

Minutes

Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee

10.00 am, Tuesday, 7 August 2018

Present

Councillors McVey (Convener), Day (Vice-Convener), Aldridge, Booth, Mary Campbell, Doggart, Macinnes, McLellan (substituting for Councillor Graczyk), Rankin, Watt (substituting for Councillor Perry) and Whyte.

Also Present

Councillor Jim Campbell (for item 4).

1. Minute

Decision

To approve the minute of the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee of 15 May 2018 as a correct record.

2. Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee Work Programme – August 2018

The Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee Work Programme for August 2018 was presented.

Decision

To note the work programme.

(Reference – Work Programme August 2018, submitted.)

3. 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 ask for a completion date for Action 16 – City of Edinburgh Council Motion by Councillor Miller – Attracting and Retaining Carers.
- 2) To note in Action 9 that the update should refer to “work with ECCI” and not EICC and ask that an update be provided.
- 3) To agree to close actions 6, 7, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 22.
- 4) To otherwise note the Rolling Actions Log.

(Reference – Rolling Actions Log, submitted.)

4. Renewal of Permissions and Licensing Processes – Update Report

The Council had agreed to review how applications for permissions and licenses were shared with Councillors, officers and members of the public.

Details were provided on an initial review which had been carried out identifying the range of permissions and licenses that the Council issued. It was proposed that a review of local authority practice be commissioned over the next 12 months to identify best practice and suitable benchmarking against authorities.

Decision

- 1) To note the complex legislation which governed in respect of roads, licensing, planning and building standards.
- 2) To note the initial review carried out.
- 3) To agree the review of local authority best practice and benchmarking as proposed.
- 4) To agree that local ward members would now receive Traffic Regulation Orders at the same time as community councils.
- 5) To recommend to the City of Edinburgh Licensing Board that local ward members receive notification of liquor licence applications.

(References – Act of Council No 21 of 24 August 2017; report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

5. Short Term Letting in Edinburgh

Details were provided on the current situation regarding short term lets in the city, including the key issues that arose from the operation of this industry. A proposed action plan for use of those powers currently available to the Council was outlined together with details of what the Council should request from the Scottish Government in terms of a response to the Council's concerns.

Decision

- 1) To note and agree the conclusions set out in paragraph 3.6 and 3.7 of the report by the Executive Director of Place which set out the short term working group's assessment of the impact of short term lets within the city.
- 2) To note the existing powers available to the Council and the plans for coordinated implementation of these as set out at paragraphs 3.8 to 3.15 of the report.
- 3) To note that officers would continue to explore with the short term let industry and other stakeholders the options set out in paragraphs 3.16 to 3.20 of the report on encouraging more responsible business practices and a joint approach with other public sector partners.

- 4) To agree the proposals set out in paragraph 3.21 to 3.29 of the report as the basis of a more detailed submission to Scottish Government requesting the introduction of a licensing system and policy changes at a national level.
- 5) To ask for an update on the figures for those transferring the payment of Council Tax to non-domestic rates.
- 6) To ask for a briefing following engagement with the Scottish Government on proposed regulations, including (i) qualifying complaints and (ii) potential licence conditions.
- 7) To discharge the outstanding remit on this subject agreed by the Council on 1 February 2018.

(References – Act of Council No 15 of 1 February 2018; report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted).

6. Sale and Use of Fireworks

The Council had agreed motions by Councillors Day, Lang and Brown which reflected widespread concerns about the events of 5 November 2017 at many locations city-wide.

Details were provided on current joint working and planned future initiatives. The Council had two main regulatory roles in respect of fireworks, namely (i) enforcing product safety rules controlling which fireworks might be sold to the public; and (ii) ensuring that retailers satisfied their health and safety duties to ensure safe storage. The Council was also working with partners to ensure a joined-up approach to managing events on and around 5 November.

Decision

- 1) To note that a city-wide Community Improvement Partnership (CIP) had been formed to minimise future disturbance around Bonfire Night.
- 2) To note that the Leader of the Council wrote to the Minister for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy, calling on the UK Government to review the rules governing the sale of fireworks on 22 March 2018 and note the response from Andrew Griffiths, Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Corporate Responsibility, dated 16 April 2018.
- 3) To note that the Leader of the Council wrote to the Cabinet Secretary for Justice regarding the misuse of fireworks on 22 March 2018 and note the response from Annabelle Ewing, Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs dated 19 April 2018.

(References – Act of Council No 12 of 23 November 2017; report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

7. Policies – Assurance Statement - Customer

To ensure that the policies remained current and relevant, all Council directorates were required to review policies on an annual basis. An assurance update on key policies within the Customer team – Corporate Debt Policy, Discretionary Housing Payments

Policy and Council Tax policies (second homes and empty properties) was presented to the Committee as fit for purpose.

Decision

To note that the Council policies detailed in the report had been reviewed and were considered as being current, relevant and fit for purpose.

(References – Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee, 9 August 2016 (item 5); report by the Executive Director of Resources, submitted.)

8. Policies – Assurance Statement – Legal and Risk

To ensure that the policies remained current and relevant, all Council directorates were required to review policies on an annual basis. An assurance update on key policies within Legal and Risk was presented to the Committee as fit for purpose.

Decision

To note that the Council policies detailed in the report had been reviewed and were considered as being current, relevant and fit for purpose.

(References – Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee, 9 August 2016 (item 5); report by the Executive Director of Resources, submitted.)

9. Policies – Assurance Statement – Human Resources

To ensure that the policies remained current and relevant, all Council directorates were required to review policies on an annual basis. An assurance update on key policies within Human Resources was presented to the Committee as fit for purpose.

Decision

To note that the Council policies detailed in the report had been reviewed and were considered as being current, relevant and fit for purpose.

(References – Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee, 5 December 2017 (item 8); report by the Executive Director of Resources, submitted.)

10. Enterprise Risk Management Policy

Details were provided on a proposed new Enterprise Risk Management Policy which sought to provide greater clarity and definition, as well as incorporating good practice from across the risk management community.

The policy set out how the Council would undertake risk management at all levels, and was the over-arching policy for all risk management activities across the Council. Arrangements to manage risks described in other policies should seek to align with this policy where possible.

Decision

To approve the Enterprise Risk Management Policy as set out in Appendix 1 to the report by the Executive Director of Resources.

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

11. Council's Risk Appetite Statement

Details were provided on the Council's overall risk appetite statement which allowed risks to be taken, communicated, and managed throughout the organisation in line with this overall direction. This would be set out in a risk appetite statement, which if approved would then reviewed on a regular basis.

Decision

- 1) To note that an organisation's attitude to taking risk should be set at the top level and cascaded down, and that this 'risk appetite' might be different across different services and types of risks.
- 2) To note that risk appetite was already set and established in many areas through policies, existing controls and schemes of delegation.
- 3) To approve the overall risk appetite presented within the report by the Executive Director of Resources.

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

12. Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report 2017-2018

The Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report for 2017/2018 was presented.

Decision

To note the Chief Social Work Officer's Annual Report for 2017/18 at Appendix 1 of the report by the Executive Director of Communities and Families.

(Reference – report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, submitted.)

13. Corporate Complaints Policy

Details were provided on the development of a Corporate Complaints Policy (CCP) to complement existing procedures and to reinforce the Council's commitment to effective complaints handling, and valuing of complaints to help drive service improvement.

Decision

- 1) To approve the City of Edinburgh Council's Corporate Complaints Policy.
- 2) To ask for a briefing on how waste service complaints were defined and how other Local Authorities defined these.

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

14. Data Driven Community Empowerment

An update was provided on action which was underway to ensure that Data Driven Innovation was used to foster greater community participation in service design and improve the efficiency of public services in Edinburgh.

Details on the Data Driven Innovation (DDI) programme within the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal and the commitment to collaboration, exchange and joint working were outlined.

Decision

To note the action underway to ensure that Data Driven Innovation was used to foster greater community participation in service design, and improve the efficiency of public services in Edinburgh.

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

15. City of Edinburgh Council – Fair Trade Policy

Details were provided on the outcome of a review which had been carried out on the Council's fair trade policy, in light of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) 2014 Act and changes in Council structures.

Decision

- 1) To approve the updated Fairtrade policy and action plan (as set out in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 of the report by the Chief Executive) in support of the Edinburgh Fairtrade City initiative.
- 2) To agree that a progress report on the implementation of the policy be prepared annually in August.
- 3) To acknowledge the work of Edinburgh Fairtrade Steering Group in supporting and promoting Fairtrade across the city.
- 4) To acknowledge the work the city's schools had done to support Edinburgh as a Fairtrade city.

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

16. Resource Use Policy – Position Statement August 2018

The Committee had agreed that the Council's Resource Use Policy would be reviewed in light of new legislation and Council structures.

In the light of the forthcoming independent audit of Council activity on sustainability and climate change by the Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation, the review of the Resource Use Policy had been deferred to allow the findings of the audit to be taken into account. The provisional timescale for the completion of this work and reporting to the Committee was now December 2018.

Decision

To note that the review of the Resource Use Policy had been deferred until the findings of the independent audit of council activity on sustainability and climate change had been considered by the Committee. The provisional timescale for reporting the audit findings to committee was December 2018.

(References – Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee 24 January 2017 (item 6); report by the Chief Executive, submitted.)

17. Participation Requests

The Committee had agreed an interim process for participation requests received by the Council. Participation Requests were a legal duty under Part 3 of the Community

Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 and the Council was required to publish annually details of requests and any support and promotional activity undertaken.

Details were provided on participation requests received by the Council since the legislation came into effect on 1 April 2017 in line with the annual reporting requirement together with an update on the work programme to support the delivery of this new duty.

Decision

- 1) To note the participation requests received from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.
- 2) To note the development work to support the delivery of this legislative duty.
- 3) To agree to receive a report setting out proposals for the Council's policy on participation requests within two cycles of the conclusion of the Westbank Street Outcome Improvement Process as set out in paragraph 3.5 of the report by the Chief Executive.

(References – Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee 28 March 2017 (item 6); report by the Chief Executive, submitted.)

18. Edible Edinburgh – A Sustainable Food City – Progress Report

An update was provided on progress made by the Edible Edinburgh initiative in delivering the Sustainable Food City Plan since its launch in June 2014. Key successes were highlighted and areas for future action outlined.

Decision

- 1) To note the progress with the Edible Edinburgh Sustainable Food City Plan.
- 2) To continue to support and work with the Edible Edinburgh initiative in driving the Plan.
- 3) To support the development of a Food Growing Strategy for the city as required by the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act.
- 4) To support the development of a regional food strategy which recognised the increasing importance of local producers, sustainable agriculture and regional food brands, as agreed by the Council in June 2018, as part of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal.

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

19. Managing Transition to Brexit in Edinburgh

The Committee had noted concerns relating to the departure of Scotland and the UK from the EU, and the likely impacts of Brexit on Edinburgh's relationship with European institutions, businesses and citizens.

An update was provided on actions underway to manage the potential impacts of Brexit on Council colleagues and the Edinburgh economy, as well as activity to maintain relationships with European institutions and cities.

Decision

- 1) To note the actions in place to manage transition towards Brexit, and maintain Edinburgh's position as an open and welcoming international city.
- 2) To agree that the Brexit Working Group review actions currently in place and report on future options to provide support for Non-UK EU nationals within the Council workforce and the wider city population.

(References – Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee, 3 October 2017 (item 16); report by the Chief Executive, submitted.)

20. Internal Audit Opinion and Annual Report for the year Ended 31 March 2018 – referral from the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee

The Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee had referred a report on the Internal Audit's annual opinion for the City of Edinburgh Council for the year ended 31 March 2018 to the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee for their consideration and asked that its discussions and any decisions be reported back to the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee.

Decision

- 1) To note the report by the Executive Director of Resources.
- 2) To ask for an update report on directorate actions to strengthen controls, including timescales for implementation
- 3) To refer these decisions to the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee for information.

(References – Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee, 31 July 2018 (item 4); referral report from the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee, submitted.)

21. Corporate Performance Report 17-18

Details were provided on an overview of council performance in 2017/18 against the Council Business Plan Strategic Aims and Objectives, drawing on corporate performance indicators, Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2016/17 data, complaints analysis and wider achievements.

Decision

To refer the report to the City of Edinburgh Council without recommendation.

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

22. Contact Centre Performance Update – January-June 2018

An update was provided on Contact Centre performance, trends, and ongoing service improvement activities together with detailed performance information that demonstrated current trends, supported by targeted actions to address specific issues.

Decision

- 1) To note the current performance trends within the Contact Centre.
- 2) To note the ongoing service and performance improvement activities to ensure that Council services were easy to access and citizen queries and complaints were dealt with effectively.
- 3) To note the revised performance target to include 60% of calls answered within 60 seconds and a customer satisfaction target of over 75%.
- 4) To request future updates include total volumes of abandoned calls for each transaction area.

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

23. Welfare Reform Update

An update was provided on the Council's ongoing Welfare Reform activities which included the benefit cap, the short term benefit advance and local housing allowance in Edinburgh. The discretionary housing payment (DHP) funding had been devolved to the Scottish Government and the Council's initial allocation for 2018/19 was £5.2m, with a further top up due later in the year. This would be determined by demand and the fund continued to be monitored to ensure appropriate spend.

Decision

- 1) To note the ongoing work to support Universal Credit (UC) and Welfare Reform, in Edinburgh.
- 2) To note the current spend projections for Discretionary Housing Payments, Council Tax Reduction Scheme and the Scottish Welfare Fund.
- 3) To agree to the removal of paper forms in favour of online benefit application, with appropriate support for all claimants.

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

24. Appointments to Working Groups

The Committee was invited to appoint the membership of its Working Groups for 2018/19.

Decision

To agree the appointment of members to Working Groups as follows:

- a) **Brexit Working Group (7 members)**
 - 2 SNP
 - 2 Conservative
 - 1 Labour
 - Councillor Miller
 - Councillor Aldridge

b) **Redford Barracks Working Group (7 members)**

2 SNP

2 Conservative

1 Labour

Councillor Corbett

Councillor Aldridge.

c) **Welfare Reform Working Group (7 members)**

2 SNP

2 Conservative

1 Labour

Councillor Aldridge

Councillor Rae

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

25. Accounts Commission – Local Government in Scotland – Challenges and Performance 2018 – referral from the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee

The Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee had referred a report on the Accounts Commission's complementary, forward-looking report assessing councils' readiness to confront the growing challenges that lay ahead following its earlier Scotland-wide review of 2016/17 local government financial performance to the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee for consideration.

Decision

To note the joint report by the Chief Executive and the Executive Director of Resources.

(References – Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee of 5 June 2018 (item 8); referral from the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee, submitted.)

26 Implementing the Programme for the Capital Coalition Commitments Progress to June 2018 – referral from the City of Edinburgh Council

The City of Edinburgh Council had referred a report on the progress of its business plan (A Programme for the Capital: The City of Edinburgh Council's Business Plan 2017-22) which had been built around 52 commitments the Council Administration had pledged to deliver over the next five years, to the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee for further scrutiny.

Decision

To note the report by the Chief Executive.

(References – Act of Council No 11 of 28 June 2018; referral from the City of Edinburgh Council, submitted.)