

**COMMUNITY SERVICES**  
**STANDING SCRUTINY PANEL**

Minutes of meeting in County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr,  
on 16th June 2010 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors John Allan (Chair), Ian Douglas, Ann Galbraith, Hugh Hunter, Elaine Little, Alec Oattes and Philip Saxton.

Apology: Councillor Bill Grant.

Attending: H. Garland, Executive Director – Children and Community; K. Leinster, Head of Community Care and Housing; M. Williamson, Head of Curriculum and Service Improvement; H. Carswell, Head of Children’s Services; C. Monaghan, Head of Policy, Performance and Communication; I. Woodburn, Head of Customer and Community Services; J. Cronin, Policy and Strategy Manager; C. Bishop, Performance and Business Change Manager; G. Boyce, Service Planning and Performance Management Officer; J. Hall, Senior Local Planning Officer; C. Gardner, Senior Strategic Planning and Performance Officer; and E. Wyllie, Committee Administrative Officer.

Also attending: Councillors Douglas Campbell, John McDowall, and Stan Fisher.

**1. Item for Call-in – Housing Need and Demand Assessment.**

Reference was made to the Minutes of the Leadership Panel of 8th June 2010 (Page 308, paragraph 6) when that Panel, having considered a report (issued) of 29th April 2010 by the Executive Director – Children and Community, decided, having recorded their appreciation of the work undertaken by the staff within the Housing Service and in particular, Zhan McIntyre

- (1) to approve South Ayrshire’s Housing Need and Demand Assessment as summarised in Appendix 1 of the report;
- (2) to note that South Ayrshire’s Housing Need and Demand Assessment met the requirements of Scottish Planning Policy in relation to housing;
- (3) to agree that the content of South Ayrshire’s Housing Need and Demand Assessment would form the evidence base for the Local Authority’s Local Housing Strategy; and
- (4) to request the Executive Director – Children and Community in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to explore the possibility of buying houses for use as rented accommodation to alleviate the number of families in bed and breakfast and to report his findings to a future meeting of this Panel.

The Panel was advised that the report had been the subject of a call-in for the following reasons:-

- (a) Why has there been a significant time lapse between the Public Inquiry Reporter’s Recommendation of 2005 and the production of the HNDA in 2010;
- (b) What is the definition of Examination of the Strategic Development Plan (Paragraph 3.5 of the report);

- (c) Technical Appendix Page 2 refers to 1,500 households with support needs, why in page 4 of the Appendix was this reduced to 750 households?;
- (d) Give an explanation of potential planning implications including range of targets, possible use of CPO and land allocation;
- (e) What are planning policy implications of failing to distinguish between categories of affordability between LCHO and social rented?; and
- (f) Are Officers from Housing and Planning Services confident that the HNDA is sufficiently robust to withstand any possible subsequent Public Inquiry?.

The Chair invited Councillor McDowall to explain his reasons for the call-in and, thereafter, the Panel heard Councillor McDowall seek clarification on the points outlined at (a) to (f) above and the Executive Director – Children and Community, the Head of Community Care and Housing and the Senior Local Planning Officer responded to the various issues raised.

A full discussion took place and various questions and comments were raised by Members of the Panel and the Portfolio Holder in respect of this matter and the relevant officers responded accordingly. The Head of Community Care and Housing also highlighted that the HNDA would be submitted to the Centre for Housing Market Analysis for evaluation and should any suggested changes be made following this process by the Centre then these would be submitted to the Leadership Panel for its consideration.

Councillor Saxton moved a Motion that this matter be referred back to the Leadership Panel with a recommendation that the issues raised within the Call-in paper be further explored.

Councillor Saxton failed to find a seconder and his Motion fell.

Councillor Saxton requested that his dissent be recorded.

**Decided:** following review (Councillor Saxton dissenting), that the decision of the Leadership Panel in respect of this matter be confirmed and implemented.

## **2. Minutes of previous meeting.**

**Decided:** to note the Minutes of the meeting of 19th May 2010 (issued).

## **3. Progress Against the Council Corporate Plan to 31st March 2010.**

Reference was made to the Minutes of the Leadership Panel of 8th June 2010 (Page 313, paragraph 13) when that Panel, having considered a report of 28th May 2010 by the Head of Policy, Performance and Communication advising of the progress achieved to date against the Council Corporate Plan's aims and objectives, had agreed

- (1) to note the progress achieved over 2009/10 against the Council Corporate Plan as set out in the table at 4.2 of the report and Appendix 1 attached to the report; and
- (2) to note that detailed performance reports were to be considered at the forthcoming Standing Scrutiny Panels.

There was submitted a report (copies previously issued) of 28th May 2010 by the Head of Policy, Performance and Communication outlining the progress which had been achieved to date against the Council Corporate Plan in relation to the directorate objectives and tasks which had fallen within this Panel's remit. The Head of Policy, Performance and Communication referred to the recent workshops attended by Members and invited comment on the format and content of the Plan.

A full discussion took place and various points were made by Members of the Panel in relation to the colour coding system, whether arrows could be incorporated within the format to outline direction of travel and the reporting timeframes. The Head of Policy, Performance and Communication commented on these points and also advised that, in future, the intention would be for Standing Scrutiny Panels to receive the detailed report for consideration prior to the Leadership Panel on a six monthly basis.

Various detailed questions were raised, to which the relevant officers responded accordingly, in respect of the following specific Directorate objectives and tasks:-

- Increase the availability of affordable homes in South Ayrshire (CC03a01);
- Develop and implement a Scheme of Assistance in line with legislation (CC03c01.03);
- Provide an appropriate level of personal support to all children and young people (CC05c01);
- Work in partnership with Chief Executives and Community Council link officers to listen and respond to community issues timeously and proactively (CC06a02.05);
- Provide personalised and efficient care services (CC08a01);
- Continue to monitor and evaluate services against specifications on agreed basis (CC08a01.06); and
- Provide a range of accessible, quality services which meet the needs of people who are experiencing problems with alcohol and drug misuse (CC09d01).

**Decided:** to note

- (a) the progress and assessments made as outlined in paragraph 4.2 of the report and in Appendix 1 of the report;
- (b) that further refinement to the reporting format would be developed taking into account the comments made at this meeting; and
- (c) that for future reporting, Standing Scrutiny Panels should receive the detailed report for consideration prior to the Leadership Panel.

#### **4. Social Work Inspection Agency (SWIA) Performance Inspection – Progress Report.**

There was submitted a report (issued) of June 2010 by the Executive Director – Children and Community

- (1) detailing the actions arising from the 2009 Social Work Performance Inspection and the ongoing progress being made; and
- (2) advising that SWIA
  - (a) had completed a performance inspection of this Council's Social Work Services in 2009 and an action plan addressing the 16 recommendations identified by SWIA during the inspection had been developed with key stakeholders and agreed by members of the SWIA inspection team; and

- (b) would scrutinise progress reports submitted by the Executive Director – Children and Community in March, June and August 2010, in relation to progress made against the action plan; and
- (3) reporting
  - (a) that in the second progress report submitted to SWIA on 1st June 2010, 63 of the 72 actions were reported as being 'Completed/On Target (Green)', 7 actions reported as 'May Not Meet Target (Amber)' and 2 actions reported as 'Not on Target (Red)';
  - (b) that the colour-coding system being used by SWIA to monitor progress against each of the actions differed from the Council's definition as it was based purely on whether an action would be completed by the timescales indicated within the Plan; and
  - (c) that the actions reported as 'Not on Target (Red)' were being progressed and would be completed prior to SWIA's Follow Through Inspection in September 2010.

Various questions were raised by a Member of the Panel in relation to the progress being made with the two 'Not on Target (Red)' actions and the communication protocol and the Head of Children's Services responded accordingly.

**Decided:** to note the contents of the report.

#### **5. Additional Support Needs (ASN) Review – Progress Report.**

There was submitted a report (issued) of 7th June 2010 by the Executive Director – Children and Community

- (1) outlining the progress of the work of the Additional Support Needs Review Group; and
- (2) advising that the review timescales had been altered as a result of a change to the lead officer and that this would entail an additional eight weeks (August 2010) delay in completion of the review.

**Decided:** to note

- (a) the work of the Review Group to date; and
- (b) that the timeline for completion would be August 2010.

The meeting ended at 11.30 a.m.