

MINUTES OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING DATE Monday, 2 September 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors David Howarth (Chair), Jacky Alty, Matt Campbell, Chris Lomax, Colin Sharples, Stephen Thurlbourn and Karen Walton

CABINET MEMBERS: Councillor Paul Foster (Leader of the Council and Leader of the Labour Group), Councillor Michael Titherington (Deputy Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member (Health, Wellbeing and Leisure) and Deputy Leader of the Labour Group), Councillor Aniela Bylinski Gelder (Cabinet Member (Community Engagement, Social Justice and Wealth Building)), Councillor William Evans (Cabinet Member (Planning, Regeneration and City Deal)), Councillor Susan Jones JP (Cabinet Member (Environment)) and Councillor Matthew Tomlinson (Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets))

OFFICERS: Gary Hall (Interim Chief Executive), Howard Anthony (South Ribble Partnership Manager), 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), Councillor Damian Bretherton and Councillor Phil Smith

PUBLIC: 0

8 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Will Adams, Colin Coulton, Mal Donoghue, Michael Green and Matthew Trafford.

9 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

10 Draft Refreshed Council Corporate Plan 2019-23

The Leader of the Council (Councillor Paul Foster) and the Interim Chief Executive (Gary Hall) presented the Draft Refreshed Council Corporate Plan for 2019-2023 to the Committee and responded to members' comments and queries.

Members were informed that the Council's corporate vision had been updated and that over thirty projects had been refocused and others removed. Evidence for the changes to the Corporate Plan had largely come from the administration's manifesto

and four-year campaign in addition to information highlighted by air quality data and housing needs assessments.

Efforts would be made to appropriately scope projects to enable efficient monitoring and a review of resources was in the process of being undertaken to ensure successful delivery of the Corporate Plan's objectives.

Following queries, members were advised that community engagement and public participation would be encouraged and facilitated by the Corporate Plan through various schemes. These included the establishment of a cross-party member working group on community involvement, a Youth Council, the relaunch of the South Ribble Partnership and a review of My Neighbourhood Forums. Residents' surveys would be carried out within the next three months.

The report highlighted that project and risk updates would be provided informally to meetings of the Programme Board. Members questioned the purpose of the Programme Board and whether formal mechanisms for reporting on risk were needed. The Programme Board is an officer-led meeting to ensure the efficient fulfilment of the Corporate Plan. Members were assured that in the interest of transparency all critical information around projects and risk would be circulated to members.

The Apprentice Factory project was queried and members were informed of its purpose and objectives. Emphasis was placed on the importance of apprenticeships for school leavers in low-income areas and how the Apprentice Factory could encourage local businesses to sign up to the scheme.

Members requested further explanation of the Community Bank and were advised that this would be across the North West and would be supported by five local authorities, including Preston City Council, and other organisations to provide small-scale loans to the local community. The project remains to be scoped and a review of its suitability and sustainability for South Ribble Borough Council was ongoing.

Councillor Bill Evans left the meeting at 7pm

The Committee explored the reason for removing existing projects from the refreshed Plan and were assured that there would be no impact on the Council from this. The Corporate Plan Revision Document (Appendix 2) highlighted the removal of the Leadership Development Programme and members requested more information on staffing resources. Development opportunities for staff remained a priority and staff surveys were scheduled to be undertaken to gain a better understanding of issues and attitudes.

Members asked about the performance management arrangements for the new Plan and it was acknowledged that a Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel had been established with the first meeting scheduled to take place within the next fortnight. Consequently, the full Scrutiny Committee would no longer receive quarterly performance and budget monitoring reports but would be informed of the discussions surrounding these reports as the minutes of all Panel meetings would be reported to the full Committee.

The role of the Scrutiny Committee in implementing the Plan was acknowledged as being critically important.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That

1. the Committee welcome and commend the new Corporate Plan
2. an explanatory note on the process and evidence base used to develop the Plan is included in the final document
3. the Committee welcomes the assurance that the scoping and delivery of the projects in the Plan will be more robust going forward
4. further information be provided on the priorities to outline what the contribution of the Scrutiny Committee is
5. further information on the Community Bank be reported to Scrutiny Committee as it develops

Chair

Date