

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE**

6.00 P.M.

16TH OCTOBER 2019

**PRESENT:-** Councillors Tricia Heath (Chair), Stewart Scothern (Vice-Chair),  
Richard Austen-Baker, Alan Biddulph, Tim Dant, June Greenwell,  
Debbie Jenkins and Abi Mills

Apologies for Absence:-

Councillors David Whitaker

Officers in attendance:-

Stephen Metcalfe                      Principal Democratic Support Officer

**13        MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2019 were signed by the Chair as a correct record.

**14        ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR**

There were no items of Urgent Business.

**15        DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

**16        DISCUSSIONS WITH COUNCILLOR JANICE HANSON**

Councillor Janice Hanson provided an update on her portfolio. The areas within the portfolio which were discussed included Legal, ICT and Democratic Services.

**Resolved:** - That Councillor Hanson be thanked for attending the meeting and that the verbal report provided at the meeting be noted.

**17        CHANGING TO A COMMITTEE SYSTEM**

The Principal Democratic Support Officer advised that, at the last meeting of the Committee, a request had been made for a report upon the process for changing from the existing Cabinet system to a Committee system of governance. (Minute 12 refers).

A report was submitted that informed of the process for changing from the existing Cabinet system to a Committee system of governance.

**Resolved:** - That report be noted.

**18 STATUTORY GUIDANCE ON OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IN LOCAL AND COMBINED AUTHORITIES**

The Principal Democratic Support Officer advised the Committee of Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, which the City Council must have regard to when exercising its functions. The Guidance provided advice for senior leaders, members of Overview and Scrutiny Committees, and support officers.

It was noted that a link to North West Employer's webinar regarding the Guidance – "An Audience with Dr Steph Snape: Bringing Scrutiny To Life" had been made available.

The Committee considered the key issues, cultural, resources, Committee Member issues, power to access information, seeking information from external organisations, planning work and evidence sessions. The guidance also provided as an appendix details of creating an Executive Scrutiny Protocol and engagement with independent technical advisers.

The Committee considered the Guidance. It was noted that the Guidance refreshed the understanding of the key principles of scrutiny, as defined by the Centre for Public Scrutiny and underlined by the Statutory Guidance, considered the roles of the function and the tools and techniques for effective scrutiny. The Committee noted that the Council's Constitution reflected the issues contained within the Guidance and, as the Constitution was available on the Council's internet and intranet sites, Members were aware of the issues referred to. With regard to the Scrutiny Protocol it was noted that this issue had been recently discussed at the informal Cabinet and Scrutiny evening, when the Guidance was considered. It was the feeling of the Committee that as Cabinet Portfolio Holders were regularly invited and attended meetings of scrutiny there was no need for a protocol to be introduced.

**Resolved:** - That the oral report be noted.

**19 WORK PROGRAMME REPORT**

The Principal Democratic Support Officer updated the Committee on its Work Programme. It was noted that the Property Portfolio Informal Task Group would hold its first meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2019. Members were also asked to respond to the request for additional information regarding outcomes, issues and accountability prior to arranging a scoping meeting for the proposed Integration of Services Informal Task Group.

The Committee was advised that information on rural issues, provided by Councillor Greenwell, had been circulated to Members of the Committee.

It was reported that the next meeting the Committee would be acting in its capacity as the City Council's Designated Crime and Disorder Committee in accordance with the Police and Justice Act 2006 and Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009. Councillor Alistair Sinclair, Cabinet Member and Portfolio Holder with responsibility, had also been invited to attend the meeting to discuss his portfolio, which included, amongst other areas, community safety and emergency planning. The Committee was asked to submit any questions or queries in advance of the meeting in order for responses to be provided at the meeting.

The Committee, after considering a number of issues, requested that Member Briefings be provided for all Councillors, as resolved below.

***Resolved: -***

- (1) That the oral report be noted.
- (2) That officers be requested to make arrangements for Member Briefings for all Councillors regarding:
  - Community Connectors;
  - The Healthy Villages Initiative.

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Chair

(The meeting ended at 7.20 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact  
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or email [jkay@lancaster.gov.uk](mailto:jkay@lancaster.gov.uk)**