

MINUTE of MEETING of the SOCIAL POLICY, POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WEST LoTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE, on 1 NOVEMBER 2019.

Present – Councillors Angela Doran (Chair), George Paul, Charles Kennedy, Dave King, Sarah King and Dom McGuire

Apologies – Councillor Damian Timson

In Attendance – Margaret Preston, Joint Forum of West Lothian Community Councils

The Chair welcomed Margaret Preston, Joint Forum of West Lothian Community Councils Representative, to the meeting.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

2. MINUTE

The panel approved the minute of its meeting held on 30 August 2019 as a correct record. The Chair thereafter signed the minute.

3. REVENUE BUDGET STRATEGY 2020/21 TO 2022/23 - POTENTIAL ADDITIONAL SAVING MEASURES

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Social Policy providing members with a summary of potential additional saving measures within the remit of the panel for their scrutiny.

During discussion, officers responded to questions from members relating to the redesign of residential care for children and young people and to the servicing of maintainable equipment for private homeowners.

It was recommended that the panel:

1. Note the revised estimated budget gap of £6.730 million as the latest planning assumption for the three years 2020/21 to 2022/23;
2. Note the potential additional saving options identified by officers within the Social Policy portfolio, as set out in Appendix 1, including service developments which would generate additional savings, noting that these were provided for information at this stage and could potentially be utilised to address any remaining budget gap;
3. Note and consider the Integrated Relevance Assessments

undertaken on the potential options as included in Appendix 1.

4. Note that, where a full Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) was assessed as being required, that this would be completed in advance of any of these measures being presented to the budget setting meeting and would be included in the budget report;
5. Note that, in relation to revenue budget reduction measures, decisions by members which substantially change or delete decisions made by Council at the annual budget setting meeting each year must be made at full Council;
6. Note that the Head of Finance and Property Services would continue to review and refine the budget model assumptions and present a three-year detailed revenue budget for 2020/21 to 2022/23 to Council in February 2020 for consideration and approval.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

4. CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT 2018-2019

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Chief Social Work Officer providing members with the opportunity to comment on the Chief Social Work Officer's Annual Report. The report provided an overview of the statutory work undertaken during the period 2018–2019.

During discussion, the panel noted thanks to social work and social care employees in West Lothian for their hard work and contribution to delivering change and improvement in social work and social care services.

It was recommended that the panel:

1. Note the contents of the Chief Social Work Officer's annual report for 2018–2019;
2. Note that the report would be submitted to:
 - a) West Lothian Council on 19th November 2019
 - b) West Lothian Integration Joint Board on 21st January 2020; and
3. Note that the final report would be submitted to the Scottish Government Chief Social Work Advisor.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

5. SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT'S PRE-LEGISLATIVE PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON FINANCIAL REDRESS FOR HISTORICAL CHILD ABUSE IN CARE

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Social Policy informing members of the Scottish Government's Pre-Legislative Public Consultation on Financial Redress for Historical Child Abuse in Care hosted by the Scottish Government and welcoming views and comment.

During discussion, it was noted that each case would be judged on its individual merits in order to determine the appropriate level of financial redress to be awarded.

It was recommended that the panel consider the draft response to the consultation which was intended to be submitted to the Council Executive for approval prior to its submission to the Scottish Government.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report.
2. To agree the recommendations that would be presented to a future meeting of Council Executive for approval.

6. PERFORMANCE REPORT - OCTOBER 2019

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Social Policy informing members of the current level of performance for the annual indicators that support the Corporate Plan and are the responsibility of Social Policy and reportable to this Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel.

It was recommended that the panel note the performance information and determine if further action or enquiry was necessary for any of the performance indicators in the report.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

7. SOCIAL POLICY CONTRACT ACTIVITY UPDATE

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Social Policy providing an update on contracting activity for the provision of care and support services for the period 1 April 2019 to 30 September 2019 in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders and West Lothian HSCP's Health, Care and Support Services Procurement Procedures.

It was recommended that the panel:

1. Note the contacting activity for the provision of care and support services for the period 1 April 2019 to 30 September 2019; and
2. Recognise the ongoing development of clear contractual agreements between the council and providers of care and support services.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

8. WORKPLAN

A workplan had been circulated for information.

Decision

To note the workplan.