

**FALKIRK COUNCIL**

**MINUTE of MEETING of the PERFORMANCE PANEL held in the MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, FALKIRK on THURSDAY 26 MAY 2016 at 9.30 AM.**

**CORE MEMBERS:** Stephen Bird  
Cecil Meiklejohn (Convener)  
Rosie Murray  
Baillie Joan Paterson  
Depute Provost John Patrick

**MEMBERS** Jim Blackwood  
**ATTENDING:** Tom Coleman  
Gordon Hughes  
Brian McCabe  
Alan Nimmo  
Provost Pat Reid

**OFFICERS:** Alex Finlay, Business Development Manager  
Jack Frawley, Committee Services Officer  
Rhona Geisler, Director of Development Services  
Rose Mary Glackin, Chief Governance Officer  
Kathy McCarroll, Head of Social Work  
Robert Naylor, Director of Children's Services  
Catherine Quinn, Curriculum Support Manager  
Stuart Ritchie, Director of Corporate and Housing Services

**PP3. MINUTE**

**Decision**

**The minute of the meeting of the Performance Panel held on 24 March 2016 was approved.**

Provost Reid entered the meeting during consideration of the previous item.  
Baillie Paterson and Councillor Hughes entered the meeting during consideration of the following item.

**PP4. SELF ASSESSMENTS AND SERVICE REVIEWS/IMPROVEMENT GROUPS – PROGRAMME FOR 2016/19**

The Performance Panel considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services which presented a programme of self-assessments and service reviews for 2016 – 2019. A draft programme had been submitted to the meeting of the Performance Panel held on 24 March 2016 (ref PP15). Stuart Ritchie provided an overview of the report.

The panel asked about the use of the Public Sector Improvement Framework (PSIF) as the default performance management tool for Services and if other tools were used. Stuart Ritchie stated that PSIF was the default tool but was not used exclusively. He commented that Services who were subject to external inspection regimes, carried out self-assessments which were not always through PSIF and that in such cases the Service would not be asked to duplicate that work in PSIF. Robert Naylor stated in Children's Services schools carried out self evaluation using How Good Is Our School (4<sup>th</sup> edition), an Education Scotland resource. However, the Service used PSIF in relation to catering and cleaning services.

In relation to public sector reform and the development of the Falkirk Integration Joint Board (IJB), the panel sought clarification on where performance information would be reported. Rose Mary Glackin advised that the IJB would report performance information to the Scrutiny Committee (External) in line with the Council's Standing Orders.

Members commented that it would be helpful if in future reports on Service Reviews that information on when the review had been completed and when it would be reported were separated.

The panel asked, in relation to the Winter Service Plan, about the provision of salt bins. Rhona Geisler stated that there was a criterion in place to assess the provision and siting of salt bins. She advised that she would circulate this to members after the meeting.

### **Decision**

**The Performance Panel noted that the progress and conclusions from self assessments will be reported to the Performance Panel as part of the regular Service performance reporting statements.**

## **PP5. SERVICE PERFORMANCE PLANS 2016 – 2019**

The Performance Panel considered a report by the Chief Executive which provided Service Performance Plans for each of the Council's three Services for the period 2016 – 2019. The plans set out what each Service planned to achieve and in order to ensure that progress was made against the actions in each plan, an update of progress would be included in the performance statements submitted to the Performance Panel. Stuart Ritchie provided an overview of the report.

Councillor Nimmo entered the meeting during consideration of the following item.

**(i) Children's Services – Service Performance Plan 2016 – 2019**

The panel considered the Service Performance Plan for Children's Services for 2016 - 2019. Robert Naylor provided an overview of the performance plan.

Members sought further information on the regime of Service scrutiny and the reporting of this information to members. Robert Naylor stated that it had been previous practice to present all Education Scotland inspection reports to committee but that it was now practice that each inspection report was included in the Information Bulletin. As well as this, the ward Councillors for the school were provided with a copy of the inspection report. There would be a summary report of all inspection outcomes to the Education Executive at the end of the academic session. Where any inspection report identified an area as 'weak' or 'unsatisfactory' this report would be presented to the Scrutiny Committee.

The panel asked for an update on the implementation of Self Directed Support (SDS). Kathy McCarroll stated that the Service had undertaken a year long pilot with seven local families who were identified as being appropriate to utilise SDS. All of the families involved had produced individual solutions to work for them which would allow services to be provided differently without additional cost. The Service was continuing work with frontline staff to promote the opportunities of SDS with service users.

Members asked what work the Service had undertaken in relation to the school estate, particularly in relation to extended early years provision. Robert Naylor stated that over a period of five years early learning and childcare provision was to be expanded to 1140 hours. Detail of how this would be implemented was not yet available from the Scottish Government. He commented that it was likely the increase would be phased in, targeted to the least advantaged first. The Service had analysed the capacity in schools and standalone nurseries. It was thought that an increase in both accommodation and workforce would be required to implement the 1140 hours. This was an area of significant challenge nationally. He advised that the terms and conditions offered by the Council compared favourably for early years officers to those available in the independent sector. However, this could lead to a drain on the pool of staff available to the independent sector rather than an overall increase. In relation to the increase of accommodation, he stated that some buildings could be adapted and at others modular units could be used. However, there were some sites where modular units could not be accommodated and this presented a challenge to the Service.

The work to develop the new Additional Support Needs Secondary School was commented on and the panel asked for information on the review of additional support needs provision. Robert Naylor stated that the Policy Development Panel to Review Inclusion and Additional Support Needs had had a meeting to agree the scope of its work. The Service had undertaken preparatory background work to prepare for this panel and a report was being prepared for the next meeting of the panel.

The panel asked for an update on the action 'Embed the Named Person Service'. Kathy McCarroll stated that a lot of preparatory work had been carried out to ensure that the named person service could be embraced from August 2016. Schools and social work received vulnerable persons database reports from Police Scotland. In future these would be sent directly to the named person. Education staff had been involved in piloting the arrangements in the summer of 2015. Head Teachers had received training on the implementation of the named person service. She highlighted that the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 was complex and that members would receive an update report after the summer recess.

Members asked about advocacy as part of children's rights. Kathy McCarroll advised that the Council had a contract with Who Cares? Scotland and Quarriers, who had been involved in developing the job specification for the Children Rights Officer.

The panel sought an update on the replacement of the Social Work Information System (SWIS) and asked if work had been undertaken to ensure that the replacement system interfaced with that used by NHS Forth Valley. Robert Naylor stated that a report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Executive following work by the Business Transformation Board to appraise the alternative procurement options available. There were a number of commercial products available which were being considered. The health service was not participating in the tendering process and to have waited for them would have delayed procurement of a new product for the Council. He advised that modern systems had portals which facilitated interface between different products. The Service was focussed on ensuring that a product was procured which met the needs of social work and could integrate with others.

In relation to staff training, members asked if external providers were used in addition to the training provided by the Service. Robert Naylor stated that who provided training was dependent upon the topic. The Scottish Government had delivered training in relation to the named person service. The Service had worked with the Scottish College for Educational Leadership to develop a tailored scheme for Falkirk. The Service also sought to attract the highest quality of probationary teachers. Falkirk Council's probationer support was nationally recognised as being very strong. Further, all teachers took part in continuous professional development which was delivered by both the Service and external providers including a link with Glasgow University on a leadership qualification.

Members asked for further information on the workload demands faced by staff within the Service. Robert Naylor stated that the Service would ensure that staff concentrated on work which made the most difference and impact. In order to do this school leadership teams would draw on the skills and expertise which existed within their staff teams. It was important to ensure that staff were highly skilled in managing and prioritising their workload.

The panel asked about the attainment gap, in particular with regard to areas of deprivation. Robert Naylor stated that it was important to have early identification of attainment differences as where intervention took place at age 12 the costs could be fifteen times as much as if the intervention was carried out when the child was 3 years old. He commented that Community Learning & Development did good work in improving adult literacy, however if schools were more successful then there would be less need for this work later in a person's life. He commented that if the Council wished to increase early intervention work then it followed that the biggest resource and most skilled practitioners should be focussed there. He highlighted that early years officers are paid less than teachers and require fewer qualifications but have more intensive interaction with children at this early stage.

The panel discussed mental health services for young people. Robert Naylor stated that the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) was available to young people in Falkirk. The resource for this sat with NHS Forth Valley and a clinical diagnosis was required to access the service. This was a particularly high bar which a lot of people who would benefit from the service did not meet. Further work and debate was required regarding this. The Community Planning Partnership was also working on this area. Kathy McCarroll advised that CAMHS and Barnardo's had held a meeting together recently. From this Barnardo's had decided to make a bid to the Scottish Government for funding for a tier two service for children and young people with mental health issues. This would help those who did not meet the clinical diagnosis criteria for CAMHS access. Further, NHS Forth Valley had increased the resources available to CAMHS and she commented that this should have a positive impact on waiting lists for the service.

Members sought information on additional Scottish Government funding available to schools as part of the Scottish Attainment Challenge. Robert Naylor stated that the Service had not received any formal communications regarding the use of this funding but that there would be discussions between the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland, Scottish Government and COSLA before the end of the academic year where detail was expected. One significant point to consider was what mechanism would be used to give the funding to schools as there was no means by which the funding could be allocated directly to individual schools. Practice was that funding was received by the Local Authority and then dispersed.

In response to a question regarding whether the Carrongrange School was progressing to schedule, Robert Naylor advised that the project was on schedule.

A question was asked in relation to the growing need for school places in Larbert. Robert Naylor stated that additional capacity would be provided on the top floor of Carrongrange School which, based on planning predictions, would be sufficient through to the academic session 2019/20. The Service would keep this under review considering other assets available or potentially re-zoning if necessary. Following a question on the interaction of the pupils at Larbert and Carrongrange, Robert Naylor advised that the two communities

had experience of working together and that discussion was ongoing around the use of communal areas between the EIS, Head Teachers and parent councils.

The panel asked about the shift in focus from punishment to a restorative justice approach in schools. Robert Naylor stated that there had been a long term focussed drive to move away from punishment. The Service's exclusion policies were used to provide time to make arrangements to address whatever difficulties had resulted in the exclusion incident. Exclusions were typically for shorter periods now than they had been previously.

## **Decision**

**The Performance Panel noted the Service Plan.**

### **(ii) Development Services – Service Performance Plan 2016 – 2019**

The panel considered the Service Performance Plan for Development Services for 2016 - 2019. Rhona Geisler provided an overview of the performance plan.

The panel asked for information on savings made by the Service in relation to the use of overtime. Rhona Geisler advised that the Service had worked to manage overtime bills more effectively and critically examined all payments made. Better planning of workloads reduced the need to utilise overtime and allowed savings to be made. In response to a follow up question on public reporting, she stated that public reporting of faults was very useful. This information was then used to batch repairs in a locality and deploy resources in an effective way.

Members requested a structure chart for the Service which detailed who performed which duties. This should include names of the post holders at a senior level.

The panel asked about the situation regarding employment locally. Rhona Geisler stated that the situation in Falkirk reflected national trends. There were fewer jobs and fewer high value ones. It was important to attract high value jobs to the area. To this end the Service continued to focus on the links between schools, colleges and employers as well as implementing the Council's Economic Strategy. Falkirk had a strong base from which to build with high value manufacturing operating locally.

A question was asked in relation to Supplementary Guidance and its relationship to the Local Delivery Plan (LDP). Rhona Geisler advised that there was a legal requirement to have Supplementary Guidance which provided more detail around general policies in the LDP. This allowed the Service to be more agile in dealing with and responding to changing circumstances.

Members sought further information in relation to the application for funding the elevated pedestrian and cycle structure above the Westfield roundabout. Rhona Geisler stated that the value of the application was c. £3m and that should any match funding be required it would be provided through the tax incremental funding scheme (TIF).

There was then discussion on the Denny town centre regeneration works. Rhona Geisler stated that Phase One was on schedule to be completed as detailed in the report and that there would be a report to the next Executive providing information on the marketing of Phase Two. In response to a question on regeneration of Grangemouth and Bo'ness town centres, she stated that there was a need to carry out a review in this regard. Work had been done to advance plans for Bo'ness in 2008 and a number of land ownership issues had been identified. The Service was keen to integrate TIF aspirations with economic growth. She highlighted the work which had been carried out on the Grangemouth energy project which would result in cheaper heating and electricity. Updates on this would be presented to the Executive regularly.

The panel asked about the number of sites which were subject to the Control of Major Accident Hazards regulations and if this was higher than in other areas. Rhona Geisler stated that Falkirk had the highest number of top tier COHMA sites in Scotland. On a UK basis Falkirk had been recognised as dealing with this area well and the Director of Development Services had spoken at a national event on the work carried out in Falkirk.

Members sought information on civil contingencies. Rhona Geisler stated that there were three resilience partnerships which reported to the national board. They examined how to best care for people in an emergency situation. Information was held on people who were most vulnerable during a period of emergency so that the support they required could be targeted to them quickly. Data sets from the NHS and Council had been used to develop the persons at risk database. Falkirk had piloted the relevant data sharing agreements and these would make a difference to vulnerable people during situations such as power outage or flooding. She highlighted that there had been a seminar at Callendar House with attendees from across the country to learn from the work carried out locally.

The panel asked about traffic management and parking restrictions enforcement. Rhona Geisler stated that uniformed Police Scotland officers would continue to carry out these duties until a view was taken on the potential decriminalisation of parking, which was expected in the coming months. Transport Scotland would give their view on the application and then it would be presented to Ministers.

A question was asked about the commencement of marketing and promotion of the Falkirk Gateway/Stadium Phase One sites. Rhona Geisler stated that there had been a move away from reliance on retail in the plans. There had been more of a focus on retail units before 2008. The focus was now on commercial activity and some housing. The area was to be a zero carbon

quarter in terms of emissions. There was also the intention to develop a hotel on the site. This would result in an improved leisure and tourism offering including maximising the attraction of the Helix site.

## **Decision**

### **The Performance Panel noted the Service plan.**

Provost Reid, Baillie Paterson, Councillors Blackwood, Coleman and Nimmo left the meeting during consideration of the previous item.

Depute Provost Patrick left the meeting during consideration of the following item.

### **(iii) Corporate and Housing Services – Service Performance Plan 2016 – 2019**

The panel considered the Service Performance Plan for Corporate and Housing Services for 2016 - 2019. Stuart Ritchie provided an overview of the performance plan.

The panel discussed the older persons housing plan, commenting that anecdotally people with medical priorities were waiting a long time for housing, it was asked if there was enough adapted housing to meet the area's needs. Stuart Ritchie stated that the Service was in the process of working with Social Work Adult Services and Children's Services to establish the level of demand. They would then plan how to best meet that demand going forward through the development of a delivery plan. In response to a question on the timescale for this work, Stuart Ritchie stated that he had met with the Director of Children's Services and anticipated that the work would be completed after the summer recess but before the Christmas break.

Members sought further information on the action to 'Develop a market facilitation plan for the Health & Social Care Integration Joint Board'. Stuart Ritchie advised that the work was being taken forward by David McGhee, Head of Procurement & Housing Property in conjunction with Social Work Adult Services. The arrangements would be similar to those in place for home care. Members requested that further information was provided on this area after the meeting.

The panel then asked about the implications for the Service relating to the introduction of universal credit. Stuart Ritchie stated that in relation to rent arrears and collection Finance and Housing were working to develop the right model utilising the principles of 'What Does Good Look Like' informed by information gathered by Jump Research which had been commissioned by the Council. It was found that people wanted a single Local Authority point of contact to deal with. The Service had visited other Councils to examine best practice and evaluate Falkirk's approach against that. He advised that different interactions and solutions were required for different people, for



example, tenants who had been pushed into arrears following the reforms would be best helped by different actions than those who already had significant arrears which were being added to.

Following the point made relating to a single point of contact, members asked if that would mean one officer was the contact for everything including repairs. Stuart Ritchie confirmed that this was the intention.

The panel commented on training for Councillors and requested that as part of the training for the new Council in 2017 that an organisation chart, with named individuals, was provided and put on the intranet. Stuart Ritchie stated that the Service was already developing work toward what new Councillors would need and commented that hearing about the experiences of current Councillors would be valuable.

Members asked for an update on the pilot of having Building Maintenance staff make appointments before attending properties. Stuart Ritchie advised that this information would be included in the Business Transformation Board report to the Executive. The Service had expanded the pilot area into central Falkirk in the first quarter of 2016. However, further roll out of the scheme would be gradual in order to allow the process to bed in. He commented further that customer satisfaction had increased alongside increased operational efficiency. The Service was more agile than it had been and could more easily redirect resources as they were required. It was stated that the number of no access calls had not decreased and that other Councils were reporting the same. The positive of the pilot however, was that it allowed staff to move on to the next job more quickly. Further the Service was looking at options relating to allowing lone workers to keep their vehicles at home. It was planned to pilot this in Bo'ness and Grangemouth initially and then look at rolling out further. In relation to customer feedback improvements had been made through the introduction of mobile devices as information is captured timeously at source. This gathered more information more quickly than the previous method of leaving comment cards to be posted back to the Service.

The panel asked for further information in relation to information governance. Stuart Ritchie stated that a report would be submitted to the Executive in the near future on this area. The Chief Executive had given an undertaking to the Scottish Information Commissioner regarding the Council's controls on how data is dealt with. This undertaking had been made after some potential breaches. Training for staff had been rolled out and the Service had ensured that there were appropriate systems and controls in place. Rose Mary Glackin advised that information governance was a significant issue in the public eye and that there had been six figure sanctions imposed on other public authorities following breaches. The Information Commissioner could audit organisations to evaluate what data is held, how it is stored and how it is protected. The Information Commissioner recognised that things can go wrong in large organisations at an individual level so sought to ensure that appropriate systems and procedures were in place. The Council aimed to ensure that these processes were evidenced including the frequent training of staff. Rose Mary Glackin highlighted that a new post of Information

Governance Manager had been created to lead and drive the work in this area. She advised that a training session for Councillors would be arranged in the future. She stated that the Service would work with Councillors on their data protection responsibilities relating to their constituents.

In response to a question on the development of a policy framework for public processions, Rose Mary Glackin stated that this work was being taken forward through the Policy Development Panel (PDP) on civic licensing activities. The outcomes would be reported to a future meeting of the Executive. There had been a slight delay in developing the parades policy as Police Scotland had changed their approach in this area and the Service sought to establish their position in writing. Following a question on the timing of the report to the Executive and who chaired the PDP, Rose Mary Glackin stated that the report would be submitted to the August meeting of the Executive and that Councillor Blackwood chaired the PDP.

A question was then asked on the review of bylaws prohibiting drinking in public places. Rose Mary Glackin stated that this work was being carried out and that information was being sought from Police Scotland. A focussed approach would be taken to improving the situation rather than having a blanket approach to all.

The panel sought an update on the corporate review of CCTV and alarm services. Stuart Ritchie stated that a report would be submitted to the Executive on the tender which sought to continue CCTV provision for 12 months. There remained uncertainty of funding from Police Scotland. The alarm arrangements would be reviewed in the near future as there were currently different approaches across the Council. In some cases the systems were monitored by the providers and some by the contact centre. The Service sought to introduce a cohesive and joined up approach.

Members asked about the action to 'Develop the approach to implement renewable technologies for our Council Housing stock'. Stuart Ritchie advised that there had been a number of discussions with other Councils who had implemented renewable technologies. It was felt that now was not the right time to take work forward on solar panels due to tariff changes. The Service had looked at the broader picture of the weather envelope of the house and it was highlighted that renewable technologies included more than just solar panels. Discussions were ongoing in this area.

The panel asked about the implementation of the third edition of the SJC job evaluation scheme. Stuart Ritchie stated that the most recent report to Council on equal pay had flagged this up and that agreement had been reached with the trade unions to implement the third edition. Trade union representatives had been identified and trained in order to participate in the next stage of the review group. A progress report would be included in the next report on equal pay to Council. The Director offered to update members directly if they desired it.

## **Decision**

**The Performance Panel noted the Service plan.**