

MINUTES OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING DATE Thursday, 14 February 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors Matthew Tomlinson (Chair), Colin Coulton (Vice-Chair), Carol Chisholm, Susan Jones, Keith Martin, Mike Nathan, Michael Titherington and Graham Walton

CABINET MEMBERS: Councillor Colin Clark (Cabinet Member (Corporate Support and Assets)), Councillor Margaret Smith (Leader of the Council and Leader of the Conservative Group), Councillor Phil Smith (Cabinet Member (Regeneration and Leisure)), Councillor Susan Snape (Cabinet Member (Finance)) and Councillor Karen Walton (Cabinet Member (Public Health and Safety, Wellbeing and Environmental) and Member Champion for Older People)

OFFICERS: Gregg Stott (Deputy Chief Executive of Regeneration and Growth), Tim Povall (Deputy Chief Executive of Resources and Transformation (Section 151 Officer)), Dianne Scambler (Governance and Member Services Team Leader), Darren Cranshaw (Assistant Director of Scrutiny & Democratic Services), Charlotte Lynch (Trainee Governance and Member Services Officer) and Howard Anthony (South Ribble Partnership Manager)

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39 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors David Howarth, Jim Marsh, Elizabeth Mawson, John Rainsbury and Linda Woollard.

40 Minutes of the Last Meeting

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

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

41 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

42 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

The Committee received an update on progress made against matters arising from previous meetings. It was suggested that those actions implemented be removed from the matters arising sheet.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That the update be noted.

43 Corporate Plan and Corporate Risk Register 2019-2024

The Leader of the Council (Councillor Margaret Smith) and Deputy Chief Executive – Regeneration and Growth (Gregg Stott) addressed the Committee and responded to members' comments and enquiries relating to the Corporate Plan and Corporate Risk Register for 2019-2024.

During the discussion, the Committee's comments and enquiries included the following areas:

- The input of residents and wider membership involvement was queried and assurances sought that consultations would occur.
- How the Council seeks to meet the criteria of 'the UK's best place to live' and how the Council knows what this criteria is.
- Differences between the Corporate Plan and the Community Strategy were queried. It was assured that the documents outlined a broader vision for the borough but informed and complemented one another.
- The success measures for the Corporate Plan seemed to be process-based, rather than outcome-based, with reference made to the Dementia Alliance and the percentage of empty properties. It was acknowledged that there would be issues in quantifying success but that it was important to highlight commitment to these matters.
- The measurability and achievability of the project plans were queried. It was reported that the project management system, InPhase, holds a detailed breakdown of indicators and measures which would be reported within quarterly performance reports and quarterly feedback to the Committee. Detailed information for individual projects could be requested for scrutinising by Committee if required.
- The success measure for the Air Quality Plan revolving around the percentage of residents concerned about air quality was considered inappropriate, with the Committee believing success should be measured around the actual quality of air.
- The lack of focus on village centres within the Corporate Plan.
- An update was requested regarding progress at the Cuerden Strategic Site and the economic importance of the site was stressed. The considerable business rate of the site was acknowledged.
- Reference was made to the Cross-Borough Link Road and the timescale for its delivery. Further information was provided on the progress of consultations with Homes England, Taylor Wimpey and Highways England. It was queried

whether explicit timescales for delivery could be included consistently in the Plan.

- The role of South Ribble Ambassadors was explored with regards to the criteria for this position and how this role would be advertised and appointed.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That:

1. the Committee welcomes the look and presentation of the Corporate Plan.
2. future Corporate Plan documents be more explicit on the consultation and evidence base used to influence the Plan.
3. success measures be reviewed to be more measurable and outcome-focused.
4. the Committee looks forward to project plans for each Corporate Plan Action being accessible to Members and to the Scrutiny Committee in future Performance Monitoring reports. [Point of clarity – where appropriate on an individual basis to the Committee].
5. the Committee asks that the measure of success for air quality be reviewed and revised to be more outcome-focused.

44 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy

The Cabinet Member for Finance (Councillor Susan Snape) and Deputy Chief Executive – Resources and Transformation/Section 151 Officer (Tim Povall) addressed the Committee and responded to members' comments and enquiries relating to the 2019/20 Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

During the discussion, the Committee's comments and enquiries included the following areas:

- What the additional income generated by increased council tax would be spent on and what tangible difference(s) residents would see, with a vision to the next five years' strategy and growth.
- The need to raise council tax was queried, due to the council maintaining stable and healthy bank balances.
- The difference between earmarked and total reserves and how these are prioritised was queried. It was confirmed that an earmarked reserve was allocated for a specific purpose.
- An explanation as to the surplus budget for Planning and Property forecasted over the next five years was sought. It was reported that the Council would increasingly benefit from the New Homes Bonus grant as they met targets in house-building.

- The significant amounts received in Section 106 and Infrastructure levies were highlighted and queried as possible investments for affordable housing. Attention was drawn to an ongoing review regarding the use of Section 106 monies and areas to build in and use such money. Indicative figures would be available later in February 2019 with a full report scheduled to be published after the elections in May 2019.
- The reasoning behind referring to staffing and resources as Efficiency Targets in Appendix B was raised and seen as being peculiar wording.
- Assurance was provided that the Council was confident in delivering the capital programme and that it has the skills and capacity required for delivery.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That:

1. the link between the Budget and implementing the Corporate Plan is strengthened and made more explicit.
2. the Committee looks forward to receiving a copy of the Section 106 Review.
3. that future information and reports on how and when Section 106 money is spent be more transparent.
4. the title of the Efficiency Target in Appendix B be reviewed and made more specific.

45 Worden Hall - Progress Update

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Support and Assets (Councillor Colin Clark) and Deputy Chief Executive – Resources and Transformation (Gregg Stott) addressed the Committee and responded to members' comments and enquiries relating to the Worden Hall Commercialisation Update.

During the discussion, the Committee's comments and enquiries included the following areas:

- Disappointment was expressed with the delay in producing the options paper on the future use of Worden Hall and it was queried whether there would be a reduction in fees to the consultants due to this. It was confirmed that there would be no such reduction and that final recommendations would be received from the consultants in March 2019.
- Potential uses for Worden Hall were discussed and it was queried whether there had been any expressions of interest in renting the premises.
- A pricing policy for leasing the premises at Worden Hall was mentioned, with emphasis placed on income generation.
- Concern was expressed over a change to the Terms of Reference for the project which was not reported to the Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That:

1. the Committee expresses concern at the extended delay with the consultant's report into the future of Worden Hall.
2. the Committee looks forward to the consultant's report being presented to Cabinet on 20 March 2019.
3. a written report on progress continues to be a standing item on the Scrutiny Committee agenda.

46 Scrutiny Matters

46a Cabinet Forward Plan

The Committee noted the Cabinet Forward Plan.

46b Scrutiny Forward Plan

The Committee noted the Scrutiny Forward Plan.

46c Joint Scrutiny Review of Our Health, Our Care

The Chair informed the Committee that the Joint Scrutiny Review of Our Health, Our Care had been postponed until May 2019, when more would be known about the next stages of the programme.

46d Lancashire County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee

The Chair updated the Committee that a meeting of Lancashire County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee had been held, but expressed his disappointment that he was unable to attend.

Chair

Date