

SOUTH RIBBLE BOROUGH COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING – 20 NOVEMBER 2013
REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Scrutiny Committee met on two occasions, namely the evenings of 8 October and 5 November 2013.

A. 8 October 2013

The committee started by considering **Matters Arising** which listed the outstanding matters from the last ordinary meeting of the committee. The committee felt that all but one of the items could now be removed from the list. This item related to Our People Action Plan (Report 2012/13 and Plan 2013/15) – min. no.16(5) (13/08/13) - it felt that this should remain on the list for the time being. The committee had understood that when it considered the Plan 2013/15 the recommendation would subsequently be incorporated into the plan.

It then turned its attention to a report on the **South Ribble Leisure Partnership**. The committee commended the South Ribble Leisure Partnership for its performance. It looked forward to receiving future updates on the GP Referral Scheme. The committee requested that it be provided with a copy of the partnership's capital programme and the prioritisation process for its leisure sites. It also encouraged the council and the trust to explore how the partnership might work more closely with the Sports Development Team, in particular engaging with hard to reach groups.

The next and penultimate item considered was the **Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service – Consultation on Emergency Cover**. The committee received a presentation from the Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service and was addressed by County Councillor Francesco De Molfetta (Chairman, Lancashire Combined Fire Authority), John Buck (Group Manager, Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service), Steve Harman (Brigade Secretary, Fire Brigade Union) and David Russel (Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service). The committee thanked them for their presentation and their comprehensive responses.

The committee expressed concern at the Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service's proposal to remove a whole-time fire engine and crew from Bamber Bridge Fire Station and requested this be re-considered because of the disproportionate adverse impact of increased response times in the Bamber Bridge area that would increase the risk of fatalities.

The committee also requested that the Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service:

- explore the possibility of introducing Day Crew Plus at Bamber Bridge Fire Station
- continue to provide a fire prevention service (such as installation of smoke detectors etc) in the Bamber Bridge area
- review the impact of future development in South Ribble as part of its calculations, in light of the council's Local Development Framework and Central Lancashire City Deal

The final item discussed by the committee was an **Update on Scrutiny Reviews and Scrutiny Matters**. The committee approved the final report of the Scrutiny Review of Health Inequalities for submission to Council on 20 November 2013. It noted progress and agreed the scope of the Scrutiny Review of Planning. The committee agreed the creation of a Scrutiny Review of Flooding and Drainage task group consisting of Councillors Martin, M Gardner, Mrs S Jones, Ms Prynn and Titherington. In respect of NHS Healthcheck: Joint Scrutiny Review with Lancashire County Council, it received an update and endorsed the creation of a task group (Councillors K Jones, Titherington, Miss Walker and Mrs Woollard) noting that Councillor Titherington had been appointed chairman. The chairman reported that he had attended the last meeting of Lancashire County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee – when the Clinical Commissioning Groups in Lancashire were before the committee. There was no feedback on meetings and training attended by members of the

committee and the committee considered and noted its forward plan and also that of the Cabinet.

B. 5 November 2013

The committee started by considering **Matters Arising** which listed the outstanding matters from its last meeting. The committee agreed to remove all but the item relating to Our People Action Plan (Report 2012/13 and Plan 2013/15) – min. no.5 (13/08/13) which it felt should remain on the list for now.

Next the committee considered a report on the **South Ribble Partnership – Summary 2012/13**. It acknowledged that the partnership had worked on last year's recommendation relating to areas with few Community Bids Fund applications. The committee commended the partnership for the progress over the last year. It appreciated everything done by members of the partnership was in a voluntary capacity. The committee looked forward to receiving a copy of the new Sustainable Communities Strategy in two to three months. It congratulated the partnership on the Skills for Work project and its impressive outcomes.

The committee then turned its attention to the council's **Performance Monitoring Report: Mid Year 2013/14 (April 2013 to September 2013)**. The committee commended all those involved in delivering the Corporate Plan and the progress made. It asked that future Corporate Plans include more explicit actions and challenging targets. The committee looked forward to receiving information on the duty to discharge homelessness to the private sector. It urged the Leader to ensure that a solution was found to the vacant post of Director of Development and Planning as soon as possible. The committee welcomed the Leader's re-assurance that there were no capacity issues with regards to delivering the Corporate Plan as a result of the foregoing vacancy. It also thanked the Leader for her re-assurance that members would be kept informed about progress with the City Deal and the setting up of governance arrangements. The committee recommended greater links between the City Deal and the Leyland Board. It expressed concern that Worden Arts Centre and the Marsden Theatre remained empty and the delay in the officer working group reporting back on its future use. The committee hoped that lessons had been learned from the way the Leyland Fire engine display case project was designed and managed.

The final item discussed by the committee was an **Update on Scrutiny Reviews and Scrutiny Matters**. The committee noted the progress of the Scrutiny Review of Planning, including meeting members and officers and shadowing teams in Planning. Further to agreeing the membership of the Scrutiny Review of Drainage and Flooding this group would meet in December. In respect of the NHS Healthcheck: Joint Scrutiny Review the CCGs had been questioned, it was to meet next week and members in pairs were to visit GPs to see how they conducted health checks. Whilst the chairman had been unable to attend the last meeting of Lancashire County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee, papers had been circulated to members of the Scrutiny Committee. There had been two training events. Firstly, Health Scrutiny at Warrington had been informative highlighting different angles on the topic and that this council's members were up to speed on the subject. An information gathering visit was planned to Pendle BC. The second had been Effective Questioning Techniques which was well received by members but they were disappointed that the second session had had to be cancelled due to numbers and were keen for this to be re-convened. The committee considered and noted its forward plan and also that of the Cabinet.

I hereby commend the report of the Scrutiny Committee to the Council.

COUNCILLOR MICK TITHERINGTON
CHAIRMAN
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE