

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 3 September 2012

Present: Councillor Steve Holgate (Chair), Councillor Roy Lees (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Julia Berry, Matthew Crow, Graham Dunn, Robert Finnamore, Christopher France, Hasina Khan, Marion Lowe, Joyce Snape, Kim Snape and Ralph Snape

Officers in attendance: Gary Hall (Chief Executive), Jamie Dixon (Head of Streetscene & Leisure Contracts), Chris Sinnott (Head of Policy and Communications), Carol Russell (Democratic Services Manager) and Dianne Scambler (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

12.OS.120 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

12.OS.121 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

No declarations of interests were received.

12.OS.122 MINUTES

RESOLVED - That subject to the inclusion of Councillor Mark Perks being in attendance at the meeting the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 9 July 2012 be confirmed as a correct record for signing by the Chair.

12.OS.123 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no questions received from any member of the public.

12.OS.124 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE PANEL MINUTES

The Committee received for information the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel held on 23 July 2012.

RESOLVED – That the minutes be noted.

12.OS.125 EXECUTIVE CABINET MINUTES

There were no issues raised by any member of the Committee for the Executive Cabinet meeting held on 16 August 2012.

12.OS.126 EXECUTIVE RESPONSE TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY INQUIRY ON TOURISM AND PROMOTING CHORLEY

The Committee considered the response of the Executive Cabinet to the findings and recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Inquiry into Tourism and Promoting Chorley.

The Committee were pleased to note that the Executive Cabinet had accepted all the recommendations and the report provided details demonstrating the progress made to date.

Members asked if the provision of a permanent hard standing overflow car park could be given further consideration for the larger events held in Astley Park. Many visitors

to the events use the grass verges along Chancery Road in Astley Village to park along and this was a particularly sensitive issue for local residents.

The Council had developed a new traffic management plan for major events that had been tested at this year's picnic in the park. The new plan had received positive feedback from residents in Astley Village and local ward and parish councillors. Officers recognised that the plan needed to be developed further to ensure that it worked for all events and weather conditions and should be completed by the end of the financial year.

The Committee queried why there had been no response to the recommendation regarding working with partners to improve public transport links to the Rivington area to ease traffic problems. The Rivington Heritage Trust and Groundwork have recently made a £5million lottery bid for funding to improve facilities at Rivington so this piece of work would be more important if visitor numbers to the area increased.

RESOLVED

- 1. That the report be noted.**
- 2. That the Executive Member (Places) be asked to provide a response to the recommendation regarding working with partners to improve public transport links to the Rivington area.**
- 3. That the Committee continue to be kept updated on the progress made against each of the recommendations.**
- 4. That progress on the Executive's response to the Private Rented Housing Inspection Task Group Final Report be sought.**

12.OS.127 ASSET MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY TASK GROUP - MONITORING REPORT

The Committee received a report of the Chief Executive updating Members on the progress made in the implementation of the strategic principles proposed by the Asset Management Scrutiny Task Group.

The Final Report of the Group had proposed 13 Strategic Principles to the Executive Cabinet for consideration. These were not recommendations on specific works but had been intended as a guide to the Councils future approach to asset management and a progress update against each of the proposals was included in the report.

Members enquired as to the present status of the Gillibrand Street offices which had been leased to the probation service and asked the Council to consider looking at the longer term usage of the site.

The Council were also in the process of completing some works to the retaining wall of the car park of the White Hart Public House and some works to the exterior of the building. The new lease holder would be responsible for the refitting of the interior.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted

12.OS.128 ALLOTMENTS SCRUTINY TASK GROUP - MONITORING REPORT

The Committee received a report of the Director of People and Places which provided an update on the implementation of agreed actions by the Executive Cabinet following the Overview and Scrutiny's inquiry into allotments.

Good progress had been made and the majority of actions had been implemented. On 29 March 2012, the Executive Cabinet had agreed amended responses to some of the actions that included:

- That the Council would not proceed with the phased removal of concessionary rates for allotments plots.
- That the cost of provision of mains water at the Crosse Hall and Windsor Road sites be allocated within existing allotment budget.

Some of the Councils larger plots had been carved up into two or sometimes three plots and twenty new plots had just been allocated on the Manor Road site in Clayton-Le-Woods, with the potential for another additional 33 plots to be sited at the Rangleys Recreational Ground in Chorley. Although the Waiting List for Allotments was still high, evidence showed that most preferred to wait for a plot to become vacant on a site that was located near to where they lived.

Some Members reported concerns about the state of some privately owned allotment sites and asked if the Councils planning enforcement team could investigate further.

Councillor Julia Berry requested that an item be submitted on the agenda at the next meeting of the Borough/Parish Liaison meeting on Allotments and Community Growing Schemes, referring to the Todmorden model as an area of best practice.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

12.OS.129 LANCASTRIAN SCRUTINY TASK GROUP - MONITORING REPORT

The Committee received a report that reviewed the implementation of the recommendations of the Lancastrian Scrutiny Task Group since their acceptance by the Executive earlier this year.

The Council had recently secured a regular weekly booking and under the new flexible pricing policy were able to offer incentives to make the booking sufficiently attractive to the organisers and increase the chances of this becoming a long term booking.

A number of improvement works had already been undertaken with some additional improvements to the bar area still continuing, so that there was the potential to maximise this area for use for informal meetings and training events for around 12 people.

The income target had been increased for 2012/13 and currently appeared to be on target to achieve the required income level at this stage.

The Chair commented that he had seen the improvements to date and suggested the possibility of an open day with an invitation to all local groups to view the enhance facility once all the work had been completed.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

12.OS.130 FORWARD PLAN

The Committee received a copy of the Forward Plan for the period 1 September to 31 December 2012 for information.

RESOLVED – That the Forward Plan be noted.

12.OS.131 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received a copy of the updated Work Programme for 2012/13.

The Chair thought that it would be beneficial for the Committee to wait for the outcome of the Neighbourhood Working review that was currently being undertaken by the Executive Member (Places) before starting a review of Citizen Engagement, one of the potential topics for review.

The Chair also explained that the report on the roles and responsibilities of the Police and Community Support Officers would now be provided as part of the information Members would review as part of its duty to scrutinise Crime and Disorder.

However it was agreed that Members of the Committee would be provided with information about their roles and responsibilities in advance.

RESOLVED

- 1. That the Work Programme for 2012/13 be noted.**
- 2. That Members of the Committee be provided with agreed information on the role of the PCSO's.**

12.OS.132 REPORTS FROM THE TASK AND FINISH GROUPS

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group – Adoptions of Estates, Councillor Matthew Crow updated the Committee on the work that had taken place to date on the review.

A Member Learning Session had taken place on 13 August that had provided Members with some information to help them understand the processes, and the various agencies and responsibilities involved in adopting new developments, ahead of their next meeting on 19 September where they would scope the review.

Two more Members had requested to join the Group and interest had been shown by Lancashire County Council Members in joining the review.

RESOLVED – That the updated report be noted and the addition of Councillors Cronshaw and Rogerson to the Task Group be agreed.

Chair