

**EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

**GOVERNANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2011 AT 1000 HRS  
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS,  
LONDON ROAD, KILMARNOCK**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Tom Cook, Willie Coffey, John McGhee, Helen Coffey, John Campbell, Stuart Finlayson, Elaine Dinwoodie and Drew Filson.

**ATTENDING:** Elizabeth Morton, Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services; Graham Short, Executive Director of Educational and Social Services; Bill Walkinshaw, Head of Democratic Services; Craig McArthur, Head of Finance; Martin Rose, Head of Human Resources; David Mitchell, Head of Legal, Procurement and Regulatory Services; and Stuart Nelson, Administrative Officer.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Alan Brown, Jimmy Kelly and Eric Ross.

**CHAIR:** Councillor Tom Cook, Chair.

**PREVIOUS MINUTES**

1. There were submitted and approved as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 January 2011 (circulated).

Councillor Drew Filson joined the meeting at this point.

The Chair confirmed, and it was noted, that, with regard to Item 4(iv), the request for further information was dealt with within the Matters Arising Update Report under Item 2 on the Agenda; that with regard to Items 2(ii), 5(i) and (ii), the relevant Executive Directors had provided further information to the Elected Members concerned; and that with regard to Item 5(iii), this matter was under consideration by the Head of Legal, Procurement and Regulatory Services, the outcome of which would have a bearing on the nature of the information presented within future Awarding of Contracts reports.

**MATTERS ARISING UPDATE REPORT**

2. There was submitted a report dated 27 January 2011 (circulated) by the Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Support which provided the Committee with a consolidated response to information requests made by Members at the last meeting.

It was agreed to note:

- (i) the information provided, viz:- that the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership had been asked to prepare an update report on the relative needs identified at National Outcome 6 "We Live Longer, Healthier Lives - Alcohol and Drugs Agenda", and the response by partners, for submission to this Committee; and
- (ii) that it was anticipated that the report would be submitted to either the March or April meeting.

## **GOVERNANCE**

### **INTEGRATED RESOURCE FRAMEWORK - FINANCIAL PROTOCOLS AND MECHANISMS**

3. There was submitted a report dated 7 January 2011 (circulated) by the Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Support which advised of work which had been undertaken to develop financial protocols and mechanisms to support the progression of existing and future projects within the Integrated Resource Framework arrangements.

During discussion, the Head of Finance provided clarification on issues raised by Members relative to audit arrangements where pooled budgets were to be implemented and the determination of the level of resource transfer between the Health Authority and the Council.

It was agreed:

- (i) to adopt the guidance in relation to financial mechanisms and protocols and to request the Head of Finance to implement any necessary amendments to the Financial Regulations and Accounting Policy Bulletins; and
- (ii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

## **SCRUTINY**

### **QUARTERLY EMPLOYEE STATISTICS: OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2010**

4. There was submitted a report dated 27 January 2011 (circulated) by the Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Support which provided a range of employee statistics including Staffing Watch and Absence for the period 1 October to 31 December 2010.

During discussion, the Head of Human Resources provided clarification in respect of the following matters raised by Members, namely:-

- the overall decline in the rate of absence of employees over the period December 2008 to December 2010 from 6.11% to 5%; and
- the protocols in place to respond to and manage absence due to stress.

It was agreed:

- (i) that the Head of Human Resources would provide within the Matters Arising Update report to the next meeting a breakdown, for the last quarter of 2010, of the level of absence due to stress arising from work related reasons and personal reasons; and
- (ii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

### **GOVERNANCE AND SCRUTINY WORKSHOP 2011**

5. There was submitted (circulated) report of the meeting of the Governance and Scrutiny Workshop held on 27 January 2011.

It was agreed:

- (i) to note that Councillor Eric Ross had submitted apologies for the Workshop, which had not been recorded in the report of meeting; and

- (ii) otherwise, to note the report of the meeting and the actions arising therefrom which would be appropriately progressed by the officers concerned.

**FINANCE AND SERVICE STRATEGY REPORT  
BASED ON PERIOD 9 (12 DECEMBER 2010)**

6. There was submitted a report dated 26 January 2011 (circulated) by the Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Support which advised of the projected financial position for the year based on expenditure to 12 December 2010 (Period 9) and information provided by Executive Directors.

During discussion, the relevant officers responded to questions from Members on the undernoted matters, namely:-

- the reasons for the underspend on Education budgets due to vacancies;
- arrangements being progressed for the filling of a current vacancy for Head Teacher at a nursery school;
- the reasons for the amount of waste currently going to landfill and the amounts being recycled; and
- the reasons for a reduction in the percentage of planning applications being determined within the target of two months.

It was agreed:

- (i) to note the recommendations to Cabinet on 26 January 2011, as set out in paragraph 6 of the report;
- (ii) that a report on the outcome of the currently ongoing food and plastic recycling trial within part of the Council's area be submitted to an appropriate meeting of this Committee;
- (iii) that the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services would confirm to Councillor Tom Cook, outwith the meeting, progress with regard to the issuing of tenders for the construction of the new Gargieston Primary School; and
- (iv) otherwise, to note the terms of the report submitted and further information provided by officers concerned.

**ARRANGEMENTS FOR NEXT MEETING**

7. Noted that the next meeting of the Committee, to be held on 11 March 2011, would commence at 0930 hrs within Meeting Room 1, in order to facilitate arrangements for an Inclusive Design Awareness Seminar to be held in the Council Chambers on the same day.

The meeting terminated at 1045 hrs.