



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE

**TUESDAY 24 NOVEMBER 2015
COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HOUSE, HADDINGTON**

Committee Members Present:

Councillor D Berry (Convener)
Councillor J Gillies
Councillor J Goodfellow
Councillor P MacKenzie
Councillor F McAllister
Councillor J Williamson

Other Councillors Present:

Councillor J McMillan (Item 2)

Council Officials Present:

Mrs A Leitch, Chief Executive
Ms M Patterson Depute Chief Executive (Partnerships and Community Services)
Mr T Shearer, Head of Communities and Partnerships
Mr R Montgomery, Head of Infrastructure
Mr D Proudfoot, Head of Development
Mr P Vestri, Service Manager - Corporate Policy and Improvement
Ms E Wilson, Service Manager - Economic Development and Strategic Investment
Mr E John, Service Manager - Sport, Countryside and Leisure
Ms S Smith, Team Manager, Economic Development
Mr R Baty, Team Manager, Business Development
Mr C Forbes, Team Manager, East Lothian Works
Mr P Forsyth, Asset and Regulatory Manager (Road Services)
Mr A Strickland, Policy Officer

Clerk:

Ms A Smith

Apologies:

Councillor J Caldwell

Declarations of Interest:

Councillor Goodfellow declared an interest in the enjoyleisure item as one of the Council's representatives on the Board of Enjoy East Lothian Ltd. He added that according to the specific exclusions within the Councillors' Code of Conduct he was permitted to remain in the Chamber and participate in the debate on this item.

Prior to commencement of business the Convener moved that the Landlord Performance report be continued to the next meeting, for appropriate revision. Councillor McAllister seconded this. This item was withdrawn.

1. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

The minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Performance Review Committee of 29 September 2015 were approved. There were no matters arising.

2. EAST LOTHIAN COMMUNITY PLANNING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2012-2022

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive (Partnerships and Community Services) providing an update of the implementation and impact of the East Lothian Economic Development Strategy 2012-2022.

Esther Wilson, Service Manager for Economic Development and Strategic Investment, presented the report. She outlined the strategic context, drawing attention to the Strategy's 2 goals and 5 objectives. A review was planned next year, which would lead to a new composite action plan for the Strategy. She referred to the performance indicators, giving details of benchmarking data and analysis of performance and activity. She took Members through each of the 5 strategic objectives, highlighting performance, key activities and future relevant activities. Ms Wilson stated that positive progress was being made in areas where activity had been targeted. The process of reviewing the Strategy would allow consideration of how resources should be prioritised going forward to ensure progress made was maintained and to target areas not prioritised to date.

Councillor Goodfellow, referring to East Lothian Works programme for developing the young workforce, asked if forward planning was being restricted by grants being allocated on a yearly basis. Ms Wilson advised that work was ongoing to secure European funding which would secure delivery of the programme in the medium term, however it was a difficult process and it had been identified as an area of risk. Colin Forbes, Team Manager, East Lothian Works, provided further information about the funding structure. He assured Members that progress on the programme was not being hindered and that an allocation of funding had been made by the Scottish Government this financial year to support an Employer Recruitment Initiative. Ms Wilson responded to further questions about the level of risk. She advised that the speed with which European funding was being released by the Scottish Government had been escalated and was now being taken forward by local authority Chief Executives. She added that there were issues between the European and Scottish Governments regarding audit compliance.

Councillor MacKenzie queried progress in the food and drink sector, putting forward several suggestions for further activity. Ms Wilson stated that excellent progress had been made in this sector; East Lothian was held up as an exemplar. She added that through the Business Gateway, many businesses had received start up assistance in this sector. Richard Baty, Team Manager, Business Development, provided further details of activity around seafood; he also gave examples of progress in other food and drink companies. Responding to further points raised by the Convener in relation to a seafood strategy, Ms Wilson indicated that other possible opportunities could be looked at, along with further discussion, to inform the Strategy review.

Officers responded to several other questions from Members in relation to tourist bed numbers, the young workforce, apprenticeships, supporting young people in setting up a business and business office space provision at Brewery Park.

Councillor McAllister queried progress on the Cockenzie site. Douglas Proudfoot, Head of Development, outlined some of the steps taken to date in relation to proposals for masterplanning for the site. He reported that the Council was working collaboratively with the Scottish Government and other stakeholders to maximise opportunities. A cross party working group would be meeting in early December to establish governance arrangements for the masterplanning exercise.

Responding to the Convener, regarding performance and evidence of progress, Ms Wilson advised, that as set out in the report, some aspects of the monitoring and evaluation framework were not robust enough; there were areas where fuller information was required to enable proper analysis. Mr Proudfoot stated that context was key; there were significant variables across different sectors. He referred to the opportunity to review the Strategy; to give consideration to the performance management framework, adding that indications from the Committee about where the framework could be improved would be welcomed. The Convener suggested meeting with key officers and Councillor MacMillan in this regard.

Councillor MacKenzie welcomed the 179 new jobs created for 16-24 year olds. In respect of looked after children, he remarked that the figures gave a sense of what could be done in relation to Corporate Parenting. Comparing this Council's improvements with Midlothian Council, he noted that a hidden factor, undoubtedly a boost for Midlothian, was the presence of Edinburgh College in Dalkeith. He welcomed development of the Future Technologies Centre in Musselburgh, which would be operational next year. There was a great deal to celebrate.

Councillor Goodfellow welcomed the report. He did have concern about risks in relation to employment pathways. It was important that local authority Chief Executives applied pressure to the Scottish Government to ensure funding was not on a year by year basis. He welcomed the review of tourism bed numbers as mentioned earlier. He highlighted successful initiatives by entrepreneurs within his North Berwick ward. The future for the county looked interesting, taking into account the possibilities for Cockenzie and the City Region Deal.

Councillor McAllister welcomed Mr Proudfoot's comments in relation to the Cockenzie site. He put forward several suggestions for the use of this site, stating that the Council should be bold and ambitious. He also made reference to the artisan food market and the potential for Council involvement.

Councillor McMillan, Cabinet Spokesperson for Economic Development and Tourism, praised the work carried out by this small team of officers. The team had a very constructive relationship with local businesses and provided significant support. He acknowledged the constant need to improve, stating that considerable work was being done in this regard. The goal was for East Lothian to be recognised as Scotland's leading coastal, leisure and food and drink destination. A huge amount of excellent work had been done to promote East Lothian.

The Convener added his praise; this was a very capable team. There were some areas requiring further action, such as increasing the jobs growth rate and increasing positive school leaver destinations. He would like to see more outcome orientated performance, also for achievements to be highlighted. He looked forward to the report next year.

Decision

The Committee agreed to note the contents of this report, specifically, that a review of the Strategy would be undertaken in 2016.

3. ROADS ASSET MANAGEMENT – ANNUAL STATUS AND OPTIONS

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive (Partnerships and Community Services) summarising the Council's road assets at 1 April 2015 and detailing:

- the status of the asset, in its current condition, and performance
- the value of the assets
- the service that the asset and current budgets were able to provide
- the options available for the future

Peter Forsyth, Asset and Regulatory Manager within Road Services, presented the report. He informed Members that the report concerned 4 different asset groups: carriageways; footways; street lighting; and traffic management systems - full status and option reports for each group were attached as appendices. He took Members through each asset group report in detail, drawing attention to the key points, trend information, options summary and recommendations.

Mr Forsyth responded to questions from Councillor MacKenzie in relation to pothole repairs, advising that the jet patcher had been effective over a number of years however it was less effective during the winter months. The intention now was to move to a greater reliance to permanent repairs. In relation to the carriageway report, option C3, specifically whether the 4% allocated to the strengthening budget was sufficient, Mr Forsyth advised that between 2012/14 there had been an increase in reconstruction investment.

In response to questions from the Convener, Mr Forsyth clarified matters regarding carriageway condition and different classes of roads. Responding to further questions, Ray Montgomery, Head of Infrastructure, outlined the history of, and process for, road network maintenance. He stressed that it was a reflection of the road network at any given time; it was always a judgement of the work required, taking into account the budget position. He added that as a result of investment over a number of years the structural condition of the road network was better than it had been and the intention now was to move to preventative work.

Mr Forsyth responded to other questions from several Members regarding the effect of different types of vehicles on the county's roads, street lighting columns, specifically the process for repairing and reporting faulty lights, strategy for refreshing road warning linings and recovery of costs in relation to maintenance of roads leading into new developments due to damage caused by construction vehicles.

Councillor McAllister remarked that having separate cycle paths away from main carriageways may encourage more people to cycle.

Councillor MacKenzie expressed concern at the number of unlit kerbed keep left signs; this was a safety issue. He felt that the new LED lighting was very satisfactory.

The Convener made some general comments about the report content and format. Mr Forsyth indicated that comments would be taken on board. Regarding the

recommended options, specified within each of the asset group reports, the Convener stated it would not be competent for this Committee to approve these.

The Convener added that, in terms of the report recommendation, the words *and operational requirements* should be removed.

Decision

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

4. COUNCIL ARRANGEMENTS WITH ENJOYLEISURE ALEO

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive (Partnerships and Community Services) updating Members on the Council's governance arrangements with its ALEO enjoyleisure and highlighting the areas of work that enjoyleisure contributed to wider Council objectives.

Eamon John, Service Manager for Sport, Countryside and Leisure, presented the report. He drew attention to the key messages of the Accounts Commission's requirements regarding ALEOs and KPMG's role as the Council's auditor. He highlighted the 5 key conclusions from the KPMG report. He outlined the 2 routes of governance within the existing enjoyleisure structure. He provided several examples evidencing that enjoyleisure was aligned with, and contributed to, the Council's objectives. He drew Members' attention to the appendix which provided specific performance analysis information. Mr John gave details of future plans, stating that enjoyleisure would continue working with the Council to deliver positive outcomes.

Responding to questions from Councillor MacKenzie, Mr John replied that enjoyleisure's performance was a major focus but it was a balance between income generation and providing a service. He added that there had been a strong focus on the membership scheme, resulting in a significant increase in membership numbers.

Mr John responded to questions from the Convener. Regarding Access to Leisure Scheme admissions, this accounted for around 10%; more work promoting this scheme was required. In the context of balancing the social aspects and running a business and guidance from the Board Directors, Mr John advised that the aim had been to create flexibility and growth but also to have a social anchor, which was why there were still some activities, such as free swims for children during the summer holidays, in place. Regarding the potential for competing with private gyms, Mr John advised that Audit Scotland would probably have concerns if enjoyleisure tried to operate more as a private gym as the focus on the social aspect was very important. He reiterated that year on year, for the last 6 years, membership had grown; the direct debit income had made an impact. He stated that the membership fee could probably increase but it would be for the enjoyleisure Board to determine.

Councillor MacKenzie remarked that the governance of this ALEO was secure and it did contribute to the Council's objectives. He was pleased to note the numbers of people taking part in sporting activities; this contributed to the stability and mental health wellbeing of East Lothian's communities.

Councillor McAllister made reference to the Access to Leisure Scheme, stating this was of huge benefit to those concerned. He agreed with his colleague's comments about the benefits of physical activity in relation to mental health wellbeing.

Councillor Goodfellow also felt that the Accounts Commission's remit to KPMG regarding ALEOs was being met. This ALEO had a strong partnership with the Council and was moving forward to benefit all of the East Lothian population.

The Convener welcomed the report and endorsed earlier comments. Enjoyleisure was a good example of how an organisation tied to the Council, but not part of the Council, could provide a good, customer focused service.

Decision

The Committee agreed to note the report.

5. PERFORMANCE REPORT, Q2 2015-16

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive (Partnerships and Community Services) regarding the performance of Council services during Q2 (July to September) 2015/16.

Andrew Strickland, Policy Officer, presented the report. He made reference to the performance briefing for Members held on 3 November, advising that responses to questions raised at that briefing had been included in the report. He took Members through the report, providing further information in relation to all of those performance indicators queried. The quarterly and monthly KPIs were detailed in the appendix.

Councillor MacKenzie expressed concern regarding the homelessness indicator, specifically the average number of days to re-house. Tom Shearer, Head of Communities and Partnerships, referred to a report brought to Cabinet last month regarding adjusting the allocations targets for council houses, which would assist in trying to address homeless provision. He added that a further report would be brought to Cabinet in due course.

The Convener thanked Mr Strickland for this very helpful report.

Decision

The Committee agreed to use the information provided in the report to consider whether any aspect of the Council's performance was in need of improvement or further investigation.

6. ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE 2015/16

An updated Annual Work Programme detailed the reports already scheduled for session 2015/16. It was noted that the Landlord Performance Report would be brought to the January meeting.

Additional reports requested:

- Cycle Paths/Core Paths (May 2016 meeting)

Signed

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Councillor David Berry
Convener of the Policy and Performance Review Committee