

SOUTH RIBBLE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Scrutiny Committee

Meeting held at 6.00pm on Tuesday, 31 January 2017 in Wheel Room, Civic Centre, West Paddock, Leyland PR25 1DH

Present:

Councillor Titherington (in the chair)

Councillors Bird, Coulton, Michael Green, Martin, M Tomlinson, Mrs K Walton, Watkinson, Wharton and Mrs Woollard

In Attendance:

Darren Cranshaw (Scrutiny and Performance Officer) and James Wallwork (Democratic Services Officer)

Also in Attendance

Councillor Mullineaux (Leader of the Council), Jean Hunter (Interim Chief Executive) and Joanne Platt (Corporate Improvement Manager)

Public Attendance: 2 members of the public were present

Officers: 8 other officers were present

Other Members: Councillors Clark, Mrs Mary Green, Hughes, P Smith, Mrs Snape and G Walton

Minute No.	Description/Resolution
30	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs S Jones and Suthers.</p>
31	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>
32	<p>Minutes of the Last Meeting</p> <p>UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the chairman.</p>
33	<p>Matters Arising from Previous Meeting(s)</p> <p>The committee considered the list of matters arising from the last and earlier meetings. It was agreed to remove the following matters from the list:</p> <p>08/03/16 - Looks forward to seeing action plan and measuring the progress in the Housing Framework – min no.53</p> <p>19/04/16 - The Community Safety Partnership reviews how it measures resident confidence in South Ribble being a safe place – min no.59.5</p>

	<p>20/09/16 - Concern that the Green Flag feedback indicates the number of staff on Worden Park had reduced and requests further information – min no.3</p> <p>25/10/16 - Involve the Scrutiny Committee in the development of a SMART corporate plan and asks for robust targets to be developed – min no.2</p> <p>25/10/16 - Looks forward to Member Learning Hour on Economic Development – min no.8</p>
34	<p>Corporate Plan 2017-18</p> <p>Councillor Mullineaux, Leader of the Council and Joanne Platt, Corporate Improvement Manager, were present and introduced the draft Corporate Plan 2017-18. The Leader indicated that this was a smarter type of plan than presented in previous years and would help move things forward. He stated that the Scrutiny Committee along with Cabinet and the Corporate Improvement Manager had been involved in preparing the plan.</p> <p>The Chairman welcomed the draft Corporate Plan and the improved approach to involving Scrutiny in developing the Corporate Plan. He hoped that the comments made at this meeting would be taken on board. He also recognised the steps which had been taken and that this was the first time in a while where the plan had been considered by Scrutiny prior to Cabinet.</p> <p>Following a question from the Chairman, the Leader explained that the Corporate Plan had a significant part in running the council as it set out the priorities for the Council for 2017-18 and what could be achieved during those 12 months. The plan would put the building blocks in place for the future and hoped that during those 12 months, the Council would be able to see the light at the end of the tunnel.</p> <p>In response to a question, the Leader explained that local businesses were regularly consulted and it was important that they were kept involved when possible. The Corporate Improvement Manager added that there was a specific key actions for much wider consultation with residents, businesses and other stakeholders to develop and influence priorities for the next three years. It was recognised that a fundamental review was required with stakeholders, public and staff. At present only residents had been consulted but this would be extended further. The Corporate Improvement Manager explained that the Gateway Surveys were another way of collecting data. However, improvements could be made as to how the Council collect this particular information which would make the data more robust.</p> <p>The Leader appreciated the comments of Councillor M Tomlinson regarding the Corporate Plan being much easier to read, and confirmed that he was confident that everything in the plan could be achieved. Councillor Tomlinson asked a further question concerning the links with the Health and Wellbeing Board and the work the Council was actively doing to reduce health inequalities. The Leader indicated that although the Council was interested in the health and wellbeing of its residents, it was the responsibility of its partners. The Corporate Improvement Manager added that the Council would still be playing a full and active part in these boards. Although the Council was not directly responsible for this particular area, it still had a role in the early intervention agenda. Councillor Tomlinson was disappointed with the response and suggested that consideration should be given to including an action to deliver the Leyland Loop.</p> <p>Following a question from Councillor Bird, the Leader indicated that he had not heard the interview with the Cabinet Member on BBC Radio Lancashire regarding the future of South Ribble's leisure facilities. Following the Leader's response, Councillor Bird read</p>

an extract of the interview and asked if the Council had now moved past that strategic stage. The Leader explained that as a responsible Council, it needed to look at the future needs of the borough but assured the committee that no decision had been made about the future of the leisure service.

The Chairman referred to the clean, green and safe section and that there didn't appear to be any outcomes or actions around the Council's Licensing Service. The Leader explained that the detailed way that the Licensing Service had been scrutinised over the last 12 months he thought that the service would now be one of the best in the country. However, it was important that the service be continually monitored to ensure that the service continued to be fit for purpose.

Following a question from Councillor Coulton concerning the prevention of people dropping litter, the Leader explained that this issue was regularly raised. The Council was looking at bringing in new technology to respond to issues of litter control, but educating public not to drop litter was still extremely important.

The Leader responded to a question concerning environmental enforcement and stated that these particular issues would be dealt with plans which sat underneath the Corporate Plan. The Corporate Plan dealt with issues at a higher level; However, this did not mean they wouldn't be addressed.

The Leader agreed to give consideration into how the plan could be explicit on what was within the Council's control and accountable for.

In response to a question from Councillor Mrs Walton, the Corporate Improvement Manager explained that the Residents Telephone Survey had started the previous week and although the percentage of residents contacted would not be very high it would provide a broad baseline and some demographic information. These would form priorities for the next Corporate Plan.

Councillor Michael Green raised a question concerning the Strategic Property and Asset Review and that it wasn't mentioned within the Corporate Plan. The Leader explained that the full outcome of the review was not yet known and would be included if required. The Chairman indicated that once the review had been completed he would like to see some actions included.

Following a question from Councillor Mrs Woollard, the Corporate Improvement Manager stated that the budget would include the amount of savings which needed to be found for this and next year. The Leader agreed to provide full impact assessments of the savings proposals and the Chairman welcomed this commitment.

The Corporate Improvement Manager responded to a question from Councillor Michael Green, stating that the Council was committed to reviewing services to ensure that they were efficient, effective and exceptional; However, being realistic she was not sure if the resources were available at present to do this. She added that the success of the services could be measured by the outcomes of that service, whether targets were being achieved, resident's satisfaction data and whether key performance indicators were being achieved. These would be shared with the committee when they are available.

The Leader stated that Scrutiny could help Cabinet in delivering the Corporate Plan by providing positive constructive advice as had been the case that night.

Councillor P Smith, who was in the audience, stated that strong and healthy

	<p>communities was engrained in everything the council does and agreed with Councillor Tomlinson regarding the Health and Wellbeing Board and that this Council was instrumental, along with other partners, in setting this board up.</p> <p>Councillor Clark, who was also in the audience, indicated that that the Corporate Plan was just a direction and that policies need to be put in place to address, act upon, review and update throughout the year.</p> <p>Councillor Mrs Snape referred to the report and throughout it stated that progress would be monitored. On behalf of Cabinet she reassured the committee that this would take place</p> <p>The Chairman thanked the Leader and the Corporate Improvement Manager for attending the meeting and presenting the Corporate Plan and responding to the questions raised.</p> <p>UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the Leader and Corporate Improvement Manager be thanked for attending. 2. That the positive steps and improved approach to involving Scrutiny in developing the Corporate Plan and taking its comments on board be welcomed. 3. That consideration be given to including an action to deliver the Leyland Loop. 4. That the Leader's commitment to carrying out a strategic review of leisure and his assurance that no decision about the future of leisure had been made, be welcomed. 5. That consideration be given to adding an action to continuing to monitor and ensure Licensing was fit for purpose. 6. That the committee was reassured by the Leader's assurance on the improvements made to the Council's Licensing Service. 7. That consideration be given to adding an action on proactive environmental enforcement. 8. That the plan be explicit on what was within the Council's control and accountable for. 9. That the committee looked forward to receiving the outcomes of the strategic property and asset review. 10. That the commitment to providing full impact assessments of the savings proposals be welcomed.
35	<p>Employee Survey Results</p> <p>The Leader of the Council remained and was joined by Jean Hunter, Interim Chief Executive and presented the report on the Employee Survey Results.</p> <p>The Leader indicated that obviously the results were very upsetting especially as not too long ago the results were much higher. He was aware that this needed to be addressed as soon as possible. The Interim Chief Executive agreed stating that it was a significant fall and wasn't a surprise considering what had occurred at the Council over the past year.</p> <p>In response to a question from Councillor Tomlinson, the Leader indicated that it was up to every councillor as well as every officer to treat each other fairly and with dignity. As long as everyone went down that route positively, it should be a step in the right direction. In respect of putting plans in place, the Leader indicated that he had only been aware of the results for a matter of days but that it was important to move forward, although he understood that this wouldn't be easy.</p>

The Chairman indicated that these were devastating results and was astounded and asked the Leader if had discussed them with Cabinet yet. The Leader indicated that he hadn't but would do so as soon as possible. Following a question from the Chairman concerning the question which indicated that 20% of staff felt bullied, the Interim Chief Executive said that this was the most shocking figure and that work taking place with the Centre of Public Scrutiny would cover this. She added that some of the work already put in place included producing an Organisational Development Strategy, undertaking a 360 degree assessment and having an honest, open and blameless culture. The Interim Chief Executive indicated that she didn't know how the figures were split between officer/officer and member/officer bullying.

Councillor M Tomlinson was shocked to read that only 4% of staff thought that moral within the Council was good and he urged the Leader to come back with some plans as soon as possible on how this should be addressed. The Chairman agreed stating that all employees and councillors need to know how this will be addressed. The Leader appreciated the comments stating that thought needed to be given to how to move this forward but that it was vitally important to get this right and that he would work with the Interim Chief Executive to provide a joined up approach. The Interim Chief Executive explained that any actions would be included in the Improvement Plan in March.

Following a question from Councillor Michael Green concerning the approach from SMT, the Interim Chief Executive indicated that SMT recognise that they play an important part of this and that they need to be open, accessible and visible. Work had already started to improve communications with the Council's Intranet being rejuvenated. There needed to be a two way communication and that the Core Managers Group were a link between the two. She also referred to staff briefings and they were not as inclusive as she would have liked.

Councillor Martin referred to the health, safety and wellbeing of staff must be terrible. This would have created a huge amount of stress which had impacted on the sickness records. In response the Interim Chief Executive stated that the Council had an active Health and Wellbeing Group and that the week before had been a very popular Health and Wellbeing Week. She confirmed that staff absences had doubled over the last 12 months.

In response to a question from Councillor Coulton, the Interim Chief Executive stated that the Communications Strategy would be considered at the next meeting and that internal communications had been prioritised first. She also referred to social media training for members which would be taking place shortly.

Following a question from Councillor Wharton concerning the structure of the Council, the Interim Chief Executive stated that she would need to look at what's right moving forward particularly with the key vacancies that still exist. She also stated that it would take about six months to bring in the new Chief Executive and clearly that person would want to have an input.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the Leader hoped to see a considerable improvements in the survey when it is repeated in June 2017. Although there was a lot of work to be done before then, he said it was important to be positive and move forward.

Councillor P Smith, who was in the audience, was devastated by the contents of the report. He thought he had a good working relationship with officers, but if he had contributed to these results then he would feel even worse. He said everyone needed

	<p>to accept responsibility and would be interested to see what the recommendations would be.</p> <p>Councillor Mrs Snape, who was also in the audience, was greatly concerned with this and that it needed to be addressed.</p> <p>A member of the people stated that this was a diabolical report but stated that the report was flawed due to there being an option to either agree or disagree.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked the Leader and the Interim Chief Executive for attending the meeting and responding to the questions raised.</p> <p>UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The committee expressed its deep concern with the results of the Employee Survey. 2. That the Leader develops a detailed plan of the steps that will be taken to respond to the issues identified in the survey and these be provided as a matter of urgency. 3. That the committee was reassured by the Interim Chief Executive’s work to support employees and take the Council forward. 4. That the all members and officers be encouraged to work together in “One Council, One Team” approach. 5. That a 360 degree assessment process for members be introduced. 6. That a review of the structure of the Council be welcomed. 7. That a member Training and Development Plan be developed.
<p>36</p>	<p>Scrutiny Matters</p> <p>a) Membership of Scrutiny Task Groups –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i) In respect of the Standing Heath Scrutiny Steering Group, this would not be created until the next Council year. (ii) That Councillor Wharton be added to Councillors Michael Green and Martin to make up the membership of the Scrutiny Review of the Banqueting Suite. Other volunteers were welcome. <p>b) Verbal report on the Scrutiny Committee’s tour of Worden Park, Leyland and Hurst Grange Park, Penwortham – This had been covered at the last meeting.</p> <p>c) Verbal update on Lancashire County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee – The Chairman stated that he would circulate the minutes of the last meeting of this committee where Health and Social Care Integration was discussed.</p> <p>d) Member feedback on meeting(s) and training attended on behalf of the committee – Councillor Martin referred to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Panel and that the next meeting was the following week.</p> <p>e) Cabinet and Scrutiny Forward Plans – the plans were noted.</p>

The meeting finished at 7.35pm

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