

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

6.00 P.M.

8TH JANUARY 2025

PRESENT:- Councillors Brett Cooper (Chair), Chris Hanna (Vice-Chair), Mandy Bannon, Maria Deery, Martin Gawith, John Livermore and Sue Penney

Apologies for Absence:-

Councillor John Wild

Also in Attendance:-

Councillor Caroline Jackson – Leader of the Council
Councillor Paul Hart – Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Environmental Services
Councillor Sally Maddocks – Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Corporate Services

Officers in attendance:-

William Griffith	Chief Officer - Environment and Place
Joanne Wilkinson	Chief Officer - Housing and Property
Peter Linsley	Council Housing Manager
Stephen Metcalfe	Principal Democratic Support Officer
Jenny Kay	Civic & Ceremonial Democratic Support Officer

38 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd November 2024, were signed by the Chair as a correct record.

39 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR

There were no items of Urgent Business.

40 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

41 TENANT SATISFACTION MEASURES

The Chair welcomed the Leader of the Council (also Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing and Homelessness), the Chief Officer - Housing and Property, and the Council Housing Manager to the meeting.

Members were reminded that all registered social housing providers were now required to submit and publish data about their performance alongside the outcome of a tenant satisfaction survey each year. This information would be used to assess how housing providers across the UK are performing and to aid robust scrutiny of services.

The Committee considered the results of the recent Tenant Satisfaction Survey that had been undertaken in August – September 2024. The survey revealed that the overall satisfaction rate had improved by 5% now standing at 77% with improvement on all measures being seen. Benchmarking data from the company undertaking the surveys indicates this would put Lancaster in the top quartile of providers.

It was reported that repairs to Council housing were a key driver of satisfaction and this had improved by 8% from last year as a result of a range of improvements implemented and providing a safe home was up to 78%.

Members were advised that Officers noted key areas of improvement to focus on over the coming year were in relation to communication, complaints handling, communal areas and antisocial behaviour. It was reported that an action plan to address these issues was to be produced. It was suggested that this could be considered by the Committee at a future meeting as well as the Complaint Annual Report.

The Committee went on to ask a number of questions.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair expressed his thanks and congratulated the Officers for their success in producing such fantastic results.

Resolved :-

- (1) That the Leader of the Council, the Chief Officer - Housing and Property, and the Council Housing Manager be thanked for their attendance at the meeting.
- (2) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee express their thanks and congratulate the Housing officers on their success.
- (3) That the action plan for addressing the improvements required and the Complaint Annual Report be considered by the Committee at a future meeting.

42 SCRUTINY PROTOCOL - UPDATE

The Chair welcomed the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Corporate Services to the meeting.

With recent changes to the membership of Cabinet, the Committee discussed what progress had been made with the Scrutiny Protocol to date.

The Committee clarified the requests that had been made and the following were agreed to be taken forward by the Cabinet Member :

- That Cabinet papers are circulated to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the same time as for Cabinet before Cabinet briefings. If the Committee wish to receive a briefing on any of the Cabinet items, this would be requested and arranged before the Cabinet meeting the following week to allow any comments or concerns to be shared with Cabinet. This replaced the request for briefings for every Cabinet meeting for the Committee in order to save officer time and resources. This involves the building in of safeguards to mitigate risks around the sharing of sensitive information with Scrutiny members.

- That a list of key initiatives for the forthcoming 12 months be shared with both Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (as opposed to a list of forthcoming Key Decisions for the next 12 months).
- That, as part of the consultation process, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be consulted on all major projects as a matter of course to enable pre-decision scrutiny.

Resolved :-

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee request the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Corporate Services to produce a Scrutiny Protocol to include the above points.

43 DRAFT FLY TIPPING STRATEGY

The Chair welcomed the Chief Officer, Environment and Place to the meeting.

The Committee considered the draft Fly Tipping Strategy that had been circulated separately. Members were reminded of the work that had been undertaken with Keep Britain Tidy to tackle Fly Tipping in the district that had been reported to the Committee at previous meetings.

The Council had worked closely with Keep Britain Tidy to produce the draft Strategy. It was noted that within the district, a large proportion of Fly Tipping reports were concentrated on just 34 streets in 4 wards which had been targeted by the Keep Britain Tidy Project previously reported. The Strategy, which was underpinned by an operational action plan would focus on these high reporting areas and produce Key Performance Indicators to monitor progress.

The Committee discussed how Fly Tipping had been tackled in the project and how enforcement was not seen to be the solution. Where Fly Tipping was most prevalent, in the most deprived areas of the district, it was felt incentives coupled with education would be a better way forward.

Resolved :-

That the update be noted.

44 LITTER BIN MONITORING

The Chief Officer Environment and Place, provided an update on the roll out of litter bin monitoring.

It was reported that innovative sensor technology was being introduced which provided real time data collection which enhanced decision making for waste collection routes. This in turn optimised waste management operations reducing waste collection costs. A trial had taken place in Heysham the previous year which had seen collections drop almost 75% which meant operatives could be moved on to other tasks around the district.

Members were advised that 519 sensors had been installed in bins to date but unfortunately, almost half the Council's bin stock were not suitable for sensor installation. A capital request was being prepared to replace these bins.

This new technology, which used algorithms to collect data, was being analysed and provided a dashboard of information.

It was suggested it would be useful for the Committee to consider the Dashboard at a future meeting.

Resolved :-

- (1) That the Chief Officer Environment and Place be thanked for his attendance at the meeting.
- (2) That the Litter Bin monitoring Dashboard be considered by the Committee at a future meeting.

45 FORTHCOMING KEY DECISIONS

The Committee discussed the Forthcoming Key Decisions. With regard to the Canal Quarter item, it was agreed that the Chair would request further information from the relevant Cabinet Member.

Resolved :-

That the Chair requests further information regarding the Canal Corridor decision from the relevant Cabinet Member.

46 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the Work Programme report which included a number of updates set out below and the scoping of two Task Groups.

It was agreed that the Neighbourhood Management (Public Realm) Task Group be set up on an informal basis and that it should begin its work.

It was further agreed that the Tackling Obesity Task Group be established as an informal Task Group but would not begin its work until the Neighbourhood Management Task Group had been completed.

Resolved :-

- (1) That the Economic Development Strategy be considered at the meeting on 5th February 2025.
- (2) That with regard to the suggestion of a Review of Licencing - Fit for the Future Project a briefing note was requested to be circulated to the Committee.
- (3) That the Chair be appointed to the Property Assets Working Group.
- (4) That the scoping of the Neighbourhood Management Informal Task Group be approved and the Task Group be established.

- (5) That the scoping of the Tackling Obesity Informal Task Group be approved and that the Task Group but it would not begin its work until the Neighbourhood Management Task Group had been completed.
- (6) That the issue of Dilapidated Buildings be referred to the Property Assets Working Group.
- (7) That the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge be scheduled for the April 2025 meeting.
- (8) That the draft Enforcement Strategy be considered by the Committee once it was completed.

Chair

(The meeting ended at 8.05 p.m.)

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