

**SCRUTINY AND GOVERNANCE MANAGEMENT PANEL.**

Minutes of meeting in County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr,  
on 22nd June 2010 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors Ian Douglas (Chair), Stan Fisher, Hugh Hunter, Elaine Little, Helen Moonie and Winifred Sloan.

Attending: V. Andrews, Head of Legal and Administration; A. Wilson, Head of HR and Organisational Development; P. Linton, Performance and Change Management Manager; A. MacLeod, Business and Performance Manager; C. Gardner, Senior Strategic Planning and Performance Management Officer; M. Wallace, HR Adviser; and E. Wyllie, Committee Administrative Officer.

**1. Minutes of previous meetings.**

**Decided:** to note the Minutes of the previous meeting of 27th April 2010 (issued).

**2. Elected Member Development.**

Reference was made to the Minutes of South Ayrshire Council of 9th July 2009 (Page 407, paragraph 17) and there was submitted a report (issued) of 14 June 2010 by the Head of HR and Organisational Development

- (1) advising of Elected Member training and development activity for 2009/10 and informing of the proposed roll out of the 2010/11 training needs analysis and national CPD exercises;
- (2) reporting that leadership development for Members comprised of the various strands as outlined below:-
  - (a) Portfolio-holders and Chairs of Scrutiny Panels;
  - (b) Elected Member training needs analysis;
  - (c) Lunch and learn and breakfast briefings for Elected Members;
  - (d) National CPD Project; and
  - (e) Masterclass series for Elected Members;
- (3) indicating that with the range of interventions continuing to evolve, there was an opportunity to refresh the current role profiles for Elected Members which would be aligned with the national political skills framework to ensure that the Council had a clear set of competencies for Members to reflect their strategic role in terms of governance and scrutiny; and
- (4) highlighting that the refresh would take place during the summer recess with progress on this being remitted to a future meeting of this Panel.

Various questions were asked and comments made by Members of the Panel in relation to:- the training programme and ways in which to develop Member participation; the rescheduling of two of the training events; whether evaluative information should be provided rather than statistical data; whether levels of competency should be established, particularly for certain roles; a request for mind mapping and speed reading information to be circulated; 'signing in' for training events with a view to this information being held within the CPD; whether or not training records should be publicised; whether evening training events could be organised to cater for those Members who were in day-time employment; reviewing the induction training programme and taking cognisance of the experiences of the current Members; officer support to Members; whether there was a duty on Members to attend training; training opportunities for perspective candidates; and completion of evaluation forms following each training event. The Head of HR and Organisational Development and the Head of Legal and Administration responded accordingly on the various issues raised. The Performance and Change Management Manager advised of the evaluation process following each of the lunch and learn and breakfast briefing sessions and also commented on the questions included in the Elected Members' survey concerning training, induction and Member support.

The Head of HR and Organisational Development commented further on Member participation and ways in which to provide further support to Members and how to supplement the training programme. She also suggested an evaluative method which could be undertaken during the CPD process at the end of the year and, in turn, this could provide qualitative evidence for the Panel and thanked Members for the feedback on their experiences of induction training which she would take on board when reviewing this package with IS.

The Head of Legal and Administration advised that she would further explore whether Members had a duty to undertake training.

The Chair intimated that, as part of improving efficiencies and officers' time at meetings, the Head of Policy, Performance and Communication would be exploring various options in relation to this matter with a view to reporting her findings after the summer recess.

**Decided:** to note the activity for 2009/10 and the proposals for 2010/11 as outlined within the appendices to the report, taking into account the suggestions raised during the course of this meeting.

### 3. **Elected Members' Survey.**

Reference was made to the Minutes of the Standards and Governance Panel of 17th June 2008 (Page 406, paragraph 4) when that Panel had decided to undertake an Elected Members' Survey in conjunction with Audit Scotland and the Head of Legal and Administration advised that a similar exercise should now be undertaken, although on this occasion it would be solely by the Council, with the intention being to develop and proceed with such a survey, once Members are returned from recess, in September.

**Decided:** to note the current position in relation to the arrangements being made for the forthcoming Elected Members' Survey.

#### 4. Delivering Good Governance – 2009/10 Assessment.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 15th June 2010 by the Head of Policy, Performance and Communication

- (1) providing Members with the opportunity to review the 2009/10 year end assessment against the Council's Delivering Good Governance Framework as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report;
- (2) informing that alterations made to the assessment were shown in red within the Appendix to the report and intimating that the July 2008 Member survey results had been removed as these were now out of date for inclusion within 31st March 2010 assessment;
- (3) outlining, as discussed in the previous item of the Agenda, the intention to undertake a further survey to inform ongoing assessment work and proposing that this be taken forward in September rather than in July which would allow
  - (a) questions to be framed in the light of the final conclusions of the Best Value Audit follow up report; and
  - (b) the survey to be issued when all Members were present rather than conducting the exercise during the recess period; and
- (4) highlighting that the year-end assessment indicated that there was still some areas under development and that these areas would be addressed through the Council's Improvement Agenda, augmented as necessary to reflect the particular requirements of the framework with progress being reviewed during the course of 2010/11 as previously agreed by this Panel.

The Senior Strategic Planning and Performance Management Officer provided an update in relation to Appendix 1 of the report which highlighted the six principles and intimated that in relation to Principle 5.2 dealing with developing skills, the final document would be amended to reflect that the reference to 360 degree appraisals were not in place for Chief Officials.

On a similar point, Councillor Moonie asked questions relating to the Chief Officers' appraisal process and raised concerns that the Panel with responsibility for appointing a Chief Executive was the same Panel undertaking the appraisal of that person and requested that this practice be reviewed to enable a more objective approach and suggested ways in which effective scrutiny could be undertaken. She also sought clarification as to whether it was solely the Chief Executive who was appraised in this manner or if it was extended to other Chief Officials and the Head of Legal and Administration responded accordingly and commented on the appraisal system which was cascaded down through the Council's workforce.

A full discussion took place in relation to this matter when the other Panel Members indicated that they were satisfied with the Chief Executive's appraisal process and that the relevant Panel consisted of cross party membership.

**Decided:** to approve the 2009/10 year end assessment as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report, taking into account the revision outlined by the Senior Strategic Planning and Performance Management Officer in respect of Principle 5.

## 5. Observing Arrangements

Reference was made to the Minutes of 27th April 2010 (Page 254, paragraph 4) and the Head of Legal and Administration

- (1) advised that, following the visits made by Members of this Panel to the June cycle of Standing Scrutiny Panels, she had received positive feedback from these visits which she had compiled into a Note (tabled);
- (2) reported that the Note highlighted six areas of good practice and two areas for improvement and outlined that, on this particular occasion, only one of the Standing Scrutiny Panels had one call-in item;
- (3) reminded Members that in the previous year the findings had been discussed with the Scrutiny Panel Chairs at a Special meeting of this Panel, however, as a result of the positive feedback queried whether would such a formal arrangement be required on this occasion; and
- (4) highlighted the opportunity for this feedback to be incorporated within the joint work being undertaken with the Head of Policy, Performance and Communication in relation to Scrutiny, the outcomes from the Scrutiny Workshop and the findings in due course of the Elected Members' Survey referred to earlier on the Agenda.

A full discussion took place in relation to the call-in process and the role of scrutiny as a mechanism for challenge and the ways in which to discuss the content of the Note with the Chairs of the Standing Scrutiny Panels.

**Decided:** that this Panel would informally discuss the Note with the Standing Scrutiny Panel Chairs prior to the summer recess period and, thereafter, any feedback would be incorporated within the overall findings of the Scrutiny exercise and the Elected Members' Survey, the outcome of which would be submitted to a future meeting of this Panel.

The meeting ended at 11.30 a.m.