

Committee Minutes

Policy and Strategy Committee

Edinburgh, 22 March 2011

Present:- Councillors Dawe (Convener), Cardownie (Vice-Convener), Balfour, Blacklock, Brock, Buchanan, Burgess, Burns, Edie, Godzik, Hinds, Jackson, Gordon Mackenzie, MacLaren, Mowat, Munn and Wheeler.

1 Director of Corporate Services - Retirement

The Convener noted that this would be the last meeting of this Committee that Jim Inch, Director of Corporate Services, would attend prior to his forthcoming retirement. She paid tribute to his contribution to the work of the Council as a whole, and this Committee in particular, and wished him a long and happy retirement.

2 Minute

Decision

To approve the minute of the Policy and Strategy Committee of 22 February 2011, as adjusted, as a correct record.

3 Revised Organisational Reviews Procedure and new Policy on Pay Protection

3.1 Deputation – UNISON/Unite

The deputation expressed concern at the lack of scrutiny over the proposed Reviews Procedure. They raised the issues of a lack of local collective agreement which they would have preferred and that no pay protection was being offered to employees. The deputation stressed that the proposals showed that where a review was to be undertaken, there would be no requirement for approval by the appropriate Committee and that powers were to be delegated to Directors for implementation.

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Although pay protection costs had been highlighted, the deputation asked that a breakdown of these costs be provided. They urged the Committee to consider whether or not the proposals were fair, reasonable or equitable for staff.

3.2 Report by the Director of Corporate Services

Details of a proposed revised Organisational Reviews Procedure and a new Policy on Pay Protection which were to be implemented retrospectively from 1 March 2011 were provided.

Motion

- 1) To note the report by the Director of Corporate Services.
- 2) To approve the revised Organisational Reviews Procedure for implementation retrospectively from 1 March 2011.
- 3) To approve the Policy on Pay Protection for implementation retrospectively from 1 March 2011.
- 4) To approve the proposed amendment to the Scheme of Delegation to Officers as outlined in the report.
- 5) To ask the Director of Corporate Services to provide Committee members and UNISON/Unite with a breakdown of how the estimated £700k cost of pay protection had been calculated.
- 6) That further discussions take place with the Unions on possible transition protection arrangements for affected staff with a report on the outcome to be submitted to the next meeting of this Committee.
- 7) To refer the report to the Joint Consultative Group for its interest.

- moved by Councillor Wheeler, seconded by Councillor Brock

Amendment

To continue consideration of the matter for one cycle of meetings to enable further discussions to take place on:

- a) possible transition protection arrangements: and
- b) the breakdown of the £700k pay protection costs.

- moved by Councillor Burns, seconded by Councillor Blacklock

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Voting

The voting was as follows:

For the motion - 12 votes
For the amendment - 5 votes

Decision

To approve the motion by Councillor Wheeler.

(Reference – report no PS/109/10-11/CS by the Director of Corporate Services, submitted.)

Declaration of Interests

Councillor Cardownie declared a non-financial interest in the above item as a member of Unite.

4 City Centre and Princes Street Public Realm – Consultation Plan

The Committee had approved the vision and action plan for the City Centre and Princes Street public realm project for consultation purposes. Proposals for the consultation exercise were provided.

Decision

To approve the consultation plan for the City Centre and Princes Street public realm project.

(References – Policy and Strategy Committee of 22 February 2011 (item 11); report no PS/105/10-11/CD by the Director of City Development, submitted.)

5 Decentralised Energy in Edinburgh

In response to a motion by Councillor Whyte, progress in delivering decentralised energy within Edinburgh and the role of Planning was detailed.

Decision

- 1) To note the progress being made in supporting decentralised energy and other low carbon solutions.

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- 2) To ask the Director of City Development to include a requirement for large scale developments to incorporate decentralised energy in the forthcoming Local Development Plan.
- 3) To refer the report to the Planning Committee for information.
- 4) To ask the Director of City Development to provide further updates to the report.

(References – Policy and Strategy Committee of 29 September 2009 (item 12); report no PS/106/10-11/CD by the Director of City Development, submitted.)

6 Response to Consultation on draft Self-Directed Support Bill

The Committee had agreed responses to previous consultations on the draft National Strategy for Self-Directed Support and on proposals for legislation.

Details were provided on the Scottish Government's second consultation on proposed new legislation on Self-Directed Support and the Council's proposed draft response.

Decision

- 1) To agree the response to "Self-Directed Support: A Draft Bill for Consultation" as detailed in the report by the Director of Health and Social Care.
- 2) To ask the Directors of Finance and Health and Social Care to raise with COSLA the financial issues associated with implementing Self-Directed Support, including the need for short-term bridging finance.

(References – Policy and Strategy Committee of 11 May 2010 (item 6) and 8 June 2010 (item 11); report no PS/107/10-11/H&SC by the Director of Health and Social Care, submitted)

7 Edinburgh University Settlement Closure: Further Actions

The Committee had noted the consequences of the closure of Edinburgh University Settlement and the actions being taken to address these consequences. An update was provided on the measures which had been taken.

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Decision

- 1) To note the steps taken to make alternative provision for individuals using the former Stepping Stones and Personal Steps projects, and that short and longer term options for recommissioning were under active consideration.
- 2) To note the actions taken with regard to people using Edinburgh University Settlement Learning projects.
- 3) To note that the Council's Culture and Sport Service continued to monitor the future use of the venues formerly run and owned by Edinburgh University Settlement, and the potential for these venues to be used by the Festival Fringe.
- 4) To ask the Directors of Health and Social Care and Children and Families to submit further informal briefings to members on the matter.

(References – Policy and Strategy Committee of 30 November 2010 (item 8); report no PS/108/10-11/H&SC &C&F, submitted)

8 Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland – Consultation on Determining Councillor Numbers

The Council's views were sought on the Local Boundary Commission for Scotland's methodology for determining the number of councillors in Scotland. Comments on the questions posed in the consultation were provided as the basis of the Council's formal response to the Commission.

Decision

- 1) To note the forthcoming review of electoral arrangements.
- 2) To approve the report by the Director of Corporate Services as the Council's response to the Commission.

(Reference – report no PS/110/10-11/CS by the Director of Corporate Services, submitted.)

9 Response to the Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services

The Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services had been established by the Scottish Government to develop recommendations for the

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future delivery of public services. An invitation to submit evidence to the Commission had been received.

Details were provided on the proposed officer response to the Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services (Christie Commission).

Decision

- 1) To note the response as detailed in the report by the Director of Corporate Services.
- 2) To agree that a further report be submitted once the implications of the Commission's report and recommendations were clear.

(Reference – report no PS/111/10-11/CS by the Director of Corporate Services, submitted.)

10 Corporate Management Performance Report – December 2010/ January 2011

Performance information for the corporate management of the Council for the period December 2010 to January 2011 was submitted. An update was also provided of progress made in key projects and actions being taken to improve performance across the Council.

Decision

To note the good performance reported in the indicators.

(Reference – report no PS/112/10-11/CS by the Director of Corporate Services, submitted.)

11 Motion - Councillor Burns – Constituents' Ability to Raise Issues with Local Councillors

The Convener ruled that the following item be dealt with as a matter of urgency in order that it be dealt with timeously.

The following motion by Councillor Burns was submitted in terms of Standing Order 27:

“Following press reports this weekend, and confirmation from a city council spokesman that a "letter was sent to staff as a reminder of their obligations under the code of conduct for employees of the City of Edinburgh Council” ...

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... Committee **calls for an urgent report** clarifying the rights of individual members of the public (as constituents) to raise/discuss any issues of concern with their locally elected representatives.

The report to specifically address:

- The right of all individuals to attend local Councillors' surgeries
- The right of all individuals to contact local Councillors in writing and/or via e-mail
- The responsibility of local Councillors to respond to such enquiries
- The restrictions placed on these rights and responsibilities by the 'Code of Conduct' for employees of the City of Edinburgh Council

Committee agrees this report to return to Policy and Strategy within **one cycle.**"

Decision

- 1) To agree the motion by Councillor Burns.
- 2) To ask the Director to include in his report details on how this impacted on the Council's "Whistle Blowing" policy.
- 3) To refer the report by the Director of Corporate Services to the Cross Party Working Group for consideration.