

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

6.00 P.M.

1ST AUGUST 2024

PRESENT:- Councillors Brett Cooper (Chair), Suhir Abuhajar, Martin Gawith, Chris Hanna, Paul Hart, Sue Penney, James Sommerville (Substitute for Abi Mills) and John Wild

Apologies for Absence:-

Councillors Sally Maddocks (Vice-Chair) and Abi Mills

Officers in attendance:-

Stephen Metcalfe
Jenny Kay

Principal Democratic Support Officer
Civic & Ceremonial Democratic Support Officer

9 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29th May 2024 were signed by the Chair as a correct record.

10 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR

There were no items of urgent business.

11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

12 WORK PROGRAMME, TRAINING AND APPOINTMENT REPORT

Members were requested to consider the list of suggestions for the Committee's Work Programme that had been received from members of the public and Councillors. It was reported that the Chair of the Committee and the Budget and Performance Panel Chair along with the Pre-Scrutiny Champion had met with the Council's Executive Team to discuss the outstanding Work Programme and the suggestions that had been submitted for the forthcoming year.

Members of the Committee were reminded of the training that had been provided by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS), on 17th July 2024.

The Committee was also asked to note the appointment of Councillor Chris Hanna as the scrutiny representative on the Mainway Project Board.

The Committee considered the existing Work Programme and agreed to remove Air Quality Management Areas. It was further agreed that the following be included in the Committee's Work Programme:-

Resolved:-

- (1) That the existing Work Programme items for the Committee be agreed, with the exception of the deletion of the item regarding Air Quality, and that the following items be added to the Work Programme for the Municipal Year.

| Work Programme - Suggested Item | Committee Decision |
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| Lancaster District Allotment Review. LESS to present a report to OSC on the district allotment review, funded by UKSPF. | To consider at the September 2024 meeting. |
| Update on Fly Tipping Strategy. | September 2024. |
| LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Feedback Report (reported to Cabinet on 9 July 2024). | Request the Chief Executive to provide and report on the Action Plan, with particular focus on Scrutiny. |
| A review of the role the City Council has in promoting and supporting economic development, both large and small businesses, within the district and its impact. Include Business Support. | The Economic Development Strategy to be considered by the Committee when it was available before it is considered by Cabinet. |
| Is the City Council's Housing Strategy delivering the housing needs of the district? | Request an update at the October meeting. |
| Does the City Council have a holistic approach to improvement and organisation of the provision of services in a community as well as the maintenance and repair of infrastructure and conditions of our neighbourhoods, if not how can this be achieved? | Scoping of a Task Group. |
| Are the current key performance indicator and project reporting systems fit for purpose to provide the information we need as Councillors to help us understand what is happening in our Wards? | Invite the Chief Officer – People and Place and the Projects and Performance Manager to the November meeting to inform on Performance Management. |

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| <p>Review of Licencing and suggest a working party is formed. In the identical way Overview and Scrutiny did with planning.</p> | <p>This is already being considered as part of Digitalisation/Fit for the Future.</p> <p>Request an update on the Fit for the Future project.</p> |
| <p>Campervans parked on the Promenade in Morecambe is major concern and frustration for residents and the situation escalating to a point where the numbers are getting higher.</p> <p>Officers to convene a meeting with other partners including the County Council, Morecambe Town Council and Morecambe BID.</p> | <p>Request an update on the situation including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have meetings taken place yet? • Who attends? • Who is considering alternatives if a ban is imposed? |
| <p>There are various buildings in Morecambe that are being left dilapidated and making the area look neglected. This is a major issue in The West End of Morecambe-As a Committee I would like to see this issue explored and some ideas formulated to work out some effective solutions. For example, ways to bring the properties back into use in partnership with the community and various funding bodies. This is a building on Alexander Road Morecambe -It has been in that state for ten years. No progress has been made.</p> | <p>Request Chief Officer – Planning and Place to advise on the City Council’s powers and influence with regard to dilapidated buildings.</p> <p>To provide at the September meeting of the Committee.</p> <p>Invite Councillor David Whitaker to attend.</p> |
| <p>Enforcement. The range of ways councils are able to use enforcement, our policy on range of enforcement actions we take, when it was last revised, numbers of enforcement actions over last 2 years, what for and outcomes if financial etc</p> | <p>The draft Enforcement Strategy be submitted to OS&C prior to consideration by Cabinet. To include what influence and pressures the Council has.</p> |
| <p>Benchmarking ie what big ticket services and outcome should we be benchmarking, where would we get data from and how would we use it to improve our performance?</p> | <p>Invite Chief Officer – People and Policy and Projects and Performance Manager to November 2024 meeting to inform on Performance Management.</p> <p>Also invite B&PP Members to the meeting.</p> |

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| People driving like idiots in a 20mph area full of people trying to crossroads with prams, kids trying to go home from school and old people all risking their lives. | To consider as part of the Crime and Disorder/Community Safety meeting. |
| How can the City Council help with tackling obesity in school children? | Scoping of a Task Group – widen to all the community – not just children. |
| Remote monitoring of litter bins and route optimisation. | Request an update at the September 2024 meeting. |
| A review of ways to reduce and 'police' the speed of drivers through the villages of the Yealands, north of Carnforth. Both cars, HGVs and Tractors conduct speeds which poses a serious risk to pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders. | To consider as part of the Crime and Disorder/Community Safety meeting. Invite the Ward Councillor. |

- (2) That the remaining suggestions for the Work Programme be dealt with in accordance with the recommendations provided by Chairs of Scrutiny meetings, Pre-Decision Scrutiny Champion and Senior Leadership Team.
- (3) That the positive feedback provided by Members of the Committee regarding the scrutiny training event, facilitated by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS), held on 17th July 2024, be noted.
- (4) That the Committee note the appointment of Councillor Chris Hanna as the scrutiny representative on the Mainway Project Board.

13 SCRUTINY PROTOCOL

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Officer – Governance, on the introduction of a Pre-Decision Scrutiny Protocol.

Appended to the report were details of the Appendix to the Guidance. This advised of the sections that the protocol may contain. Most of the sections were already fully covered in the Council’s Constitution either in the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure rules in Part 3, Section 3 or elsewhere. Having taken this into account and not wishing to duplicate the rules in the Constitution, the area where a protocol would seem to be useful is:

- *The way in which senior officers and Cabinet will keep scrutiny informed of the outlines of major decisions as they are developed, to allow for discussion of scrutiny’s potential involvement in policy development. This involves the building in of safeguards to mitigate risks around the sharing of sensitive information with scrutiny members.*

It was suggested that, if the Committee wished to recommend the introduction of a Pre-Decision Scrutiny Protocol, Members may wish to consider:

- What the Committee would like to do when they receive the forthcoming list of Key Decisions notice.
- More informal meetings between the Pre-Decision Scrutiny Champion and Scrutiny Chairs and Leader/Deputy Leader/Portfolio Holders.
- Cabinet Briefings
- Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) – Case Studies

After considering the report the Committee :

Resolved :-

- (1) That the Committee recommend the introduction of a Pre-decision Scrutiny Protocol.
- (2) The Committee request that the following be included in a Pre-decision Scrutiny Protocol:
 - The way in which senior officers and Cabinet will keep scrutiny informed of the outlines of major decisions as they are developed, to allow for discussion of scrutiny's potential involvement in policy development. This involves the building in of safeguards to mitigate risks around the sharing of sensitive information with Scrutiny members.
 - That the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Vice-Chair and Pre-Scrutiny Committee Champion be invited to Cabinet briefings and be permitted to ask questions at those briefings.
 - That a Pre-Scrutiny meeting be arranged when required by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider the forthcoming list of Key Decisions. The meeting would include the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee, Chair and Vice Chair of the Budget and Performance Panel, the Pre-Decision Scrutiny Champion and relevant officers identified by the Chief Executive. This enabled those Members to query and question officers on issues that were to be considered at the next Cabinet meeting and obtain information on background papers/list of the documents submitted to the decision taker for consideration in relation to the matter.
 - That a meeting with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Chair of the Budget and Performance Panel and Cabinet Members be arranged at the beginning of each municipal year to discuss forthcoming Key Decisions, projects and ways in which Scrutiny can be involved at an early stage of the decision-making process.
 - That, with regard to the list of Key Decisions, the Committee recommends a commitment to provide an extended list of Key Decisions for a period of 6-12 months to better enable scrutiny identification of future decisions for early Pre-Scrutiny and provide improved transparency.
 - That, as part of the consultation process, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be consulted on all major projects as a matter of course.

14 FORTHCOMING KEY DECISIONS

The Committee noted the latest List of Forthcoming Key Decisions.

Chair

(The meeting ended at 7.16 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Jenny Kay, Democratic Support - email jkay@lancaster.gov.uk**