

**MINUTES OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**MEETING DATE** Thursday, 6 October 2016

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councillor John Walker (Chair), and Councillors Charlie Bromilow, Paul Clark, Jane Fitzsimons, Gordon France, Margaret Lees, Matthew Lynch, June Molyneaux, Greg Morgan, Alistair Morwood, Mark Perks, Debra Platt and Kim Snape

**OFFICERS:** Chris Sinnott (Director (Policy and Governance)), Asim Khan (Director (Customer and Digital)), Jane McDonnell (HR Services Manager) and Cathryn Filbin (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor Roy Lees

**OTHER MEMBERS:** Councillor Hasina Khan and Steve Holgate (Chorley West Division, Lancashire County Council)

**16.OS.56 Declarations of Any Interests**

There were no declarations of interest received.

**16.OS.57 Health Scrutiny**

At the invitation of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee, County Councillor Steve Holgate, Chair of Lancashire County Council's Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee and Chorley Council's representative from that committee, Councillor Hasina Khan, attended the meeting to talk about the outcome of a recent scrutiny review on the topic of the temporary closure of the Accident and Emergency Department at Chorley hospital.

Since the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee review had been completed further development had taken place.

In response to public pressure, an independent report had been commissioned by NHS England and NHS Improvement on the temporary closure of the Accident and Emergency Department. The report's findings concluded that the department could re-open on a part-time basis from mid-January once the Urgent Care Unit was fully operational.

During debate, members of the Committee were asked to support the request for an early occupation of the Urgent Care Unit to allow staff redeployment to the Accident and Emergency Department. This would allow the re-opening of the department to be brought forward to November 2016.

**AGREED – That the Chair, on behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee write to the Governing Body of Chorley and South Ribble's Clinical Commissioning Group seeking the**

**re-opening of the Accident and Emergency Department being brought forward to November 2016.**

#### **16.OS.58 Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 7 July 2016 (enclosed)**

Councillor Lynch referred to minute 16.OS.51 on PCSO deployment and confirmed that the drop in event had taken place since the last meeting.

**AGREED – That the minutes of the last meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 7 July 2016 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.**

#### **16.OS.59 Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel, 22 September 2016 (enclosed)**

**AGREED – That the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel on 22 September 2016 be noted.**

#### **16.OS.60 Public Questions**

There were no public questions for consideration.

#### **16.OS.61 Executive Cabinet Minutes**

**AGREED - That the minutes of the Executive Cabinet meeting held on 30 June 2016 and 25 August 2016 be received.**

#### **16.OS.62 Notice of Executive Decisions**

Members considered the Notice of Executive Decisions published on 6 October 2016 which gave notice of key and other major decisions which the Executive Cabinet and Executive Members expected to take.

**AGREED – That the Notice of Executive Decisions be noted.**

#### **16.OS.63 Flooding issues across the borough**

The Director of Customer and Digital presented a report which had been considered at a recent meeting of the Senior Management Team.

A total of 426 properties in the borough had been confirmed as flooded as a result of Storm Eva on 26 December 2015. Following guidance and criteria issued by DCLG and Lancashire County Council to help those people affected, the council was required to set up its own Flood Relief Scheme. The council's scheme was made up of a number of different elements based upon the guidance and criteria issued.

The breakdown financial assistance awarded to those properties affected was as follows –

- 386 domestic properties confirmed flooded were awarded community grants worth £500. The total amount of community grants awarded by the council was £193,000 of which £191,500 had been refunded by DCLG via Lancashire County Council. The remaining £1,500 had been included as part of a final claim made by Lancashire County Council in early September.
- Of the 32 businesses confirmed flooded. 22 businesses had received business grants awarded of £2,500 each. The total amount of business grants awarded amounted to £75,083 which was delivered by BOOST Business Lancashire
- 491 properties qualified for Council Tax Flood Discount worth £182,328, and 10 properties qualified for business rates relief worth £18,362. The majority of the financial assistance

monies had already been refunded by the DCLG. The remaining amount of monies awarded by the council, which amounted to £59,059 in total, would be claimed for as part of a reconciliation submitted via the flood portal when the discounts ceased.

As the DCLG had previously acknowledged that interim payments may be required to help councils manages cash flow, the council had requested an interim payment in September.

214 residents also applied to the government for a Property Level Resilience Grant worth up to £5,000 per property. As part of the application process a survey of each property was carried out to ascertain the most effective form of prevention work appropriate.

The surveys were carried out by Pell Frischmann who had been appointed through a joint procurement exercise with South Ribble Borough Council. It was reported that there had been elements of disconnect between what some residents wanted, and the recommendations of the experts. On those occasions, a compromised had been reached.

It was reported that Lancashire County Council was in the process of undertaking a Section 19 investigation to ensure that their legal obligations was met and that affected communities had been identified and appropriate county-wide prioritised actions put in place. Although Lancashire County Council was aware of a number of areas within the borough prone to flooding, those areas would not necessarily be treated with the highest priority when the whole of the county footprint was taken into consideration.

During debate, the Committee raised a number of issues, which included –

- the criteria required to qualify for financial assistance,
- types of work undertaken repair damage caused due to flooding, and the resilience work taken place,
- flooding due to blocked drains,
- deadline for applications to be received in respect of the Property Level Resilience Grant.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Kim Snape, the number of farms that had been affected by flooding was unknown, but that the figure would be obtained and reported back.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked the Director of Customer and Digital for his attendance and contribution to the meeting.

#### **AGREED – That the report be noted.**

Since the meeting, the Director of Customer and Digital had confirmed that the council had received one report of a farm being flooded due to Storm Eva. After initial contact was made with the resident, further approaches from the council had proved unsuccessful.

### **16.OS.64 Section 106 update**

The Director of Policy and Governance provided a verbal update on the position regarding Section 106 Agreements and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) following an Internal Audit investigation in to the identification of missed Section 106 trigger points.

To date, 50 of the 65 agreements had been invoiced totalling over £1 million pounds. The remaining 15 agreements, totalling over £100 thousand pounds could not be pursued for various reasons.

At a meeting of the Governance Committee held in June, members received a report which provided an update of work undertaken following the identification that trigger points had been missed and to minimise the loss of income to the Council. The report also highlighted current arrangements and actions taken to ensure that a robust system was now in place and operating effectively.

Members of the Committee were informed that that the Governance Committee was monitoring this activity to ensure the process was delivered correctly.

**AGREED - That the verbal report be noted.**

#### **16.OS.65 Final Monitoring Report - Overview and Scrutiny Task Group (Neighbourhood Working)**

The Committee received a second monitoring report from the Director of Early Intervention and Support which provided an update of progress made against the recommendations of the Task Group review in to Neighbourhood Working which was undertaken in 2014.

Members of the Committee raised a number of concerns that centred round the lack of information which was being communicated to members against each recommendation. This was supported by reports that information was not forthcoming from lead officers about the progress of neighbourhood area projects and that members had been unaware of the initiatives and events which were detailed in the progress for recommendations seven, eight and nine. The Director of Policy and Governance acknowledged that better communication was required and that the matter would be addressed.

**AGREED – That the report be noted, and that communication issues raised be addressed.**

#### **16.OS.66 First Monitoring Report - Overview and Scrutiny Task Group (Public Transport Issues)**

Members of the Committee received a report from the Chief Executive which provided an update on progress in delivery against the recommendations made at the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group review of public transport issues in Chorley.

The position of Lancashire County Council (LCC) subsidised bus services operating in Chorley now differed to when the review took place. It was reported that unless the service was commercially viable, no subsidised bus service would operate in Chorley. However, Chorley Council had temporarily agreed to subsidise two services whilst a sustainable solution was identified.

Members of the Committee were informed that the newly appointed Director of Business, Development and Growth would be responsible for transport issues in the future.

The Committee discussed the report and was satisfied with the progress made to date.

**AGREED – That the report be noted, and that the progress made against the recommendations be reviewed at its meeting on 30 March 2017.**

#### **16.OS.67 Overview and Scrutiny Task Group: Review of the Single Front Office - Response of Executive Cabinet**

Members of the Committee considered the response from the Executive Cabinet to the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group review of the Single Front Office.

All the recommendations put forward from the Task Group had been accepted and the report outlined the actions which would be taken to address each recommendation and also any progress made to date.

Members of the Committee were satisfied with the progress made to date.

**AGREED – That the report be noted, and that the progress made against the recommendations be reviewed at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 30 March 2017.**

## **16.OS.68 Overview and Scrutiny Task Group: Staff Sickness Absence - Response of Executive Cabinet**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Policy and Governance which confirmed that all the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group review on the topic of staff sickness absence had been accepted by the Executive Cabinet, and detailed the progress made to date.

Jane McDonnell, HR Service Manager attended the meeting to answer questions on the report and progress so far.

It was reported that 30 questionnaires had been completed by employees a minimum of three weeks following their return to work after a period of absence. A full analysis had not been carried out as HR was waiting for more responses. However, initial feedback received indicated that employees were satisfied with the council's procedures for managing sickness absences.

The figure for quarter one showed an increased level of staff sickness absence which totalled 2.01 days lost per employee compared to the target figure of 1.75 days lost per employee. However, there had been a reduction in the number of days lost when compared with the previous years which totalled 2.19. It was confirmed that the figures for quarter 2 were reducing slowly.

Members of the Committee expressed their satisfaction with progress made so far.

The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, thanked the HR Service Manager for attending the meeting and responding to questions raised.

**AGREED – That the report be noted, and that the progress made against the recommendations be reviewed at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 30 March 2017.**

## **16.OS.69 Report from the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group - Child Sexual Exploitation**

Members of the Committee received a verbal report on the work undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group looking in to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).

There had been two meetings to date. At the first meeting, the Task Group received a presentation on CSE; how it differed from other forms of child abuse and the Council's responsibility in regards to intelligence gathering, reporting and preventing CSE in Chorley.

Detective Inspector Steve Ryder from Lancashire Constabulary's Deter Team attended the second meeting and gave an overview of the work his team did, the multi-agency approach used to gather intelligence and share information and with other partners to help support the victims of CSE and their families. The Committee was informed that educating young people about CSE and how to identify signs of grooming was vital to prevent them or their friends from becoming victims of this type of abuse. As a result the team was working closely with schools to inform and educate pupils, staff and parents about the signs of CSE and grooming.

At the next meeting, representatives from the education sector will be interviewed to find out what schools are doing to educate pupils on the dangers of CSE and encourage better working relations with the Deter Team.

**AGREED – That the verbal update be noted.**

## **16.OS.70 Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme**

Members of the Committee considered the work programme for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Performance Panel and Task Group topic areas for 2016/17.

**AGREED – That the suggested work programme for the Committee, Performance Panel and Task Groups for 2016/17 be confirmed with the following additions -**

- 1. Water Rates being charged to schools**
- 2. Communications**

### **16.OS.71 Overview and Scrutiny Training**

The Chair reminded the Committee that an Overview and Scrutiny Training Member Learning Session was taking place on Monday 24 October 2016 at 5.30pm-8pm.

**AGREED – That the training be noted.**

Chair

Date