

**THE FIFE COUNCIL - PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE –  
BLENDED MEETING**

**Committee Room 2, 5th Floor, Fife House, North Street, Glenrothes**

**26 September 2024**

**10.00 am – 2.10 pm**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Darren Watt (Depute Convener), Gary Holt (Convener), Alycia Hayes (substituting for Cllr Bailey-Lee Robb), Colin Davidson (substituting for Cllr Alistair Cameron), Ian Cameron (substituting for Cllr Jan Wincott), Lesley Backhouse, Lynn Ballantyne-Wardlaw (substituting for Cllr Blair Allan), Ken Caldwell, Alex Campbell, Altany Craik, Peter Gulline, Donald Lothian, Lynn Mowatt, Sam Steele, Jonny Tepp and Ann Verner.

**ATTENDING:** Michael Enston, Executive Director - Communities; Fiona Mckay, Interim Director and Lesley Gauld, Team Manager, Health and Social Care Partnership; Diarmuid Cotter, Head of Customer and Online Services and Claire Bates, Customer Service Manager, Customer and Online Services; John Mills, Head of Housing Services, Gavin Smith, Service Manager and Mhairi Mullen, Service Manager, Housing Services; Helen Guthrie, Accountant, Lesley Kenworthy, Finance Business Partner, Finance and Corporate Services and Michelle Hyslop, Committee Officer, Legal and Democratic Services.

Following the resignation of Councillor Eugene Clark as Convener from the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Darren Watt (Depute Convener) chaired the first part of the meeting.

**127. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were submitted in terms of Standing Order No. 22.

**128. MINUTE**

The committee considered the minute of the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee of 27 June 2024.

**Decision**

The committee agreed to approve the minute.

**129. APPOINTMENT OF CONVENER**

**Motion**

Councillor Verner, seconded by Councillor Caldwell, nominated Councillor Backhouse as Convener.

**Amendment**

Councillor Tepp, seconded by Councillor Lothian, nominated Councillor Holt as Convener.

**Roll Call**

**For the Motion – 7 votes**

Councillors Lynne Ballantyne-Wardlaw, Lesley Backhouse, Ken Caldwell, Lynn Mowatt, Alycia Hayes, Sam Steele and Ann Verner.

**For the Amendment – 9 votes**

Councillors Colin Davidson, Alex Campbell, Altany Craik, Peter Gulline, Gary Holt, Donald Lothian, Jonny Tepp, Darren Watt and Ian Cameron.

**Decision**

Councillor Holt was duly appointed as Convener of the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

*The meeting adjourned at 10.05 am and reconvened at 10.10 am to allow Councillor Holt to take the chair of the meeting.*

**130. CHANGE OF MEMBERSHIP**

The committee noted that Councillor Holt had replaced Councillor Clarke and Councillor Craik had replaced Councillor MacDougall as a member of the committee and welcomed them to their first meeting.

The committee thanked Councillor Clarke for his convenership and contribution to the work of the committee during his membership.

The committee thanked Councillor MacDougall for her contribution to the work of the committee during her membership.

**131. FIFE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2023 TO 2024**

The committee considered a report by the Interim Director of Health and Social Care Partnership providing members with the assurance that the Fife Health and Social Care Partnership was meeting its legislative requirements under Section 42 (Integration Authority: Performance Report) of the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014.

**Decision**

The committee noted: -

- (1) the contents of the report;
- (2) that the Health and Social Care Partnership were meeting their legislative requirements under Section 42 of the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014; and
- (3) the progress made by the Health and Social Care Partnership over the latest reporting timescale for 2023 to 2024.

**132. HOUSING & SAFER COMMUNITIES – ANNUAL SERVICE REVIEW REPORT 2023/2024**

The committee considered a report by the Head of Housing Services presenting an overview of the service. The report outlined the service planning, change and improvement work undertaken in 2023/24 and provided an assessment of the performance to inform scrutiny of future service planning.

**Decision**

The committee: -

- (1) considered and commented on the remodelled 'annual service review' report format and related products;
- (2) reviewed the progress and performance of Housing Services for 2023/24 and the activity undertaken in 2024/25 to date; and
- (3) noted the service planning objectives for 2024/25 and the three-year direction of travel.

**133. ANNUAL ASSURANCE STATEMENT 2024**

The committee considered a report by the Head of Housing Services presenting recommendations for submissions of the Annual Assurance Statement to the Scottish Housing Regulator, based on regulatory guidance refreshed in 2024. The risks were assessed against the Councils Annual Return on the Charter for 2023/24.

**Decision**

The committee: -

- (1) noted the requirements of the 2024 housing regulatory framework, requesting the preparation of an Annual Assurance Statement (Section 2.0 and 3.0 of the report);
- (2) agreed the wording of the draft Annual Assurance Statement 2024 based on the compliance position as at 31 March 2024 (Section 4.0 and Appendix 1 of the report);
- (3) authorised the Scrutiny Committee Convener and the Housing and Building Services Spokesperson to sign the Annual Assurance Statement; and
- (4) agreed on the submission of the final Annual Assurance Statement 2024 to the Scottish Housing Regulator by the deadline of the 31 October 2024.

*The meeting adjourned at 11.55am and reconvened at 12.30pm.*

**134. GYPSY TRAVELLERS & MANAGEMENT OF UNAUTHORISED ENCAMPMENTS**

The committee considered a report by the Head of Housing Services providing an update on the current approach to manage unauthorised Gypsy Traveller

encampments within Fife and sought members views on whether the Councils Co-operation Policy should be reviewed.

**Decision**

The committee: -

- (1) noted the update on the Gypsy Traveller Co-operation Policy and the management of unauthorised encampments;
- (2) considered the operation of the Co-operation Policy and if a review is required; and
- (3) agreed that housing services would facilitate a working group with Councillors Campbell, Steele and Watt to look at the Co-operation Policy and management of unauthorised gypsy encampments within Fife.

**135. VOIDS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT**

The committee considered a report by the Head of Housing Services advising on the positive progress that Fife has made in reducing the number of empty properties. The report highlights the review processes and performance-based evidence led approach to improving services as part of Theme 2 of the Housing Emergency and Service Improvement Plan reported in late 2023.

**Decision**

The committee: -

- (1) noted the improvements detailed in the report, particularly with reference to wider sector performance;
- (2) agreed the areas of improvement as a priority focus for the Voids Governance Group and updated Service Improvement Plan linked to the Housing Emergency;
- (3) noted that the on-going work of the Tenant Scrutiny Panel would focus on Voids; and
- (4) agreed that any resultant action plans would be a feature of a future People and Communities Scrutiny report.

**136. CUSTOMER AND ONLINE SERVICES – ANNUAL SERVICE REVIEW REPORT 2023/2024**

The committee considered a report by the Head of Customer and Online Services presenting an overview of the service, outlining the service planning, change and improvement work undertaken in 2023/24. The report also provided members with an assessment of the performance to inform scrutiny and future service planning.

**Decision**

The committee: -

- (1) considered and commented on the remodelled 'annual service review' report format;
- (2) scrutinised the progress and performance of the Customer and Online Services for 2023/24 and the activity undertaken in 2024/25 to date; and
- (3) noted the service planning objectives for 2024/25 and the three-year direction of travel.

**137. 2023-24 REVENUE BUDGET PROVISIONAL OUTTURN COMMUNITIES**

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services and Executive Director, Communities providing an update on the provisional outturn position for the 2023/24 financial year for Communities and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) including the areas in scope of the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

**Decision**

The committee considered the current financial performance and activity for the 2023-24 Provisional Outturn as detailed in the report.

**138. 2023-24 CAPITAL PLAN PROVISIONAL OUTTURN COMMUNITIES**

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services and Executive Director, Communities providing an update on the Capital Investment Plan and advised on the provisional financial position for the 2023/24 financial year.

**Decision**

The committee considered the current performance and activity for the 2023/24 Capital Monitoring as detailed in the report.

**139. 2024-25 REVENUE BUDGET PROJECTED OUTTURN COMMUNITIES**

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services and Executive Director, Communities providing an update on the projected outturn financial position for the 2024-25 financial year for the Communities Directorate and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which are areas in scope of the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

**Decision**

The committee considered the current financial performance and activity as detailed in the report.

**140. 2024-25 CAPITAL PLAN PROJECTED OUTTURN COMMUNITIES**

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services and Executive Director, Communities providing an update on

## 2024 PCS 57

the Capital Investment Plan and advised on the projected financial position for the 2024-25 financial year.

Members were provided with an updated version of the report and appendices which would be uploaded to the council's website.

### **Decision**

The committee considered the current performance and activity for the 2024-25 Capital Monitoring as detailed in the report.

#### **141. 2023-24 REVENUE BUDGET PROVISIONAL OUT-TURN – HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE**

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services and the Interim Director, Health and Social Care Partnership providing an update on the 2023-24 provisional outturn and movement from December 2023 for Fife Council Social Care Services for Adults and Older People.

### **Decision**

The committee considered the current financial performance and activity as detailed in the report.

#### **142. 2023-24 CAPITAL PLAN PROVISIONAL OUTTURN – HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE**

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services and the Interim Director, Health and Social Care Partnership providing an update on the Health and Social Care Capital Investment Plan and advised on the provisional outturn for the 2023-24 financial year for the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

### **Decision**

The committee considered the current performance and activity across the 2023-24 Financial Monitoring as detailed in the report.

#### **143. 2024-25 REVENUE BUDGET PROJECTED OUTTURN – HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE**

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services and the Interim Director, Health and Social Care Partnership providing an update on the 2024-25 projected outturn as at June 2024 for the Fife Council Social Care Services for Adults and Older People.

### **Decision**

The committee considered the current financial performance and activity as detailed in the report.

*Councillors Mowatt and Lothian left the meeting during consideration of the above item.*

**144. 2024-25 CAPITAL PLAN PROJECTED OUTTURN – HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE**

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services and the Interim Director, Health and Social Care Partnership providing an update on the Health and Social Care Capital Investment Plan and advised on the projected outturn for the 2024-25 financial year.

**Decision**

The committee considered the current performance and activity across the 2024-25 Financial Monitoring as detailed in the report.

**145. PEOPLE & COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services, asking members to consider the future workplan for the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

**Decision**

The committee: -

- (1) noted the future workplan of the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee;
- (2) noted that an annual report on public protection would be submitted to the committee and agreed that the new report would replace the previous reports on “adult protection, child protection and Fife Violence against women reports” as part of the wider Fife Partnership Reporting activities;
- (3) agreed that an update on Café Inc would be included in the Communities and Neighbourhoods Annual Report scheduled for 14 November 2024;
- (4) with reference to para 135(4) above, a working group would be established to look at unauthorised gypsy traveller encampments, and an update on the working group findings would be brought back to a future meeting of the committee; and
- (5) agreed that following the Grenfell Report being considered at the cabinet committee, a report or briefing paper would be considered at a future meeting of the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee.