

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6.00 P.M.

4TH JULY 2012

**PRESENT:-** Councillors Jane Parkinson (Chairman), Roger Dennison (Vice-Chairman), Mark Bevan, Alycia James (substitute for Emma Smith), David Kerr, Ceri Mumford, Margaret Pattison (substitute for Pam Pickles) and David Whitaker

Apologies for Absence:-

Councillors Pam Pickles and Emma Smith

Also in Attendance:- Eddie Sutton, Assistant Chief Executive, Lancashire County Council

Officers in attendance:-

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Mark Cullinan    | Chief Executive (part)                                    |
| Andrew Dobson    | Head of Regeneration and Planning Service (part)          |
| Maurice Brophy   | Planning and Housing Policy Manager (part)                |
| Paul Hatch       | Senior Planning Officer (part)                            |
| Stephen Metcalfe | Principal Democratic Support Officer, Democratic Services |
| Jenny Kay        | Democratic Support Officer, Democratic Services           |

### 12 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2012 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### 13 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman advised that there were no items of Urgent Business. She did however, request the Chief Executive to inform the Committee of the position regarding the Storey Creative Industries Centre.

### 14 UPDATE ON STOREY CREATIVE INDUSTRIES CENTRE

The Chief Executive gave the Committee an update on the decision made by Cabinet on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2012 regarding the Storey Creative Industries Centre.

It was reported that Cabinet had been faced with a difficult decision as to whether to take on the Centre when it was faced with a financial crisis. It was noted that the Council had given the Centre a loan of £90,000 in December 2011 which now could not be paid back.

Cabinet was given two options:

- to withdraw support for the Storey being used as a creative centre
- to continue supporting it but under the Council's direct management and control.

Both options had risks and disadvantages. Cabinet had agreed to continue to support the Storey.

The Chairman advised that she had been asked by Cabinet to waive call-in for this item in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 17 (a), but no decision had been made on this so far.

**15 A DRAFT LOCAL PLAN FOR LANCASTER DISTRICT: PREPARATION OF 'DRAFT PREFERRED OPTIONS' LAND ALLOCATION, DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT AND MORECAMBE AREA ACTION PLAN DPDS**

The Committee heard a presentation on the emerging draft Local Plan for Lancaster District which comprised of the Development Management Development Plan Document (DPD), Land Allocations DPD and Morecambe Area Action Plan (MAAP).

The Core Strategy for the district had been adopted in 2008 and since then, Officers had been preparing further key documents in particular the Development Management DPD, Land Allocations DPD which were district-wide. The Morecambe Area Action Plan would compliment these two documents.

Details of the land allocations that were included in the draft Local Plan were given with three significant greenfield sites being identified – Whinney Carr South Lancaster, Land at Bailrigg South Lancaster and Land at Grab Lane, East Lancaster.

It was reported that, at present, there was a large shortfall in the number of new housing within the district and even with the development of the three Greenfield sites there would still be a shortfall.

Members asked a number of questions relating to land allocations, housing figures, empty houses and Halton Mills.

***Resolved :***

That the draft Local Plan be noted.

**The meeting was adjourned at 7.12pm**

**The meeting was reconvened at 7.17pm**

**16 WORK PROGRAMME REPORT**

The Chairman welcomed Eddie Sutton, Assistant Chief Executive, Lancashire County Council to the meeting who was in attendance to update the Committee on Rural Broadband.

The Chairman informed Mr Sutton that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee wanted to arrange another meeting in the rural area to receive an update on the project and allow local people to attend. Mr Sutton advised that he was willing to attend such a meeting and provide an update.

Mr Sutton gave the Committee an update on the current position regarding rural broadband in the district and answered questions posed to the County Council by the Committee in March 2012.

With regard to the maps requested, Mr Sutton advised that these would be provided shortly for the Committee.

A question had been asked relating to the Community Fund of £500,000 and whether B4RN could access the funding. It was reported that the criteria for the Community Fund had not yet been set.

The Committee was informed that currently, the project was stalled as B4RN had submitted an appeal to the European Commission. There were also issues highlighted with work being undertaken by B4RN causing white areas in the district which were illegible for funding to be converted to grey areas which were not illegible, which would prevent the County Council receiving the funding for the project.

Mr Sutton offered to request the County Council's Cabinet Committee for Lancashire County Council/BT Plc Strategic Partnership, if the quarterly update report the Committee received could be shared with this Committee.

***Resolved :***

- (1) That Mr Sutton be thanked for providing an update to the Committee.
- (2) That the maps of the project area be provided by Mr Sutton and circulated to Committee Members.
- (3) That it be noted that Mr Sutton will request and advise whether the County Council's Cabinet Committee for Lancashire County Council/BT Plc Strategic Partnership, will share the quarterly update report the Committee received with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**The remainder of the Work Programme Report was considered later in the meeting  
– Minute 21 refers.**

## **17 COMMISSIONING PLAN INFORMAL TASK GROUP REPORT**

The Committee was requested to consider the report that had been produced from the Commissioning Plan Informal Task Group.

Members were reminded that the Commissioning Plan set out the County Environment Directorate's vision, commitment and priorities together with details of how the services would be provided, managed, budgeted and monitored for the Lancaster district.

Cabinet had considered the Plan and requested the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider the opportunities the commissioning approach provided and to report back.

The Informal Task Group had considered the need for a structured approach for the Council to feed back and influence the Commissioning Plan. The Group suggested the best way would be for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to include in its work programme consideration of the Commissioning Plan on an annual basis each autumn.

As the Plan impacted on Parish/Town Council's it was suggested that the County Council should be asked how it intended to consult these groups on an annual basis.

***Resolved :***

- (1) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the necessity for a structured approach to feed back to the County Council on its Commissioning Plan.
- (2) That to facilitate a structured approach to feeding back on the Commissioning Plan, the Committee include in its Work Programme consideration of the Plan on an annual basis in the autumn, inviting all Members of the City Council to attend to make comments on the priorities for the upcoming year, to influence the County Council's Commissioning Plan.
- (3) That the Committee recommend that an appendix setting out the City Council's Public Realm priorities and spending for the year be included as an appendix to the Commissioning Plan.
- (4) That the Council request clarification from the County Council on how it intends to consult the district's Parish and Town Councils with consideration to the fact there was only one representative on the 3 Tier Forum who represents all Town/Parishes in the district.

**18 CONSIDERATION OF ANY REQUESTS FOR COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION (IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROCESS)**

It was noted that there had not been any requests for items to be considered in accordance with the Councillor Call for Action process.

**19 CONSIDERATION OF ANY PETITIONS (IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROCESS)**

It was noted that there had not been any requests for items to be considered in accordance with the Consideration of Petitions.

**20 LOCALITY WORKING**

No further information or items were raised at the meeting.

**21 WORK PROGRAMME REPORT**

The Democratic Support Officer presented the Work Programme report to the Committee.

The Committee was reminded that an extra meeting of the Committee had been arranged for 31<sup>st</sup> July to consider the Committee's Work Programme in more detail.

With regard to the bus information signs at Lancaster Bus station, it was reported that costings had been received for a replacement system. A meeting had taken place with Lancaster University who had installed their own bus information boards. A costing was now being worked up for the University to provide a similar system for the bus station.

In view of the above information, particularly as after inspection the existing board is obsolete, Members agreed to request the County Council to remove the redundant bus information board.

A report would be prepared if the information was received in time for the extra meeting of the Committee on 31<sup>st</sup> July, otherwise the report would be circulated by email for approval.

Members were advised that a request had been received from Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust to discuss with the Committee emerging plans for the future use of our NHS facilities in the Lancaster, Morecambe and Heysham areas. It was agreed that this would be included in the Committee's Work Programme for the September meeting.

It was reported that a number of suggestions had been received from members of the public, Councillors and the Council's officers on issues to include in the Committee's Work Programme. These would be considered by Management Team to remove any operational matters and then would be presented to the Committee at its meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> July.

***Resolved :***

- (1) That the County Council be requested to remove the redundant bus information board.
- (2) That a report on the bus station information boards be prepared for the extra meeting of the Committee on 31<sup>st</sup> July, if the information is received in time, otherwise the report be circulated by email for approval.
- (3) That Emerging Plans for the future use of our NHS facilities in the Lancaster, Morecambe and Heysham areas be added to the Committee's Work Programme for the September meeting.
- (4) That the suggestions received from members of the public, Councillors and officers on issues to include in the Committee's Work Programme be considered at the meeting of the Committee on 31<sup>st</sup> July.

**22 UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COUNCIL ASSETS TASK GROUP**

This agenda item was deferred to a later meeting of the Committee.

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Chairman

(The meeting ended at 8.08 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact  
Jenny Kay, Democratic Services - telephone (01524) 582065  
or email [jkay@lancaster.gov.uk](mailto:jkay@lancaster.gov.uk)**