



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
POLICY AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE**

**WEDNESDAY 12 JUNE 2019
COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HOUSE, HADDINGTON**

Committee Members Present:

Councillor L Bruce (Convener)
Councillor J Findlay
Councillor N Gilbert
Councillor J Henderson
Councillor G Mackett

Other Councillors Present:

Councillor J Goodfellow
Councillor C Hoy

Council Officials Present:

Mrs A Leitch, Chief Executive
Ms M Patterson Depute Chief Executive (Partnerships and Community Services)
Mr T Reid, Head of Infrastructure
Mr D Proudfoot, Head of Development
Ms S Saunders, Head of Communities and Partnerships
Ms F Robertson, Head of Education
Mr P Vestri, Service Manager – Corporate Policy and Improvement
Mr B Davies, Group Service Manager – Planning and Performance
Mr J Coutts, Service Manager – Community Housing and Homelessness
Ms K MacNeill, Service Manager – People and Governance
Ms E Morrison, Service Manager – Customer Services
Mr R McGill, Contact Centre Manager
Ms S Farrow, Team Leader – Customer Feedback and FOI
Mr G Stewart, Policy Officer

Clerk:

Ms A Smith

Apologies:

Councillor C McGinn
Councillor P McLennan
Councillor T Trotter

Declarations of Interest:

None

1. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL – PPRC, 27 FEBRUARY 2019

The minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Performance Review Committee of 27 February 2019 were approved subject to the following change (item 8, page 8, last paragraph - *Mr Reid stated that an allocation was within the capital plan for 19/20 for Longniddry Bents 1,2 and 3. This investment could be supplemented to deliver new facilities if the Authority was successful with an application to the Rural Tourism Grant application which would be determined at the end of March*).

2. 2018/19 Q4 AND 2018/19 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive (Partnerships and Community Services) providing the Committee with information regarding the performance of Council services during Q4 2018/19 (January to March) and for the full financial year of 2018/19.

Paolo Vestri, Service Manager – Corporate Policy and Improvement, presented the report. He informed Members of a correction in section 3.3, second bullet point; the sentence beginning *Homelessness assessments* should be deleted. Mr Vestri reported that a new performance system, Inphase, was now used, which was still bedding in. The appendices did not include RAG status but the report to the next meeting would have this and also trend data. A briefing for Members on the new system and to review key performance indicators would take place in September. Work was being carried out to ensure that the right indicators were being reported on. The quarterly Key Performance Indicators were contained in Appendix 1; Appendix 2 contained the Annual Performance Indicators report and Appendix 3 the Council Plan Top 50 Scorecard.

Officers responded to questions. Regarding reporting of street lighting repairs, Councillor Henderson asked if this fell within the Council's remit or that of Scottish Power. Tom Reid, Head of Infrastructure, stated that the network supply was not part of the report. Councillor Henderson asked if how significant this was could be followed up, to ensure clarity that particular aspects were outwith the Council's control.

Councillor Findlay, in relation to the percentage of the population claiming out of work allowance, asked if this took into account more elderly people and in addition the county's increasing population. Mr Vestri clarified that this indicator related to people aged between 16 to 64 years of age. He did not have the actual numbers but would provide this. He clarified that the figure did take into account people moving into the county as it used the latest population estimates from the National Records Office.

Councillor Findlay also raised questions about the definition and access to superfast broadband, citing particular examples in Gullane. Mr Vestri clarified that the data came from a national survey and undertook to provide further information. Douglas Proudfoot, Head of Development, added that there were a number of variables, including customers accessing/taking up the offer of superfast broadband; from dialogue with BT, there was still work to be done on customer communication and roll out.

Councillor Gilbert queried the declining performance in number of invoices paid on time. Mr Vestri clarified (*following an email response from Jim Lamond*) that staff turnover was a contributory factor but a joint Finance and Procurement services Working Group was looking at improving systems.

Councillor Gilbert also queried the decline in the satisfactory condition of the floor space indicator. Mr Vestri indicated he would ask Paul Iannetta, (*relevant Service Manager*) to provide this information following the meeting.

Councillor Mackett, referring to kerbside recycling, asked if there were plans to replace the boxes with bins, this had been raised by some constituents. Mr Reid clarified that it was not the intention to do this; the Council was one of the few local authorities to retain the recycling boxes. He added that boxes were better for lack of cross contamination than bins.

Bryan Davies, Group Service Manager – Planning and Performance (Adult Wellbeing) responded to questions from Councillor Henderson regarding the delayed discharge indicator. He referred to the shift from hospital care beds towards the community and reported that officers were looking at how resources could match that shift and at how resources could be allocated properly.

Councillor Goodfellow noted that many of these indicators were in terms of percentage of the population and queried the information source. Mr Vestri confirmed that in most cases the population estimates were based on the latest mid-year estimates from 2016 or 2017.

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.

3. EAST LoTHIAN COUNCIL CONTACT CENTRE UPDATE

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive (Partnerships and Community Services) advising the Committee on the performance of the Council's Contact Centre.

Eileen Morrison, Service Manager – Customer Services, presented the report. She gave details regarding performance over the past three years. In relation to staffing, the Contact Centre had not had a full staffing establishment for some time, due to a variety of reasons. She reported that taking on calls for the Scottish Borders Council had increased the workload but additional staff had been recruited to address this. She outlined developments, including upgrading systems and the online customer platform. The Contact Centre had recently gone through an industry standard accreditation assessment. The Contact Centre had been at the forefront of development and would continue to grow its capacity.

Ms Morrison and Raymond McGill, Contact Centre Manager, responded to questions.

Councillor Henderson, in relation to the presentation of information, asked if this could be transferred into a report showing, given the resource issues, what capacity the Contact Centre was operating at. Mr McGill indicated this could be looked at for future reports. Ms Morrison added that Mr McGill and his team were working on changing rotas and increasing staff hours; previously most posts were part time. She added that all staff worked shifts, which could on occasions cause issues if personal circumstances changed.

Responding to Councillor Findlay, Ms Morrison confirmed that the Council did benefit financially from having taken on the call service for the Scottish Borders Council. In relation to whether providing this extra service had affected the service to East Lothian residents Mr McGill said that initially it had been challenging but staff numbers had been increased and there was now a larger team resulting in a stronger service for local residents.

In reply to the Convener's query, Mr McGill stated that the Contact Centre had been working to make itself as attractive as possible to other local authorities; he added that this Council and Aberdeen City Council were the only two councils monitoring for three local authorities. Ms Morrison informed Members that accreditation was very important, as when the Council bid for a contract it could state that industry standards were met.

Councillor Gilbert asked for further detail on recruitment campaigns, noting that on occasions there had been no suitable applicants. Mr McGill gave details of the background to those instances and details of the improvements that had been made to the selection process.

Mr McGill provided information in relation to recruitment of locum teachers in response to a query from Councillor Goodfellow.

Councillor Mackett asked if the My East Lothian App had taken some pressure off the Contact Centre. Mr McGill advised that this did not go through the Contact Centre; it was rather an alternative way for the public to report issues such as street lighting faults, etc.

Decision

The Committee agreed to note the performance of, and developments within, the Contact Centre.

Sederunt: Councillor Hoy left the Chamber.

4. CUSTOMER FEEDBACK REPORTING 2018/19

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive (Resources and People Services) regarding the use of the Council's Complaints Handling Procedure for 2018/2019 (1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019) and to raise awareness of implemented and planned improved processes as result of trends seen in the reporting.

Kirstie MacNeill, Service Manager – People and Governance, presented the report, informing Members that the Customer Feedback Overview for 2018/19 showed that there had been a significant decrease in the number of complaints and an increase in the number of compliments. She drew attention to the Complaint Analysis detailed at section 3.10 of the report. She outlined the focus for improvement, explaining that moving forward there would be increased working between the Customer Feedback and FOI team and service areas to improve overall response times. She also highlighted service improvements resulting from feedback. Appendices 1 and 2 contained more detailed information.

Ms MacNeill and Susan Farrow, Team Leader – Customer Feedback and FOI, responded to questions from Members.

Ms Farrow confirmed, following a question from the Convener, that compliments were forwarded to the relevant service area.

Councillor Henderson queried the number of stage 2 complaints taken further; Ms Farrow advised that approximately 5% went forward to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

Councillor Goodfellow asked for clarification on what constituted a comment, specifically in relation to the Roads Service. Ms Farrow stated that this could be people making suggestions for how a particular service could be improved or how different types of provision could be sought. Mr Reid added that one example in relation to the Roads Service was where residents had commented on the specifics of replacement lighting for a bridge.

Councillor Gilbert asked for a breakdown of the stage 2 complaints in the Education Service. Fiona Robertson, Head of Education, replied that the 31 complaints varied across a number of themes; composite classes, early learning and childcare, additional support needs, bullying and out of catchment requests. She added that no one theme was higher than another; she confirmed that officers did check for patterns of complaints.

Councillor Goodfellow praised the report, which demonstrated a decreasing number of complaints and an increasing number of compliments; this reflected the high quality service provided by staff across the Council.

Decision

The Committee agreed to note the report.

5. WORK PROGRAMME

An updated Work Programme detailed the reports already scheduled for the Committee for the next committee session in 2019/20.

No additional reports were added to the work programme.

Signed

Councillor Lachlan Bruce
Convener of the Policy and Performance Review Committee