

MINUTES OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING DATE Thursday, 14 November 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors David Howarth (Chair), Michael Green (Vice-Chair), Will Adams, Jacky Alty, Matt Campbell, Colin Coulton, Chris Lomax, Colin Sharples, Stephen Thurlbourn, Matthew Trafford and Karen Walton

CABINET MEMBERS: Councillor Michael Titherington (Deputy Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member (Health, Wellbeing and Leisure) and Deputy Leader of the Labour Group) and Councillor Matthew Tomlinson (Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets))

OFFICERS: Peter McHugh (Assistant Director of Property and Housing), Neil Anderson (Assistant Director of Projects and Development), Darren Cranshaw (Assistant Director of Scrutiny & Democratic Services) and Charlotte Lynch (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

OTHER MEMBERS: Councillor Margaret Smith (Leader of the Opposition and Leader of the Conservative Group)

PUBLIC: 0

20 Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mal Donoghue.

21 Minutes of the Last Scrutiny Committee Meeting

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee meeting held on Thursday, 10 October 2019 be signed as a correct record by the Chair.

22 Minutes of the Last Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That the minutes of the Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel meeting, held on Monday, 11 November 2019, be noted.

23 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

24 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

The Committee received an update on progress made against matters arising from previous meetings.

An update on town centre masterplans was requested. Members were assured that an update would be provided at the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

Members were informed that Leyland had been selected as a town which may be eligible to benefit from a Town Fund Deal. A report on this would be provided to Council in November 2019.

As the Scrutiny Committee would not meet again until after the New Year, it was agreed that the masterplans for every town centre would be circulated to members.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That the update be noted.

25 Leisure Partnership

The Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Leisure (Councillor Mick Titherington), the Assistant Director of Projects and Development (Neil Anderson), the Contracts Manager for South Ribble Community Leisure (Mark Snaylam) and the Chairman of the South Ribble Leisure Trust (Peter Dodd) presented a report on the Leisure Partnership to the Committee and responded to members' comments and queries.

The Leisure Partnership is a collaboration between South Ribble Community Leisure Trust, SERCO and South Ribble Borough Council and has been in operation since 2005. It is responsible for the management of leisure centres in Leyland, Penwortham and Bamber Bridge and the South Ribble Tennis Centre.

Members were informed that the Partnership is governed by a board of trustees who are appointed following a selection process, on a need and skill basis.

The close working relationship between the Trust and the Council was acknowledged as they collaborate on projects such as the development of the Leisure Strategy. It was acknowledged that the development of a Leisure and Public Health Strategy, to include mental health, prevention and youth engagement, may be useful to take a more holistic, strategic and integrated approach with partners.

In response to a query regarding the Partnership's vision for community leisure, members were informed that the Trust envisages South Ribble having a high proportion of active residents, a high number of residents able to swim and a reduction in the obesity rate in the borough. Importance was placed on residents being able to easily access provisions for leisure activities across South Ribble.

Members queried the role of council staff in relation to the Partnership and were assured that there is a Lead Officer for Leisure and a Leisure and Projects Manager who are employees of the council but have responsibility for managing the contract with SERCO. Assurances were given that there is a full complement of staff with the capacity to maintain a good working relationship with the Partnership.

It was highlighted that the leisure contract would expire in 2021. A consultancy firm has been commissioned to identify options for the future management of leisure centres and a report on these findings would be presented to Cabinet in 2021.

The role of the Partnership in the development of the council's Leisure Campus project was queried. The Partnership is responsible for the management of the leisure provisions and its role is to find the most efficient way to deliver leisure at a benefit to residents. Members felt that it would be useful for the Council to engage with the Leisure Trust on the Campus project in the future.

The achievements of the Partnership were recognised and members requested further detail on the challenges facing the service. It was acknowledged that the leisure industry is a competitive market and that this had contributed to a decline in membership. Members were assured that, following significant investment in Leyland Leisure Centre and the Tennis Centre in 2017 and a review of membership rates, there had been a steady increase in customers.

The decentralisation of the GP referral scheme from Lancashire County Council to ABL Health had also posed a challenge to the Trust. Members were pleased to note that, as ABL Health's contract would soon expire, the Partnership had been working with the council to consider whether they could collaborate on the scheme to provide residents with a locally-focussed approach to referrals and leisure.

In response to discussion around the environment and the council's pledge to be carbon neutral by 2030, examples such as LED lighting, the Green Tick Award, movement sensors on lighting and a boiler efficiency of 92% were provided to demonstrate the measures taken by the leisure centres to increase sustainability.

A customer satisfaction survey was undertaken in April 2018 and members were informed that the results were similar to the previous survey undertaken. Further information on the results was requested.

As the expenditure has increased significantly at Leyland Leisure Centre over the last 4 years, members asked for clarification on these increased costs to be provided following the meeting.

In response to a query regarding the link between the Leisure Partnership and My Neighbourhood Forums, it was accepted that the Forums could help to deliver the Partnership's agenda by advertising events to residents and organising leisure or sports events in their respective areas, in conjunction with the council's Sports Development team.

Members queried whether SERCO is a living wage employer and requested further information on this.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That

1. the council considers how best to engage with the Leisure Trust on the Campus project in the future.

2. the Scrutiny Committee would like to consider the future options for the management of leisure facilities in the future.
3. the Scrutiny Committee welcomes the performance of the Leisure Partnership and achievements included in the report.
4. further information on the results of the leisure centre customer survey be provided to committee members.
5. further information on the increased costs at Leyland Leisure Centre be provided to committee members.
6. greater work between the Leisure Partnership and My Neighbourhood Forums be encouraged.
7. the 2019 delivery plans have more quantifiable measures of success.
8. the Council considers developing a Leisure and Public Health Strategy to take a more holistic, strategic and integrated approach with partners to include mental health, prevention and youth engagement.
9. confirmation be provided to committee members that SERCO pays their employees the foundation living wage.

26 Worden Hall Update

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Assets (Councillor Matthew Tomlinson) and the Assistant Director of Property and Housing (Peter McHugh) presented a report on the progress of Worden Hall to the Committee and responded to members' comments and queries.

An officer working group had met for the first time in early November and was made up of representatives across many departments, including Estates, Planning, Legal and Community Involvement. The group had outlined their priorities and objectives for the project and would meet again in December.

Officers would meet with the consultants for the project in November and December to establish an approach, implementation plan and costings for the project and a report on this would be provided to Cabinet in January 2020.

Members queried the effect that work on the Hall would have on the park and events. Opportunities for the Hall and the park to work together on events were acknowledged and clear responsibilities and permissions would be established for those working in both the Hall and the park to mitigate any potential conflict.

In response to an enquiry about the financial and social values of the project, members were informed that work on the Hall could have a significant benefit for residents and the council. The Hall could be used by a wide variety of people for a range of events such as birthday parties or community events and, whilst there is potential for the project to make a profit in its first year, members and officers involved on the project would be content to breakeven in the first year.

Consultation had formed a large part of the project thus far and members queried how this would be maintained as work progresses. It was acknowledged that there had been a clear steer provided by residents through the consultation feedback and that there was no requirement to undertake further formal consultation. Progress would be shared through the council's communications channels to inform residents of the developments in the project.

In response to a query regarding the role of My Neighbourhood Forum members in the work on the Hall, the Committee was assured that Forum members may help to influence and shape the project once the approach is agreed.

By the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee in January 2020, the project will have progressed, with the officer working group having met again and a report on what the project will entail having been received by Cabinet at the end of January.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That

1. the Scrutiny Committee looks forward to seeing the masterplan and timeline for the Worden Hall buildings being brought back into use.
2. the Scrutiny Committee welcomes the commitment to ensure that social value will be assessed as the project develops.
3. the Scrutiny Committee thanks the Cabinet Member for his offer to work with the Leyland My Neighbourhood Forum on the future of Worden Hall.

27 Scrutiny Matters

27a Lancashire County Council Health Scrutiny Committee Update

The Chair, Councillor David Howarth, provided the Committee with an overview of the discussion at the last meeting of Lancashire County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee, which he was unable to attend.

Members were informed that the Health Scrutiny Committee had considered the Terms of Reference for the proposed Joint Health Scrutiny for the Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care System (ICS). The Health Scrutiny Committee would receive the minutes of all meetings of the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee for the Lancashire and South Cumbria ICS.

The Health Scrutiny Committee also received an update on the development of the Occupational Therapy Service within Adult Social Care at Lancashire County Council. Significant improvements had been made in timeliness of assessments and the increase in Disabled Facilities Grants recommendations since 2014, and all Occupational Therapy posts had been recruited to.

A further report on the differing allocations of Disabled Facilities Grants to district councils in Lancashire with a focus on discretionary grants would be presented to a future meeting of the Health Scrutiny Committee.

27 Meetings and training attended by Scrutiny Committee members

b

Councillor Stephen Thurlbourn informed members of the committee that he had attended the first meeting of the Climate Emergency Working Task Group.

There had been a change in the Chair for the group from Councillor Susan Jones to Councillor Ken Jones and the group had resolved to use the year 1990 as a benchmark for measuring change in environmental factors across the borough, which is in line with the practice of the European Union and central government.

Councillor Karen Walton provided members with an update on the work of the Community Involvement Member Working Group. An all-member workshop was held in early November and a report with recommendations for improving community involvement from the working group would be provided to Cabinet in January 2020.

Members had also recently attended mandatory safeguarding training. An extra session for those who could not attend would be arranged for the early New Year.

27c Forward Plan

The Forward Plan was noted.

27 Scrutiny Committee Forward Plan

d

Members received the Scrutiny Committee Forward Plan which detailed the reports due for consideration over the next municipal year.

Councillor Matthew Trafford requested that a report be brought to the committee on the housing associations that work with the council. A list of housing associations which operate in the borough would be circulated to members to help them decide which associations to invite to a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

Members were informed that the Scrutiny Review Task Group on Commercialisation and Property Investment would meet for the first time in November 2019 and that the review would be scoped at that meeting.

The Scrutiny Committee Forward Plan was noted.

Chair

Date