



Agenda Item 3

Minute

Draft

FALKIRK COUNCIL

Minute of meeting of the Scrutiny Committee (External) held in the Municipal Buildings, Falkirk on Thursday 17 May 2018 at 9.30 a.m.

Councillors: David Balfour
Jim Blackwood
Niall Coleman
David Grant
John McLuckie
Lynn Munro
Depute Provost Ann Ritchie

Officers: Fiona Campbell, Head of Policy, Technology and Improvement
Philp Morgan-Klein, Service Manager, Children's Services, Planning & Resources
Stuart Murray, Trainee Governance Assistant
Brian Pirie, Democratic Services Manager
Suzanne Thomson, Programme Manager, Social Work Adult Services
Andrew Wilson, Policy and Community Planning Manager

Also Attending: Patricia Cassidy, Chief Officer, Falkirk Integration Joint Board

SE1. Appointment of Convener

Council had agreed on 9 May 2018 (ref FC11) that the convenership of the Scrutiny Committee (External) would be held by a member from either the SNP Group or Conservative Group.

Nominations were then sought for the position of convener of the Scrutiny Committee (External).

Councillor Balfour nominated Depute Provost Ritchie.

Decision

The Committee agreed to appoint Depute Provost Ritchie as convener.

SE2. Apologies

An apology was intimated on behalf of Councillor Aitchison.

SE3. Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

SE4. Minute

Decision

The minute of meeting of the Scrutiny Committee (External) held on 8 March 2018 was approved.

SE5. Rolling Action Log

A rolling action log detailing decisions not yet implemented following the previous meeting on 8 March 2018 was provided.

Members discussed the briefing by Police Scotland on 14 May 2018 which had featured a briefing on gender equality within Police Scotland locally and nationally. The session had also included briefings on armed response protocols and public protection. Members commented that the timing and the length of the session had both been unsuitable.

In regard to action 422, Councillor McLuckie confirmed that he had held talks with Police Scotland and he was satisfied that the matter was closed.

In regard to action 423, the clerk undertook to ensure that the road traffic accident statistics which had been requested would be provided.

Decision

The committee noted the rolling action log.

SE6. Falkirk Integration Joint Board: Performance Report 1 April 2017 – 31 January 2018

The committee considered a report by the Chief Officer, Falkirk Health and Social Care Partnership presenting a summary of Falkirk Health and Social Care Partnership's performance for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 January 2018.

The committee had considered a performance report on 14 September 2017 (ref SE6). The update provided covered performance for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 January 2018. It set out the Integration Joint Board's performance reporting arrangement, summarised various service redesign projects and, as an appendix, set out the key performance information for the period.

In response to a question on delayed discharge, Patricia Cassidy explained that across the Forth Valley, the number had been reducing. In February 2018, there had been 38 standard delays, 24 of which were in the Falkirk area. Of these, 13 were delays of 2 weeks or more. Across the Forth Valley area there were 645 occupied bed days attributable to delayed discharge compared to 782 in January 2018. She explained that a discharge to access pilot had begun in December 2016 which aimed to reduce the number of delays caused by lack of consent by either the patient or guardian. Following a question on whether the number of delays in the early part of the year had been caused by the severe weather, Ms Cassidy stated that this had not been a significant factor and that, while the weather had posed significant challenges to running the service, there had not been a drop in performance. Ms Cassidy praised the effort of staff and the lengths they had gone to to keep services running.

Members then asked for further detail on levels of sickness absence within Adult Social Work, which was 8.2% at the end of Q3 in 2017/18. The target was 5.5%. Ms Cassidy summarised a number of contributing factors such as the age profile of staff and working patterns. She explained that a comprehensive review of the Home Care service was underway. This would look at shift working arrangements and staff allocations. The aim was to develop localised services working at the locality level. Currently the service was Falkirk wide. In addition, she hoped to extend joint working arrangements with services in Clackmannanshire and Stirling.

Ms Cassidy explained that the service had rolled out a management information system, CM2000, which would provide detailed management information. This would better enable staff allocation by detailed capacity analysis. It was vital that staff felt valued and would be involved with the process.

Following a statement from members that performance issues could not be attributed to the fact that the integration model was new. Ms Cassidy agreed and gave examples when performance had improved following the creation of the Board. However she stated that it was the case that integration required time to bed in. In response to a question from members on the integration process, Ms Cassidy explained that the NHS functions, for which the IJB had operational responsibility, had yet to be transferred. This was unsatisfactory and had prevented the Board from operating effectively. In this regard, Forth Valley was an outlier. While this was an issue, it also meant that the Board would benefit of being able to learn from the experience of other Boards where the transfer of NHS staff to the Board had been completed. There was a significant amount of work yet to be done in this regard. As an example of the difficulty this caused, Ms Cassidy cited the Community Hospital in Falkirk, where the lack of integration meant that the access pathways could not be reviewed and changed. Members stated their concern at the lack of progress and asked Ms Cassidy to convey these to the Chief Executive of NHS Forth Valley, Cathie Cowan.

In response to a question in regard to the impact of private care home closures on delayed discharge in particular and on services more generally, Ms Cassidy stated that nationally there was concern. In the case of recent closures, Ms Cassidy explained that all patients had been relocated but acknowledged that the relocation process itself can impact on patients' health and wellbeing. Ms Cassidy confirmed that business continuity plans were in place in the event that providers pull out.

Decision

The committee approved the report and acknowledged progress by the organisation in meeting their priorities.

SE7. Following the Public Pound – CVS Falkirk and District

The committee considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services presenting information under the Following the Public Pound (FPP) arrangements for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 for CVS Falkirk and District which supports the Council's priorities with regard to community development.

Fiona Campbell provided an overview of the FPP reporting arrangements, CVS's important role in supporting community development and the options available for the committee. The committee then heard from Andrew Wilson who gave an overview of the Annual Reporting Statement which was attached as appendix 1 to the report.

Members discussed the reduced funding from Falkirk Council and the impact on service delivery. Andrew Wilson gave an overview of the funding received by CVS from Falkirk Council, and other bodies, and the expectations of Falkirk Council which were set out in a Service Level Agreement. The agreed outcomes were achievable and realistic in the context of the funding available. In response to a question on CVS' decision to stop an Annual Awards ceremony due to the cost and the impact of this on volunteers' morale, Mr Wilson advised that CVS recognised volunteers in other ways, for example by awarding certificates.

Members questioned the remit of the CVS and its role assisting local development, encouraging community participation and acting as the Third Sector Interface, and how it was continuing to deliver the service in light of financial pressures. Members highlighted the large number of staff based at the Forum compared to the number of staff employed by the Council to support volunteers. Andrew Wilson confirmed that the team which was based at the Forum supported volunteers and provided support to full employment in addition to supporting 3rd sector organisations, some of which were small in terms of capacity. As an organisation, CVS had a "critical mass" in terms of funding and ability to support, which was invaluable to smaller organisations. CVS was reshaping its offer in light of financial pressures and the changing landscape. It was looking to digitalise its offer for example.

Members sought information on a review of volunteer centres by the Scottish Government. Falkirk was unique in that the service was provided by one organisation covering the Council area. In other areas the services were more local. This had disadvantaged CVS Falkirk and District which acts not only as a volunteer centre but was also a 3rd sector interface. Its funding had been rolled into one package by the Scottish Government whereas in other areas the separation of service between organisations had been more financially beneficial. In response to a question, Fiona Campbell stated that the Scottish Government financial package, which would be for the next 5 or 6 years would not be backdated to account for any disadvantage to CVS Falkirk and District over previous years.

Decision

The committee approved the report and acknowledged progress by CVS Falkirk and District in meeting Council priorities.