

Report of Scrutiny Committee

1. This report summarises the business considered at the meeting of Scrutiny Committee held on 23 January 2020.

South Ribble Partnership Update

2. The Leader of the Council, Councillor Paul Foster, the South Ribble Partnership Manager, Howard Anthony, and the Chair of the Partnership, Jacqui de Rose, presented a report that provided an update on the work of the South Ribble Partnership.
3. The Partnership has recently been relaunched following a restructure and changes to its governance arrangements. Key objectives have been identified and there is an emphasis on improving the quantity of services available to residents and on utilising connections to bolster co-operative working. The Partnership also seeks to increase volunteering opportunities in the borough.
4. Discussion focused on the following areas and we asked for further information to be reported back on certain topics:
 - The Partnership benefits from several grants and most organisations involved provide funding for projects. South Ribble Borough Council, Progress Housing Group and other partners also contribute to the Partnership.
 - We asked for further information on the social progress index which the Partnership is considering using to track social improvement.
 - We were pleased to note that the agreed, clear objectives of the Partnership motivate the work of partners and that there is a strong emphasis on recognising their value and contribution.
 - As the Council has recently declared a climate emergency, we were satisfied that the need to consider environmental impact is identified by the Partnership.
5. We look forward to receiving a further update on the work of the Partnership in around 12 months, by which time it is anticipated that there will be a better understanding of existing services, more effective mapping and an increase in volunteering across the borough.
6. We noted the report and I thanked Councillor Foster, Howard and Jacqui for their attendance.

Worden Hall Project Update

7. The Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Assets, Councillor Matthew Tomlinson, and the Assistant Director of Property and Housing, Peter McHugh, presented a report which provided an update on the progress of the Worden Hall project.

8. The officer working group had met in December and is working to develop a hybrid option for Worden Hall that would enable community use and event hire. We were also informed that the business plan had been reviewed to reflect the anticipated costings for the project and were assured that this could be delivered without the need for subsidy by the Council.
9. Discussion focused on the following areas and we asked for further information to be reported back on certain topics:
 - We were pleased that work on the Hall will link with the wider estate by establishing different areas, such as the café quarter and commercial zone, to provide a variety of activities and amenities.
 - We queried the possibility of increased costs and sought reassurance around the measures that the Council would take to reduce the risk of this. The Cabinet Member and officers were confident that the Hall would become financially self-sufficient and we were pleased that that the budget and timeframe for the project would be shared with us once confirmed.
 - As the Council had recently declared a Climate Emergency, we queried what measures would be taken to make the Hall environmentally-friendly. Although there will be constraints due to the Hall's status as a Listed Building, sustainable options will be considered where appropriate.
 - We were pleased to hear that by the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee in February 2020, the project will have progressed with the capital costs and schedule of works expected to have been confirmed and approved by Cabinet.
10. We noted the report and I thanked Councillor Tomlinson and Peter for their attendance.

Recommendations

That Council note the report.

COUNCILLOR DAVID HOWARTH
CHAIR OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
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