

**MINUTES OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**MEETING DATE** Thursday, 25 July 2019

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councillor John Walker (Chair), Councillor Roy Lees (Vice-Chair) and Councillors John Dalton, Peter Gabbott, Steve Holgate, Alex Hilton, Marion Lowe, Matthew Lynch, June Molyneaux, Debra Platt, Paul Sloan and Kim Snape

**OFFICERS:** Rebecca Huddleston (Director (Policy and Governance)), Lesley Miller (Public Protection Manager), Ruth Rimmington (Democratic and Member Services Team Leader) and Nina Neisser (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor Yvonne Hargreaves

**OTHER MEMBERS:** Councillor Margaret France

**19.OS.33 Minutes of meeting Thursday, 21 March 2019 of Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Decision:** That the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 21 March 2019 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

**19.OS.34 Minutes of Meeting Wednesday, 10 July 2019 of Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel**

**Decision:** That the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel held on 10 July 2019 be noted.

**19.OS.35 Declarations of Any Interests**

There were no declarations of interest received.

**19.OS.36 Public Questions**

There were no public questions for consideration.

**19.OS.37 Executive Cabinet Minutes**

**Decision:** That the minutes of the Executive Cabinet meetings held on 14 March 2019 and 20 June 2019 be noted.

**19.OS.38 Health Scrutiny Update**

The Chair advised that there was an additional item on Health Scrutiny on the agenda. Councillor Margaret France, as Chorley Council's representative on Lancashire

County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee updated Members on the recent LCC Health Scrutiny Steering Group meeting.

At the meeting on 17 July the Steering Group considered the future of acute services in Central Lancashire and the Delayed Transfer of Care (DToC). The Steering Group assessed thirteen options with regards to the future of acute services. These were shortlisted to seven options to be explored, which would subsequently be going out for public consultation. It was also reported that in the last twelve months, the Delayed Transfer of Care was at 10% across Lancashire but reassurances were made that improvements had been made in June/July.

Cllr Holgate requested an update on the planned Our Health Our Care Joint scrutiny with South Ribble. Officers would get an update on this and refer back to Members.

**Decision: That the update be noted.**

#### **19.OS.39 Notice of Executive Decisions**

Members of the Committee considered the Notice of Executive Decisions for July 2019 which gave notice of key and other major decisions Executive Members are expected to make. The Notice is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that it is up to date and fit for purpose.

With regards to the Task Group report that was going to Executive Cabinet, Councillor Lynch stated his disappointment that some of the recommendations made as part of the review would not be carried forward. It was agreed that clarification be sought on this at the Executive Cabinet meeting in August.

**Decision: That the Notice of Executive Decisions be noted.**

#### **19.OS.40 GRT Encampments**

Lesley Miller presented a report of the Director of Early Intervention and Support updating the committee on the actions taken with regards to Gypsy-Romany-Traveller (GRT) Encampments following the initial meeting in March 2019.

Members were reminded that earlier this year, there were a number of unauthorised GRT Encampments that proceeded to move around the borough, between both Council owned and private land. These actions, to frequently move location, were undertaken to frustrate enforcement action taken by the Council.

An Overview and Scrutiny Committee was convened to review the procedures, the legal provisions, deterrents, and the role of the Police in these incidents. It was identified that the original procedure for dealing with encampments was linear and did not accurately reflect the process. Subsequently, the GRT procedure has been updated to reflect the activities undertaken by all teams and partners.

Further legal advice has been sought from Counsel which confirmed that the process and legal procedures followed by Chorley Council are appropriate and the most expedient use of legislation. The Council has completed works to install height barriers on two of the town centre car parks and has received estimated costs for further deterrents.

Councillor Lowe thanked Lesley Miller and officers for their work in updating the procedure and gave a special thanks to Carol Roscoe, the Council's Animal Welfare Officer, for her work with the animals, particularly dogs, associated with the GRT groups.

Following queries, Members were advised that no negative feedback has been received regarding the installation of the car park barriers and there has been no issues for the Market Traders as many park on different town centre car parks. Members of the Committee supported the introduction of the barriers.

Councillor Gabbott queried the police reluctance to use force and requested that officers contact Counsel regarding the powers of the police. Officers advised that the police had responded to this at the last meeting, but it was agreed that officers would go back and ask the police for further clarity on this.

**Decision: That the report be noted.**

#### **19.OS.41 Scrutiny Reporting Back: Chorley Council's Annual Report on Overview and Scrutiny in 2018/19**

Members received the annual report that summarised the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Performance Panel and the task groups which had taken place in 2018/19.

One task group established by the committee undertook a review on the topic of Quality of Housing provided by Social Landlords.

The Committee continued to receive six-monthly monitoring reports following the Executive Cabinet's response on the implementation of outcomes and measured success from past scrutiny reviews in relation to the Rollout of Superfast Broadband, Child Sexual Exploitation and the Adoption of Estates.

The Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel focused on the performance elements of scrutiny and considered all monitoring information. Each Directorate was scrutinised in turn.

In line with the Crime and disorder scrutiny, the Committee invited Chief Inspector Gary Crowe to outline recent changes to the Neighbourhood Policing model and answer any questions from Members. It was recognised that resources were stretched and the police were becoming involved in cases outside of crime. Roughly 20% of resources were spent on crime and 80% on vulnerable people who slipped through the cracks of other services. This meant that emergency response had overflowed into neighbourhood policing and subsequently, the Assistant Chief Constable commissioned a review. There were no savings arising from the review, just the realignment of resources.

In addition to challenging the Executive Members through the Performance Panel, the Committee worked together positively with the Executive Leader and the Executive Cabinet in scrutinising their proposals.

Other topics considered included the Youth Zone, review of the Absence Policy, Impact of Garden Waste Charging, Review of communications with Councillors, Update on Mobilisation for the New Waste and Recycling Collection Contract, Approach to dealing with Unauthorised Encampments on Land not owned by Gypsy

Travellers, and an update on the Lancashire County Council Health Scrutiny Committee.

The Chair highlighted how much work had been undertaken over the last year and thanked Members and Officers involved for all their work.

**Decision: That the annual report be noted and forwarded to the next Council meeting on 17 September as required in the Council's constitution.**

#### **19.OS.42 Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities**

The Committee were provided with the Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in May 2019.

The guidance was published to ensure that local and combined authorities are aware of the purpose of overview and scrutiny and how to conduct its functions effectively.

Members were satisfied and reassured that the Council already complied with a lot of the criteria included in the guidance. One area which could be addressed was creating an Executive/Scrutiny protocol. However, following discussion it was agreed that this was not required due to the small nature of the Democratic Services Team and the absence of a specific scrutiny team.

**Decision: That the guidance be noted.**

#### **19.OS.43 Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme**

Members considered the work programme for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Performance Panel and task group topic areas for 2019/20.

Councillor Holgate requested that a review be considered on the topic of reducing the council's carbon footprint, with a particular focus on single-use plastics. After a short discussion, the Chair proposed that this topic would be the focus of the next Task Group review to start without delay, and that Councillor Steve Holgate be nominated as Chair.

Members also discussed reviewing the current bus services within the borough to address the isolation of residents in rural districts. It was agreed that an update report on the previous public transport issues task group be presented at the next meeting of the Committee in September 2019.

*Councillor Marion Lowe left the meeting at 7.10pm.*

#### **Decision:**

- **That the work programme be noted;**
- **The topic of the next Task Group, which would commence as soon as possible, to be on reducing the Council's carbon footprint of which Councillor Steve Holgate was confirmed as Chair;**
- **An update report on the previous public transport issues task group be presented at the next meeting of the committee in September 2019.**

#### 19.OS.44 Exclusion of the Public and Press

**Decision: To exclude the press and public for the following items of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.**

#### 19.OS.45 Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme

Lesley Miller, Public Protection Manager, presented the confidential report of the Director (Early Intervention and Support) which updated Members on the Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme in the borough.

*Councillors Kim Snape and June Molyneaux left the meeting at 7.23pm.*

The Committee requested the exact cost to Chorley Council for the resettlement programme and it was agreed that officers would retrieve this information.

Members thanked the Housing Solutions Team for all their work on the Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme.

**Decision: That the update be noted.**

Chair

Date