

THE MORAY COUNCIL**MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE****WEDNESDAY 21 NOVEMBER 2007****COUNCIL OFFICE, ELGIN****PRESENT**

Councillors G McDonald (Chairman), G Coull, J Cree, J Hogg, B Jarvis, F Murdoch, P Paul, D Ross, M Shand, R Shepherd and I Young

ALSO PRESENT

Councillors L Bell (Chairman (Remit 2) Education and Social Services Committee), Councillor J Russell (Chairman (Remit 2) Environmental Services Committee) and Councillor Wright (Chairman (Remit 1) Environmental Services Committee), Maggie Bruce External Auditor

IN ATTENDANCE

The Chief Executive, the Director of Community Services, the Director of Environmental Services, the Chief Financial Officer and the Chief Legal Officer, the Head of Development Services, the Head of Direct Services, the Head of Community Care, the Head of Children & Families and Criminal Justice, the Chief Housing Officer, the Building Standards Manager, Jeremy Akehurst Quality Assurance Manager, Service Manager (Child Protection) and the Principal Committee Services Officer, Clerk to the Meeting.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Maggie Bruce, External Audit

APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor J MacKay.

1. MESSAGE OF CONDOLENCE

The Meeting joined the Chairman in expressing sincere condolences to the family of the late W.Percy Watt, who had served 23 years in local government, 15 years as a Member of the Moray District Council and latterly 8 years as a Member of The Moray Council.

2. DECLARATION OF GROUP DECISIONS:-

In terms of the relevant Standing Order 20 and the Councillor's Code of Conduct the meeting noted that there were no declarations from Group Leaders or spokespersons in regard to any prior decisions taken on how members will vote on any item on the agenda.

3. EDUCATIONAL SERVICES – CHAIRMAN'S REPORTS ON SERVICE PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE STANDARDS

There was submitted the Chairman's reports on service performance and service standards for Educational Services providing the Committee with an overall summary of performance for the period 1 July 2007 to 30 September 2007.

The Committee considered the reports as follows:-

- (a) Service Performance – agreed that the target in respect of Childcare, Activity Analysis be reviewed as 100% target is considered unrealistic.

The Meeting further agreed that the Director of Education discuss with MCP the issue of liasing with local members in regard to childminder provision in Rothiemay, Rafford, Newmill and Urquhart.

- (b) Service Standards - agreed that the Director of Education provide Members with information report on Service Standard 10 relating to progress of a programme for the review of policies and guidance.

4. COMMUNITY CARE - CHAIRMAN'S REPORTS ON SERVICE PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE STANDARDS

There was submitted the Chairman's reports on service performance and service standards for Community Care providing the Committee with an overall summary of performance for the period 1 July 2007 to 30 September 2007.

The Committee considered the reports as follows:-

- (a) Service Performance – agreed that the Director of Community Services bring back a further report on progress of Indicator 5 in order to provide more complete information.

In response to Members query regarding the inclusion of an indication that issues will be going to the Service Committee, the meeting also noted that the timetable in respect of the cycle of committees was currently under review with a view to addressing this issue.

- (b) Service Standards - Noted

5. CHILDREN & FAMILIES - CHAIRMAN'S REPORTS ON SERVICE PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE STANDARDS

There was submitted the Chairman's reports on service performance and service standards for Children and Families providing the Committee with an overall summary of performance for the period 1 July 2007 to 30 September 2007.

The Meeting joined Councillor Ross in congratulating John Carney in his new appointment as Head of Children and Families and Criminal Justice.

The Committee considered the reports as follows:-

- (a) Service Performance – Noted that further information about Criminal Justice indicators would be provided to Education and Social Services Committee.
- (b) Service Standards – Noted.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES - CHAIRMAN'S REPORTS ON SERVICE PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE STANDARDS

There was submitted the Chairman's reports on service performance and service standards for Environmental Services providing the Committee with an overall summary of performance for the period 1 July 2007 to 30 September 2007.

The Committee considered the reports as follows:-

- (a) Service Performance - noted that proposals to improve on indicators for Building Control would be subject of a report to future meetings of the Environmental Services Committee and this Committee.

The Meeting joined Councillor Russell in congratulating the Roads Maintenance and Building Cleaning Services staff in being nominated for the Most Improved Service by the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE).

- (b) Service Standards – Noted.

7. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE - CHAIRMAN'S REPORTS ON SERVICE PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE STANDARDS

There was submitted the Chairman's reports on service performance and service standards for the Chief Executive's Office providing the Committee with an overall summary of performance for the period 1 July 2007 to 30 September 2007.

The Committee considered the reports as follows:-

- (a) Service Performance – noted that efforts would be made to try to calculate the figure to a decimal point in regard to Indicator 1 – Complaints.
- (b) Service Standards - noted that the schedule of the Administration Group priorities would be submitted to the Service Development Group on 10 December 2007.

8. CENTRAL SERVICES - CHAIRMAN'S REPORTS ON SERVICE PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE STANDARDS

There was submitted the Chairman's reports on service performance and service standards in respect of Central Services providing the Committee with an overall summary of performance for the period 1 July 2007 to 30 September 2007.

The Committee considered the reports as follows:

- (a) Service Performance – noted.
- (b) Service Standards - agreed that the number of employment tribunals relating to equal pay be reported as a separate indicator in future.

9. FINANCE AND ICT SERVICES - CHAIRMAN'S REPORTS ON SERVICE PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE STANDARDS

There was submitted the Chairman's reports on service performance and service standards for Finance and ICT Services providing the Committee with an overall summary of performance for the period 1 July 2007 to 30 September 2007.

The Committee considered the reports as follows:

- (a) Service Performance – noted.
- (b) Service Standards – noted.

10. HOUSING SERVICES - CHAIRMAN'S REPORTS ON SERVICE PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE STANDARDS

There was submitted the Chairman's reports on service performance and service standards for Housing Services providing the Committee with an overall summary of performance for the period 1 July 2007 to 30 September 2007.

The Committee considered the reports as follows:

- (a) Service Performance – noted.
- (b) Service Standards – noted.

11. REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE INTERNAL AUDIT SECTION IN THE PERIOD 1 JULY 2007 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2007

There was submitted and noted a report by the Chief Financial Officer advising the Committee on the work of the Internal Audit section for the period 1 July 2007 to 30 September 2007.

12. PROGRESS AGAINST ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN

There was submitted and noted a report by the Chief Financial Officer advising the Committee on progress made against the annual Audit Plan for the six-month period to 30 September 2007.

13. ANNUAL REPORT BY THE COUNCIL'S EXTERNAL AUDITORS

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer including the External Auditor's Report to Members for the year ended 31 March 2007.

On the invitation of the Chairman, Maggie Bruce, External Audit addressed the Meeting and gave a brief introduction to the report, following which she responded to Members questions.

Thereafter the Committee noted the External Auditor's Report for the year ended 31 March 2007 and agreed the Chief Financial Officer arrange for the provision of training for Members on CIPFA's guidance on Audit Committee Principles for Local Authorities in Scotland.

14. STANDARDS COMMISSION FOR SCOTLAND ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2006/07

There was submitted a report by the Chief Legal Officer inviting the Committee to note the publication of the Annual Report and Accounts 2006/07 for the Standards Commission for Scotland and the Chief Investigating Officer.

Following consideration the Committee noted the publication of the Annual Report and Accounts 2006/07 for the Standards Commission for Scotland and the Chief Investigating Officer, and note, in particular, the summaries of some cases of interest and details of

Hearings as highlighted by the Standards Commission for Scotland in Appendices C and D of the Annual Report.

15. MAINTENANCE OF PRIVATELY OWNED GROUND

There was submitted a report by the Director of Environmental Services informing the Committee of the areas of privately owned ground that is maintained by the Council.

Following consideration the Committee noted the list of sites contained in Appendices 1-8 of the report as being sites in private ownership where the Council undertakes routine grounds maintenance operations free of charge.

It was further agreed that the Head of Estates Services circulate the schedule of sites to all Members and that a report be brought to the Policy Committee with a view to formulating a policy on this issue.

16. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive asking the Committee to scrutinise the Complaints Procedure Monitoring Report for the period 1 April 2006 – 31 March 2007 and note performance against targets.

Following consideration the Committee noted the Complaints Procedure Monitoring Report for the period 1 April 2006 – 31 March 2007 and noted the changes to procedures and the performance against targets.