

Minutes

Policy and Sustainability Committee

10.00 am, Tuesday 1 October 2019

Present

Councillors Day (Vice-Convener) (in the Chair), Aldridge, Bird (substituting for Councillor McVey), Jim Campbell, Kate Campbell, Gardiner, Gloyer, Macinnes, Main, Mitchell (substituting for Councillor Whyte), Mowat (substituting for Councillor Webber), Perry, Rankin, Rose (substituting for Councillor Hutchison), Rust (substituting for Councillor McLellan), Staniforth and Wilson.

1. Chair

In the absence of the Convener, Councillor Day took the Chair.

2. Chief Social Work Officer's Annual Report 2018/19

a) Deputation - UNISON

The deputation stressed that there was a growing demand for social work services and that there was a gap in available funding and funding that was required. They felt that the report by the Chief Executive did not address this and that if it were to continue, there would be serious problems within the service.

The deputation indicated that UNISON Scotland were in the process of carrying out a survey on a series of damage reports which covered work hours, staffing, aging workforce, work targets and registration issues.

They sought assurance that going forward there would be in-depth discussions with the unions regarding the existing workload and how to deal with an increasing demand for services and less available funding.

b) Report by the Chief Executive

The Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report for 2018/2019 was presented.

Decision

- 1) To note the Chief Social Work Officer's Annual Report for 2018/19 at Appendix 1 of the report by the Chief Executive.

- 2) To ask the Chief Social Work officer to circulate to members details on how recruiting to Social Work qualification courses was carried out nationally with particular reference to students from black and ethnic minority communities.

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

3. Domestic Abuse Policy

a) Deputation - UNISON

The deputation emphasised the importance of having a robust domestic abuse policy in place and urged the Committee to agree to the policy. They stressed that employees needed to be supported and asked the Committee to ensure that adequate training was put in place for managers.

The deputation indicated that this policy was an example of partnership working between the Council and the union.

b) Report by the Executive Director of Resources

Details were provided on an updated Domestic Abuse Policy which set out the Council's commitment to provide a safe and supportive working environment for colleagues impacted by Domestic Abuse. The policy recognised recent changes to legislation and a requirement for clearer guidance for colleagues and managers on their roles and responsibilities if/when a disclosure was made.

Decision

- 1) To approve the new Domestic Abuse Policy.
- 2) To congratulate staff on producing a clear and well written policy.

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

4. Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

a) Deputation - UNISON

The deputation indicated that the proposed policy was a major step forward in ensuring the Council took care and recognised the value of its citizens and staff. They felt that the promotion of rights would make for a better workplace which would be a place more reflective of its citizens.

b) Report by the Executive Director of Resources

Details were provided on the Council's Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, which set out the commitment as an organisation to work towards developing a truly inclusive culture and workplace which valued and recognised the contribution that a diverse workforce made.

Decision

- 1) To approve the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.
- 2) To approve the Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan.
- 3) To agree that an update on progress would be submitted to this Committee on an annual basis.

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

5. Minute

Decision

To approve the minute of the Policy and Sustainability Committee of 6 August 2019 as a correct record.

6. Policy and Sustainability Committee Work Programme October 2019

The Policy and Sustainability Committee Work Programme for October 2019 was presented.

Decision

- 1) To note that Item 2 – Tourism – Policy Statement, was now scheduled for December 2019.
- 2) To note that an additional meeting of the Committee was provisionally booked for 25 October 2019 at 2pm and that this would be confirmed by Committee Services.
- 3) To otherwise note the work programme.

(Reference – Work Programme October 2019, submitted.)

7. Policy and Sustainability Committee Rolling Actions Log

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

Decision

- 1) To agree to close the following actions:

Action 1 - The Future Management and Ownership of Easter Craiglockhart Hill Local Nature Reserve (LNR) – motion by Councillor Burns

Action 2 - Common Good Assets Register

Action 5 - City of Edinburgh Council Motion by Councillor Miller – Attracting and Retaining Carers

Action 18 - Draft Policy on Advertising and Sponsorship

Action 19 - City of Edinburgh Council Motion by Councillor McNeese Mechan - International Fair-Trade Charter

2) To otherwise note the Rolling Actions Log.

(Reference – Rolling Actions Log, submitted.)

8. Policy and Sustainability Committee Business Bulletin

The Policy and Sustainability Committee Business Bulletin was presented.

Decision

- 1) To agree that details of the members who were involved in Phase 2 of the Tourism Strategy consultation sessions would be circulated.
- 2) To agree that a report would be submitted outlining the process of how the Tourism Strategy was to be formulated
- 3) To agree that the draft Tourism Strategy would be submitted to Committee for consideration prior to it being finalised.
- 4) To otherwise note the Business Bulletin.

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

9. Police Scotland Update

Police Scotland's Annual Police Plan 2019/20, which provided details of city-wide plans, policies and performance was presented.

Decision

- 1) To note the report by the Chief Executive.
- 2) To agree that future reports would include a link to the Police Partnership Performance and Activity Report which was submitted to the Culture and Communities Committee.

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

10. City of Edinburgh Council Response to the Scottish Government's Consultation on Children's Rights

Details were provided on the Council's response to the Scottish Government's consultation on the Children's Rights: Consultation on incorporating the United Nations Rights of the Child into domestic law in Scotland.

Decision

To note the Council's response to the Scottish Government consultation on the Children's Rights: Consultation on incorporating the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child into our domestic law in Scotland which had been approved by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Convener and Vice Convener under urgency provisions contained within Committee Terms of Reference and Delegated Functions.

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

11. Conference Invitation – 20 Years on from Devolution...We Have a Choice – COSLA and Improvement Service Annual Conference and Exhibition 2019

The Committee were invited to appoint delegates to attend the COSLA and Improvement Service Annual Conference & Exhibition to be held in St Andrew's on 10-11 October 2019.

Decision

To agree that members would advise the Head of Strategy and Communications if they wished to attend the Conference.

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

12. Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce Trade Delegation to Shenzhen – Request for Attendance

Details were provided on an invitation which had been received from the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce for the Lord Provost to accompany a trade mission to Shenzhen in November 2019.

Motion

- 1) To agree to the Lord Provost joining the Chamber of Commerce Trade Delegation to Shenzhen, 11-16 November 2019.
- 2) To note that further information on the benefits of the visit would be included in a future Business Bulletin.

- moved by Councillor Day, seconded by Councillor Bird

Amendment

To take no action on the invitation.

- moved by Councillor Staniforth, seconded by Councillor Main

Voting

The voting was as follows:

For the motion - 15 votes

For the amendment - 2 votes

(For the motion: Councillors Aldridge, Bird, Jim Campbell, Kate Campbell, Day, Gardiner, Gloyer, Macinnes, Mitchell, Mowat, Perry, Rankin, Rose, Rust and Wilson.

For the amendment: Councillors Main and Staniforth.)

Decision

To approve the motion by Councillor Day.

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

13. EUROCITIES Annual Conference 2019

Details were provided on a proposal for the Lord Provost to be the Council's representative at the EUROCITIES AGM and Conference in Prague on 20-22 November 2019.

Decision

- 1) To approve attendance by the Lord Provost at the EUROCITIES AGM and annual conference in Prague on 20-22 November 2019.
- 2) To note that further information on the benefits of attendance would be provided following the event.

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

14. West Edinburgh Progress Update

The Housing and Economy Committee had noted progress made in delivering infrastructure improvements in the West Edinburgh area and that a further report setting out delivery and finance options would be reported to Committee in 2019.

An update was provided on recent progress and developments including the commissioning of a spatial study for West Edinburgh to maximise inclusive and sustainable growth.

Decision

- 1) To note the progress made to date in delivering infrastructure improvements in the West Edinburgh area.

- 2) To note the progress made in discussions with Edinburgh Airport Ltd.
- 3) To note that this matter would be reported to Committee in spring 2020 providing a further update on progress and seeking any necessary authority to formalise partnership arrangements for delivery of the new link road.
- 4) To agree that progress updates on West Edinburgh would be provided in Business Bulletins on an ongoing basis.
- 5) To agree that a report would be brought back to Committee on completion of the West Edinburgh study on inclusive and sustainable growth.

(References - Housing and Economy Committee 24 January 2019 (item 9); report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

15. Gender Pay Gap Update

In accordance with duties arising as a result of the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012, the Council were required to positively eliminate discrimination and publish gender pay gap information every two years.

An update was provided on the long-term measures which had been identified to support a reduction in the Council's mean gender pay gap of 4.8% (median 5%).

Decision

To note the report by the Executive Director of Resources.

(References – Finance and Resources Committee, 11 October 2018 (item 4); report by the Executive Director of Resources, submitted.)

16. Bike to Work Scheme

In response to a Council motion by Councillor Main, the Committee had agreed to further work being undertaken to promote and encourage employees to take advantage of the Council's Bike to Work Scheme.

Details were provided on the medium to longer term plans to increase uptake, what was being done internally to enable the purchase of e-bikes and how the scheme could be opened up to include small to medium bike providers.

Decision

- 1) To note the report by the Executive Director of Resources on the promotion and employee support available for the Council's Bike to Work Scheme, and the medium to longer term plans to grow the scheme and encourage more employees to cycle to work

- 2) To note that a wide range of electric bikes were available on the market at less than the price quoted and that that should be highlighted in the scheme going forward.

(References – Policy and Sustainability Committee 6 August 2019 (item 12); report by the Executive Director of Resources, submitted.)

17 Recruitment and Selection Policy

Details were provided on the Council's proposed new Recruitment and Selection Policy which had been revised to support both candidates and colleagues. The Policy highlighted the importance of robust pre-employment checking and ensured the approach to recruitment was inclusive and non-discriminatory.

Decision

To approve the new Recruitment and Selection Policy.

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

18. Sickness Absence Policy

The Finance and Resources Committee had approved the current Sickness Absence Policy which had come into effect on 1 October 2018.

An update was provided on the impact of the policy together with proposed revisions to the policy and supporting documents.

Decision

To approve the updated Sickness Absence Policy.

(References – Finance and Resources Committee, 27 March 2018 (item 10); report by the Executive Director of Resources, submitted.)

19. Human Resources (HR) Policies Assurance Statement

To ensure that the policies remained current and relevant, all Council directorates were required to review policies on a regular 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 by the Executive Director of Resources 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 Chief Executive, submitted.)

20. Policy - 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 by the Executive Director of Resources had been reviewed and were considered to reflect current legislative requirements and best practice and therefore remained fit for purpose.

(References – Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee, 7 August 2018 (item 8); report by the Executive Director of Resources, submitted.)

21. Internal Audit GDPR (Gap Analysis) Follow-up and Quality, Governance and Regulation – referral from the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee

The Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee had referred a report on GDPR (Gap Analysis) Follow-up and Quality, Governance and Regulation Audits to the Policy and Sustainability Committee for review and scrutiny.

Decision

To note the GDPR (Gap Analysis) Follow-up and Quality, Governance and Regulation Audits.

(References – Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee, 13 August 2019 (item 7); referral from the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee, submitted.)