimants after it was rolled out to everyone.

(References – Act of Council (No 1), 29 June 2017; report by the Executive Director of Resources, submitted.)

3. Minutes

Decision

To approve the minute of the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee of 8 August 2017 as a correct record, subject to the amendment of the report author from the Executive Director of Resources to the Chief Executive at item 10.

4. Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee Key Decisions Forward Plan August to October 2017

The Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee Key Decisions Forward Plan for December 2017 was presented.

Decision

To note the key decisions forward plan.

(Reference – Key Decisions Forward Plan December 2017, submitted.)

5. Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee Rolling Actions Log

Details were provided of the outstanding actions arising from decisions taken by the Committee.

Decision

- 1) To agree to close items 9 and 11.

2) That officers would update Councillors on the progress of the transfer of land from the Sasines Register to comply with the Land Registration (Scotland) Act 2012 (item 3).

3) To otherwise note the Rolling Action Log.

(Reference – Rolling Actions Log, submitted.)

6. Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee Business Bulletin

The Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee Business Bulletin was presented.

Decision

To note the Business Bulletin.

(Reference – Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee Business Bulletin, submitted.)

7. Contact Centre – Performance Update: April – July 2017

The Performance Update for April – July 2017 was presented. It was highlighted that significant improvements had been made since the previous update and that officers were continuing to consider ways to improve performance.

Decision

1) To note current performance trends within the Contact Centre.

2) To note ongoing service and performance improvement activities to ensure that Council services were easy to access and citizen queries and complaints were dealt with effectively.

(References – Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee, 28 March 2017 (item 10); report by the Executive Director of Resources, submitted.)

8. Council Asbestos Policy

Details were provided of the new Council Asbestos Policy. The new policy would replace the existing Corporate Policy for Managing Asbestos.

Decision

1) To approve the new Council Asbestos Policy.

2) To agree that officers would circulate details of cases of asbestos-related disease in Edinburgh to members of the Committee.

(Reference – report by the Executive Director of Resources, submitted.)

9. Council Fire Safety Policy

Committee considered the new Council Fire Safety Policy. The new policy would replace the existing Fire Safety Policy.

Decision

To approve the Council Fire Safety Policy.

(Reference – report by the Executive Director of Resources, submitted.)

10. Inspection of Older People's Services Progress Report

Details were provided of a progress report on the Inspection of Older People's Services. Following the Inspection of Older People's Services in October/November 2016, a detailed report was produced in order to address the issues identified. The report set out 17 recommendations for improvement.

An update was provided on the Health and Social Care Partnership's progress in responding to the 17 recommendations and outlined the commitment to review the original action plan to ensure activity was prioritised appropriately and realistically.

Decision

- 1) To note actions taken to date in responding to the inspection's recommendations, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.
- 2) To note the Health and Social Care Partnership's intention to review the associated action plan and report back on priorities and timescales.
- 3) To agree that the timetable for the appointment of a permanent Chief Officer would be brought to the next meeting of the Committee.

Declarations of interest

Councillor Main declared a non-financial interest as a member of the Edinburgh Integration Joint Board.

(References – Edinburgh Integration Joint Board, 22 September 2017 (item 8); report by the Interim Chief Officer, Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership, submitted.)

11. Edinburgh's Domestic Abuse Strategy and Improvement Plan: Developing a Coordinated Community Response

Committee considered the domestic abuse strategy and improvement plan, which set out work streams to reshape domestic abuse services in Edinburgh. Financial savings were anticipated through improving pathways across services and upskilling the professionals already involved with families using the services.

Decision

To agree the strategy and improvement plan and updated action plan attached at Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 of the report.

Declarations of interest

Councillor Macinnes declared a non-financial interest as the Chair of a domestic abuse charity.

(References – Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee, 28 February 2017 (item 8); report by the Interim Chief Officer, Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership, submitted.)

12. Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Report 2016-17

The Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Report for 2016-17 was presented. The report was due to be returned to the Scottish Government on 30 November 2017. The adaptation element was due to be reported independently to Transport and Environment Committee on 5 October 2017

Motion

- 1) To approve submission to the Scottish Government of the Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Report 2016/17, outlined in Appendix 1 to the report.
 - 2) To note the intention to review internal governance arrangements to ensure they were fit for purpose post transformation. Progress would be reported through the Member Officer Working Group on Carbon, Climate and Sustainability.
- Moved by Councillor McVey, seconded by Councillor Day

Amendment

- 1) To approve submission to the Scottish Government of the Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Report 2016/17, outlined in Appendix 1 to the report.
 - 2) To note the intention to review internal governance arrangements to ensure they were fit for purpose post transformation. Progress would be reported through the Member Officer Working Group on Carbon, Climate and Sustainability.
 - 3) To note that achieving the target of a 42% reduction in council carbon emissions by 2020 would require a significant increase in current performance.
 - 4) To therefore request a report to Committee on the outcome of the review of governance intended to assist in identifying and implementing carbon reduction projects.
- Moved by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Main

In terms of standing order 20 (7) the amendment was accepted as an addendum to the motion.

Decision

- 1) To approve submission to the Scottish Government of the Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Report 2016/17, outlined in Appendix 1 to the report.

- 2) To note the intention to review internal governance arrangements to ensure they were fit for purpose post transformation. Progress would be reported through the Member Officer Working Group on Carbon, Climate and Sustainability.
- 3) To note that achieving the target of a 42% reduction in council carbon emissions by 2020 would require a significant increase in current performance.
- 4) To therefore request a report to Committee on the outcome of the review of governance intended to assist in identifying and implementing carbon reduction projects.

(Reference – report by the Head of Strategy and Insight, submitted.)

13. Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report 2016/2017

The Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report for 2016/2017 was presented.

Decision

- 1) To note the Chief Social Work Officer's Annual Report for 2015/16 at Appendix 1 of the report.
- 2) To note that during the interim management arrangements established for the Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership, the Executive Director of Communities and Families would hold the statutory role of the Council's Chief Social Work Officer.

(Reference – report by the Interim Chief Officer, Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership, submitted.)

14. Edinburgh Integration Joint Board Annual Performance Report 2016/17

Committee considered the first Edinburgh Integration Joint Board Annual Performance Report for 2016/17.

Decision

To note the first Annual Performance Report of the Edinburgh Integration Joint Board.

(Reference – report by the Interim Chief Officer, Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership, submitted.)

15. Conference Invitation – “Tomorrow’s World” – COSLA and Improvement Service Annual Conference & Exhibition 2017 (5-6 October 2017)

Committee considered a report advising of the decision made by the Chief Executive under urgency provisions, in consultation with the Council Leader Members had been nominated to attend the annual COSLA and Improvement Service Conference & Exhibition, being held on 5-6 October 2017 at Crieff Hydro.

Decision

- 1) To note the decision by the Chief Executive under urgency provisions, in consultation with the Council Leader, to authorise delegates to attend the COSLA and Improvement Service Annual Conference & Exhibition to be held at Crieff Hydro Hotel, Perthshire on 5-6 October 2017.
- 2) To note that Councillors Burgess, McVey and Macinnes would no longer be attending the conference, but that Councillor Ian Campbell would attend.
- 3) To agree that the total cost for members' attendance would be reported back to the next Committee as part of the Business Bulletin.

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

16. Motion by Councillor Day – Europe

The following motion by Councillor Day was submitted in terms of Standing Order 29.1:

“Committee notes that 74% of Edinburgh voters who took part in the EU referendum held on 23 June 2016 voted to remain in the European Union.

Committee is concerned that the departure of Scotland and the UK from the EU is likely to result in serious damage to our relationship with European institutions, businesses and citizens.

Therefore, Committee believes that the best interests of Edinburgh and its citizens would be served by Scotland and the UK remaining in the EU.

Recognising, however, that the UK government is proceeding with the legislation to withdraw the UK from the EU, Committee believes that the best option is for Scotland and the UK to remain in the single market and customs union.

Committee further recognizes that the potential effect of 'Brexit' on the economy and the citizens of Edinburgh could be reduced by taking the following steps:

- Providing welcome and advice services to EU nationals in Edinburgh (as well all those from outside the EU who come to the Capital);
- Working with key employers in the city, such as finance, legal services, universities, NHS, to help recruitment and retention.
- Working to resist barriers to travel with the EU, to promote those coming to Edinburgh to study and visit;
- Keeping close links with cities across Europe, in particular our twin and partner cities, and with EU institutions.

Committee therefore instructs the Chief Executive to report in one cycle, with proposals to implement the above measures.

Committee further supports the retention of rights enjoyed by EU nationals within the UK and instructs the Council Leader to write to the UK Government setting out opposition to any erosion of these rights and opposing proposed measures such as the register of EU nationals.”

Motion

To approve the terms of the motion by Councillor Day

- Moved by Councillor Day, seconded by Councillor McVey

Amendment

To move no action.

- Moved by Councillor Rust, seconded by Councillor Doggart

Voting

The voting was as follows:

For the motion	-	8 votes (Councillors Aldridge, Burgess, Day Macinnes, Main, Perry, Rankin)
For the amendment	-	3 votes (Councillors Doggart, McLellan, Rust)

Decision

To approve the motion by Councillor Day.