

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

6.00 P.M.

4TH SEPTEMBER 2024

PRESENT:- Councillors Martin Gawith, Chris Hanna, Paul Hart, Sally Maddocks, Sue Penney and John Wild

Apologies for Absence:-

Councillors Brett Cooper (Chair), Suhir Abuhajar and Abi Mills

Officers in attendance:-

Mark Cassidy	Chief Officer - Planning and Climate Change
Stephen Metcalfe	Principal Democratic Support Officer
Jenny Kay	Civic & Ceremonial Democratic Support Officer

15 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR FOR THE MEETING

As the Chair of the Committee had sent his apologies, and the Vice-Chair could no longer continue in the role as the political balance had changed, nominations for a Vice-Chair for the meeting were requested.

It was proposed by Martin Gawith, seconded by Paul Hart and unanimously agreed:-

Resolved :-

“That Councillor Chris Hanna be appointed Vice-Chair for the meeting.”

Councillor Hanna took the Chair.

16 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 1st August, 2024 were signed by the Vice-Chair for the meeting as a correct record.

17 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR

There was no Urgent Business.

18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Paul Hart declared an interest in any items relating to Morecambe Town Council.

19 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION PLANNING PEER CHALLENGE - UPDATE

The Vice-Chair welcomed the Chief Officer – Planning and Climate Change to the meeting.

The Committee was reminded that this was the fourth update report following Lancaster City Council's Peer Challenge in November 2022 that had been requested by the City Council and co-ordinated by the Local Government Association (LGA), working with the national Planning Advisory Service.

It was reported that during 2024 progress in most of the outstanding workstreams had continued and concluded however some workstreams had been superseded by the recommendations of the Corporate Peer Challenge that had been undertaken halting progress on these streams.

Members were advised that immediately prior to the previous Update Report, the Planning Advisory Service Team revisited Lancaster to assess the progress the Council had made. The formal feedback was generally positive with comments being on a comprehensive action plan being developed and significant progress being made across all of the recommendations.

The Committee considered the outstanding issues and how the Committee would review the final few workstreams.

Resolved :-

- (1) That the Chief Officer – Planning and Climate Change be thanked for his attendance at the meeting.
- (2) That the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive the final updates on the outstanding workstreams.

20 DILAPIDATED BUILDINGS

The Vice-Chair welcomed Councillor David Whitaker to the meeting who had raised the issue of dilapidated buildings with Scrutiny.

The Committee was given an overview of the current enforcement powers the City Council had to deal with dilapidated buildings. These included, under the Town and Country Planning Act, a Section 215 Notice which would be served on the owners of a building to improve the visual amenity of the building.

It was reported that under the Buildings Act, there were also Section 77, 78 and 79 Notices which dealt with buildings that were deemed to be dangerous.

The Vice-Chair invited Councillor Whitaker to speak as he had raised this issue and the impact on the West End of Morecambe.

Members went on to discuss how the City Council could tackle this issue in a joint service manner and also the work of the West End Millions scheme. It was felt this should be explored further.

It was agreed to arrange a Spotlight meeting of the Committee to consider this issue further.

Resolved :-

- (1) That a Spotlight meeting be arranged to consider how the Council could best deal with dilapidated buildings within the district.
- (2) That the relevant Cabinet Members and Council Officers be requested to attend as well as representatives from the West End Millions Board.

21 WORK PROGRAMME

Members were advised that the Chair had agreed to postpone the three items that were scheduled for the September meeting - Remote monitoring of litter bins and route optimisation, Lancaster District Allotment Review and the Draft Fly Tipping Strategy, to a meeting later in the year as the Cabinet member had not been available to attend.

With regard to the scoping of the Obesity Task Group, Councillor Hart would take part in the scoping meeting, together with Councillor Gawith.

It was reported that the Scrutiny Protocol had been referred to the Monitoring Officer who had made arrangements for a meeting to discuss the Committee's recommendations with the relevant Councillor Jason Wood, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Corporate Services and officers.

Resolved :-

That the actions above be agreed.

22 FORTHCOMING KEY DECISIONS

The Forthcoming Key Decisions were noted.

It was reported that the Scrutiny Protocol had been referred to the Monitoring Officer who had agreed to discuss the Committee's recommendations with the relevant Cabinet Member.

Chair

(The meeting ended at 7.10 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
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