

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

GOVERNANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY 16 JANUARY 2009 AT 1000 HRS IN THE MEETING ROOM, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS, LONDON ROAD, KILMARNOCK

PRESENT: Councillors Tom Cook, Willie Coffey, Helen Coffey, Maureen McKay, John Campbell, Alan Brown, Stuart Finlayson, Barney Menzies, Eric Ross and Elaine Dinwoodie.

ATTENDING: Elizabeth Morton, Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support; Graham Short, Executive Director of Educational and Social Services; William Stafford, Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services; Alex McPhee, Executive Head of Finance and Asset Management; Eddie Fraser, Chief Social Work Officer/Head of Community Care; Susan Taylor, Head of Children, Families and Criminal Justice; David Mitchell, Head of Legal, Procurement and Regulatory Services; Julie McGarry, Administration Manager; and Stuart Nelson, Administrative Officer.

APOLOGY: Councillor Drew Filson.

CHAIR: Councillor Tom Cook, Chair.

CHAIR'S REMARKS

1. The Chair welcomed to the meeting, Eddie Fraser and Susan Taylor, who had recently been appointed to the positions of Chief Social Work Officer/Head of Community Care and Head of Children, Families and Criminal Justice, respectively.

PREVIOUS MINUTES

2. There were submitted and approved as a correct record, the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 19 December 2008.

BEST VALUE

BEST VALUE IMPROVEMENT AGENDA (ACTION PLAN NO 10) - "CHALLENGE AND REVIEW": PROGRESS AGAINST BEST VALUE SERVICE REVIEW PROGRAMME FOR 2007/2010

3. There was submitted a report dated 5 January 2009 (circulated) by the Executive Head of Finance and Asset Management which reviewed the implementation of the current 2007/2010 Best Value Service Review Programme in terms of progress against the Programme and overall outcomes achieved.

It was agreed:

- (i) to note the update on progress in implementing the Council's Best Value Service Review Programme for 2007/2010 as set out in the appendix to the report; and
- (ii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

SCRUTINY

FINANCE AND SERVICE STRATEGY REPORT TO PERIOD 8 (16 NOVEMBER 2008)

4. There was submitted a report dated 5 January 2009 (circulated) by the Executive Head of Finance and Asset Management which advised of the projected financial position for the year based on expenditure to 16 November 2008 (Period 8) and information provided by Executive Directors.

Councillor Eric Ross joined the meeting at this point.

The relevant Officers, in response to questions put by members of the Committee, provided information relative to the following matters, namely:-

- The current position with regard to funds held by East Ayrshire Council in Icelandic Banks;
- The budgetary provision and timescales for the demolition of properties at Chapel Lane/Manse Road, Galston;
- The funding of £100,000 which had been identified for a feasibility study into the use of the former ABC cinema in Kilmarnock, which would not now be required since the building was no longer available to the Council;
- Budgetary provision for the acquisition of ground in Cumnock in connection with the sale of Council houses;
- The budgetary provision with regard to secure placements, both generally and with regard to placements effected over the Christmas and New Year period;
- Arrangements for the filling of vacancies within the Education Service having regard to the budget setting process for 2009/10;
- Progress in respect of site identification and operating arrangements in respect of the proposed new children's home in Kilmarnock;
- Progress on, and the budgetary position in respect of, the new Crosshouse Resource Centre;
- Progress in respect of construction of the Netherthird Campus new build;
- Progress in resolving technical difficulties associated with the grey water recycling plant at Galston Primary School; and
- Difficulties which had been experienced in effectively programming connections to the utilities on the Council's major build projects such as Galston Primary School and Netherthird Community Campus.

It was agreed:

- (i) that the Executive Head of Finance and Asset Management provide to members of the Committee, information on the respective budgetary provision for creation of the new Council Chambers and the associated relocation of the Data Control Centre;
- (ii) that the Executive Head of Finance and Asset Management provide to members of the Committee information on projects where the Council's Capital works projects had experienced delays arising from difficulties in

programming connections to the utilities; and following on from that, and also a meeting which the Chief Executive and the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services were due to have with senior officers of Scottish Water later this month, arrangements be made for representatives of Scottish Water to meet with the Committee in order to discuss the matters of concern referred to above and also other issues relating to the delivery of Scottish Water services within East Ayrshire; and

- (iii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

The meeting terminated at 1032 hrs.