

MINUTES OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING DATE Wednesday, 30 August 2017

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors Matthew Tomlinson (Chair), Colin Coulton (Vice-Chair), Carol Chisholm, Michael Green, David Howarth, Susan Jones, Keith Martin, Barbara Nathan, Michael Titherington, Karen Walton and Ian Watkinson

CABINET MEMBERS: Councillor Peter Mullineaux (Leader), Councillor Colin Clark (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Support and Assets), Councillor Phil Smith (Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Leisure), Councillor Graham Walton (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Streetscene), Councillor Mary Green and Councillor Paul Foster (Leader of the Opposition)

OFFICERS: Heather McManus (Chief Executive), Kerry Maguire (Senior Risk and Insurance Officer), Darren Cranshaw (Scrutiny & Performance Manager) and Dianne Scambler (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

OTHER MEMBERS: Councillor Mary Green and Paul Foster (Leader of the Opposition)

PUBLIC: 1

10 Apologies for Absence

Councillor Linda Woollard submitted her apologies.

11 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 25 July 2017 were confirmed as a correct record for signing by the Chair.

12 Declarations of Interest

Item 5: Darren Cranshaw, Scrutiny and Performance Manager left the room as he is directly affected by the Senior Management Restructure.

13 Matters arising from Previous Meetings

Members received an update of the progress made against matters arising from all previous meetings. It was agreed to remove all items from the Matters Arising sheet with the exception of:

1. Acquisition of land at Wesley Street Mill.

2. Bringing forward proposals for the Banqueting Suites and Worden Arts and Crafts Centre.

The Committee asked that robust updates be provided to the next scheduled meeting of the Committee.

14 Management Restructure Consultation

The Committee welcomed the Chief Executive, Heather McManus who was attending the meeting to talk about her proposals for the new Senior Management Restructure for the authority that would ensure that it is fit for purpose, delivers Members priorities and also broaden and deepen the shared services arrangement with Chorley Council.

The Chair of the Committee stated that this meeting was to allow members to ask questions of the Chief Executive that would help them to gain a greater understanding of the thought processes behind the two proposals. An additional meeting the Committee was scheduled to take place on the rise of Cabinet next week to collate a formal response to the consultation.

The Chief Executive explained that as Head of Paid Service, the Council had employed her to put in place a management structure that would deliver the corporate agenda set by the Council. This agenda is detailed in the Councils Corporate Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy. The organisation wants growth, sustainability and improved governance and it was felt that this could only be achieved by the implementation of a more robust and resilient Senior Management team to drive through change across the Council.

Ahead of the proposals, extensive consultation has been undertaken with staff and a number of key themes identified that included, the restructuring of the Senior Management Team and Core Managers, improved leadership capability, development opportunities, the ability for cross working across the authority, along with improved decision making, communications and staff morale. The proposals aim to address this feedback along with repositioning the regeneration and growth agenda, exploring further shared arrangements with Chorley Council and the delivery of a sustainable leadership model that would strengthen the Statutory Officers contribution.

The proposed structures will also generate significant savings amounting to between £500,000-600,000 that would be realised in little over a year.

In response to concerns of members both on Committee and in the audience, the Chief Executive explained her justification for the proposed sharing arrangements of the statutory roles of the Section 151 and Monitoring Officer's with Chorley and gave assurances that the authority would have full time dedicated statutory officers on site.

The Committee also had concerns about the security function being absorbed into the Democratic Services team, favouring the existing arrangements of their dedicated senior officer support. It was explained that the new proposed arrangements would provide additional support to the scrutiny function in the form of a Democratic Services Officer lead in addition to involvement by senior managers who could provide the relevant technical guidance when needed.

Members asked how staff would be supported throughout the process, particularly those officers who would be unsuccessful in obtaining a role in the new structure and asked about the authority's appointment and redundancies policies. Specialist advisors had been brought in to liaise with those staff affected to offer advice and support throughout the job application and interviewing process and successful staff would have the same terms and conditions as at present, with no plans at this stage to amalgamate this aspect of the shared arrangements. A robust recruitment process was needed to ensure that all staff appointed have the necessary skills in place to step up to the challenging agenda.

Once the new Senior Management structure is in place, the transformation programme will trigger restructures across the authority and it was anticipated that this would take around 18 months to complete. The aim is to have the full Senior Management structure in place by 31 March 2018.

Members were asked to consider all the information provided with a view to formulating a full response to the consultation at their next meeting on 6 September.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

15 Scrutiny Review of Licensing Action Plan Update

The Leader submitted his apologies as he had to leave the meeting on a personal matter. The Chief Executive stayed for this item.

Councillor Mick Titherington who had chaired the review commented that it was pleasing to see that the vast majority of the recommendations made by scrutiny on the review of licensing had been completed. Members asked for better wording to be used in future to denote progress made and asked for better and improved use of the RAG rating system. The Committee commended all officers that had been involved for their continued hard work.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

16 Scrutiny Review of Flooding: Final Progress Report

The Committee welcomed Councillor Colin Clark, cabinet Member for Corporate Support and Assets who was attending the meeting along with Kerry Maguire, Senior Risk and Insurance Officer to present the final progress report on the scrutiny review of flooding.

Members were pleased to note that all the recommendations made by the Scrutiny Task Group that had been accepted by Cabinet in December 2016 had now been implemented and the authority were confident that the measures put in place were robust to ensure an effective response to any future incident. All relevant officers had undertaken appropriate training and a call-out rota introduced at Director level.

The Committee were informed that a Lancashire wide campaign 'Get ready for winter' was due to be launched shortly that would help people make the necessary preparations to combat bad weather, including the risk of flooding and that all Emergency Planning Officers from the relevant authorities and blue light organisations met on an annual basis to ensure that their plans were fit for purpose.

Although not a statutory responsibility of the Council, the Cabinet Member reiterated that the authority did have a duty of care to its residents in such situations and as a consequence of the review undertaken by scrutiny following the flooding in December 2015, the Council now had improved procedures in place. All Elected Members could contribute by effectively communicating with the local community and the administration welcomed the involvement of Scrutiny in such situations.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

17 Scrutiny Matters

17a Staff Morale Review

Members were provided with a draft final report of the review for their consideration before its approval at their next meeting. The Chair thanked those Members that had given their time to the review.

17 Lancashire County Council Health Scrutiny Committee

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The next meeting is on 19 September 2017.

17c Scrutiny Committee Forward Plan

A workshop is currently being arranged to develop the Forward Plan and Work Programme for the remainder of 2017/18.

17 Cabinet Forward Plan

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The Committee noted the Forward Plan. The Chair identified the Leisure Review and Review of Fees and Charges as items of interest for the Committee in future meetings.

Chair

Date