

MINUTE of MEETING of the PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE of WEST LoTHIAN COUNCIL held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WEST LoTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE, on 3 SEPTEMBER 2018.

Present – Councillors Stuart Borrowman (Chair), Andrew McGuire, Carl John, Charles Kennedy, Dave King, Carl John

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

2. MINUTE

The committee confirmed the Minute of its meeting held on 5 June 2018 as a correct record. The Minute was thereafter signed by the Chair.

3. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION REPORT - FOCUS REGENERATION -

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration providing an overview of the activities that were being delivered in targeted areas of West Lothian to improve outcomes for local people and regenerate communities.

The report advised that the council aimed to help people living in poverty and deprivation as they had significantly worse life outcomes than those in average households. Individuals were less likely to do well at school, were more likely to be unemployed or in poorly paid jobs and would generally have poorer health and shorter lives.

The Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration explained that Locality Plans were a statutory requirement in the Community Empowerment Act 2015. All Community Planning Partnerships must have them for the communities they identified to be the most disadvantaged.

Effective community planning was seen to bring together collective talents and resources of local public services and communities to drive positive change on local priorities. The focus was on where partners' collective efforts and resources could add most value for their local communities, with particular emphasis on reducing inequalities.

The report advised that eight regeneration areas had been identified based in the data zones within the bottom 20% of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation.

The process to develop the plans had been led by Community Regeneration officers. Appendix 1 to the report provided an overview of

how Regeneration Plans had been developed and the current position in terms of implementing the plans.

The report went on to advise that local targets and indicators had been developed along with the Regeneration Plans to ensure that robust baseline information was available, allowing monitoring of progress over the short, medium and long term.

More generally, Regeneration Plans were contributing to the delivery of the council's Corporate Plan and specifically to the delivery of the following:-

- Priority 3 – minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality
- Priority 5 - improving the employment position in West Lothian

The report went on to advise that community involvement and input from partners had been vital to the regeneration planning process. In order to be effective the process required commitment for all relevant partners.

In conclusion the report advised that regeneration plans had the potential to positively impact on the areas of West Lothian suffering the most disadvantages and improve life chances. The plans would have a greater chance of success if there was a strong partnership approach. Local steering groups were well established but could be strengthened further by additional resource and input from partners.

The report recommended that the committee:-

1. Provide feedback on the information provided;
2. Consider additional ways for the council to contribute to ongoing regeneration plan development and implementation; and
3. Consider the type of performance reporting on regeneration activity that may be brought to Performance Committee for scrutiny.

There then followed discussions and a number of questions in relation to SIMD long term patterns, the impact regeneration plans were having on the community and how these impacts were measured. Questions were also asked in relation to how the regeneration officers interacted and adjusted to the differing sizes of population in each area.

Members were advised each regeneration officer covered 2 wards and targeted specified areas . It was also explained that 360 participants had taken part in 4 focus groups.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report.
2. To report back to a future meeting of the committee providing information on the following:-

- a) SIMD long term patterns;
- b) Demonstrate the impact that regeneration plans were having on the community; and
- c) Demonstrate how impacts were measured.

4. COMPLAINT PERFORMANCE REPORT Q1 2018/19

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Depute Chief Executive providing the council's annual report 2018/19. Appendix 1 to the report contained the council wide performance against the SPSO defined measures covering the period Quarter 1 2018/19.

The committee was advised that the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) developed and published a model Complaint Handling Procedure (CHP) on 28 March 2012. The model CHP was to ensure a standardised approach in dealing with customer complaints across the local authority sector. All local authorities were required to adopt the model CHP by 31 March 2013.

Table one provided a service summary of closed complaints received by quarter 2017/18 and quarter 1 2018/19.

Table two provided a breakdown of complaints by category over a 5 year period.

The Depute Chief Executive explained that the current service level complaint performance varied across the council and was linked to the complexity and quantity of complaints received. Housing, Customer and Building Services (HCBS) and Operational Services were the main complaint generators.

There was an increase in Policy Related complaints received. This was an increase of 46 from the equivalent quarter in the previous year. Operational Services and Housing, Customer and Building Services accounted for 77.1% of all policy complaints. An increase in waiting time complaints was recorded when compared to the equivalent quarter in the previous year. Employee Attitude complaints were driven by Operational Services and Housing, Customer and Building Services.

The Corporate Complaint Steering Board identified 4 high level indicators that provided a summary of complaint handling performance and detailed as follows:-

- Total complaints received
- Complaints closed within 5 working days
- Complaints closed within 20 working days

- Complaints partly upheld/upheld

A target of 85% was currently set for the percentage of complaints which must be dealt with within timescale. Across the council 59.8% of all complaints closed in Q1 2018/19 had been upheld/part upheld which was a marginal increase when compared to the equivalent quarter in 2017/18

Table 4 provided a service trend summary of upheld/part upheld complaints as a percentage of complaints received by quarter covering 2017/18 and Q1 2018/19/.

Table 5 provided indicative ratios for the number of complaints against the specific customer groups for Education Services, Housing, Customer and Building Services and Operational Services.

In conclusion the report advised that the council had shown a dip in performance relating to the percentage of complaints closed at stage 1 and stage 2 and the number of upheld and part upheld complaints closed in this quarter. The main contributor to the reduction in processing performance was Operational Services. Operational Services complaints were predominantly related to waste collection, however the service implemented several corrective actions.

It was recommended that the Performance Committee :-

1. Note the corporate and service complaint performance against the standards outlined in the council's complaint handling procedure.
2. Continue to monitor complaint performance and request additional information from services as required.

Discussions then took place in relation to a number of issues raised by the committee, particularly in relation to Call Centre pressures, Waste Services, House Repair complaints and the chain of assessment of repairs.

It was suggested that a report be brought to a future meeting of the committee to discuss the issues raised in relation to Housing Repairs and Waste Services. It was also suggested that a briefing be provided to members on the pressures of the Call Centre and how it operates.

Decision

1. To note the terms of the report.
2. To agree that a briefing on the pressures of the Call Centre and how it operates be arranged for committee members.
3. To agree that information on complaint handling at the frontline be provided to committee members.
4. To agree that a report by the Head of Operational Services on Waste Services be brought to a future meeting of the Performance

Committee.

5. To agree that a report by the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services on Housing Repairs and the chain of assessment be brought to a future meeting of the Performance committee.

5. LOCAL GOVERNMENT BENCHMARKING FRAMEWORK

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Corporate Services providing analysis of the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) data for 2016/17, including high level comparative analysis of the council's 2016/17 performance against previous years and other local authority performance. Appended to the report was the LGBF 2016/17 average category rankings.

The report advised that the Local Government Benchmarking Framework was focused on providing a consistent approach to benchmarking local authority performance, with an evolving dataset reported each year to the public.

The comparative performance of the 32 Scottish Local Authorities was published in a national report and identified national trends across eight thematic categories of council activity.

Following the publication of the national report in February 2018, a refreshed LGBF 2016/17 dataset was issued to councils by the Improvement Service on 31 March 2018. The report provided an analysis of the council's performance.

The Head of Corporate Services explained that the LGBF Overview report 2016/17 compared Scottish councils' performance across 70 performance indicators, a decrease on the 77 performance indicators used for 2015/16. The LGBF performance indicators were grouped under the following eight categories:-

- Children's Services
- Corporate Services
- Corporate Assets
- Adult Social Care
- Culture and Leisure
- Environmental Services
- Housing Services
- Economic Development

The dataset in each category generally focused on how much councils had spent on particular services, the service performance and how satisfied people were with the major services provided by councils.

Councils were allocated to a family group of authorities with similar characteristics. West Lothian Council was a member of family group 3 with the general characteristics set out in table 1.

Table 2 provided the council's 2016/17 performance in comparison to 2015/16 performance and changes in ranking by performance indicator.

Table 3 showed that the council's average category ranking had improved in four out of eight categories since the previous year and declined in four categories.

Table 4 provided a breakdown by quartile of the LGBF indicators in comparison to the initial dataset published in 2015/16.

In conclusion the report advised that the LGBF was intended to support councils to improve performance in key activities, inform strategic planning and to form a critical part of the sector's response to requirements for public performance reporting and benchmarking.

The report recommended that the committee note the council's comparative performance in the LGBF 2016/17.

There then followed discussion and questions in relation to performance indicators, benchmarking of housing performance and Registered Social Landlords.

Decision

1. To note the terms of the report.
2. To note West Lothian Council average ranking of first.
3. To note that benchmarking information would be provided for Housing Performance and Registered Social Landlords.
4. To note that benchmarking information would be included in service performance reports.
5. To note that going forward more detailed reports would be submitted.

6. SERVICE PERFORMANCE AND WLAM OUTCOME REPORT - PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENT SERVICE

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Depute Chief Executive providing an overview of the service assessment from the West Lothian Assessment Model process. The report also provided a summary of recommendations from the officer-led

scrutiny panel that had been identified for action.

The report advised that self-assessment was an important part of the council's Best Value Framework, ensuring that there was rigorous challenge of performance and continued improvement embedded at all levels of the organisation.

The report provided the outcome from the self-assessment of the Performance and Improvement Service and the agreed recommendations for improvement for the service as well as a summary overview of performance.

The Head of Corporate Services explained that the Performance and Improvement Service had a lead role in driving modernisation and improvement in the council through coordinated programmes of planning, quality and project management. It was also responsible for building a corporate approach to performance and the administration and support of critical business systems, including the council's customer relationship management, electronic content management and performance management systems.

As an enabler, the service had a key role in supporting the modernisation and improvement of council services through the actions set out in the Improvement Strategy. The report then went on to provide a list of the main activities of the service.

In particular the service enabled delivery of the council's eight corporate priorities and made a critical contribution to the delivery of the council's Transformation Programme.

The service went through the West Lothian Assessment Model process in 2017/18 with a representative group of employees from the service critically evaluating the service effectiveness in nine criterion parts of the assessment model.

The report went on to advise that there were no measures within Local Government Benchmarking Framework that related to the remit and activity of this service.

It was also reported that the services led on a range of corporate benchmarking activity in relation to the council's Improvement Strategy 2018/23. This included overall coordination and analysis of the statutory specified performance information, the LGBF and a range of corporate assessments that identified opportunities for benchmarking and sharing of good practice.

In conclusion the Performance and Improvement Service completed the WLAM process as part of the council's corporate programme of self-assessment. This was a critical part of the council's internal scrutiny arrangements and helped to ensure that excellent practice and performance was supported and that the principle of continuous improvement was adopted in all council services.

The report recommended that the committee:

1. Note the outcome from the WLAM and Review Panel process;
2. Note the recommendations from improvement; and
3. Agree any other recommendations that may improve the performance of the service.

There then followed a number of questions in relation to budget measures and whether other services appreciated the added value that was offered by the Performance and Improvement Service.

It was suggested that the every opportunity be considered to promote the service, demonstrate what it does and what impact it had on other services.

Decision

To note the contents of the report and to report back to a future meeting of the Performance Committee on the impact the service had on other services.

7. WORKPLAN

The panel considered a list of items that would form the basis of the committee's work over the coming months.

Decision

To adopt the workplan and agree that the Chair liaise with officers to make changes to the workplan as necessary.