

**MINUTES OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**MEETING DATE** Thursday, 30 March 2017

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

**OFFICERS:** Chris Sinnott (Director (Policy and Governance)) and Cathryn Filbin (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor Margaret Lees and Kim Snape

**17.OS.13 Declarations of Any Interests**

There were no declarations of interest received.

**17.OS.14 Minutes**

**a Minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 26 January 2017**

**AGREED – That the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 26 January 2017 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.**

**b Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel held on 9 March 2017**

**AGREED – That the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel on 9 March 2017 be noted.**

**17.OS.15 Public Questions**

There were no public questions for consideration.

**17.OS.16 Executive Cabinet Minutes**

**AGREED – That the minutes of the Executive Cabinet meetings held on 16 February and 16 March 2017 be noted.**

**17.OS.17 Notice of Executive Decisions**

Members considered the Notice of Executive Decision published on 28 March 2017 which gave notice of key and other major decisions which the Executive Cabinet and Executive Members were expected to make.

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

## **17.OS.18 Monitoring reports**

### **a Final Monitoring Report - Overview and Scrutiny Task Group Review: Staff Sickness Absence**

The Committee received the final monitoring report from the Director of Policy and Governance which provided an update of progress made against the recommendations of the Staff Sickness Absence task group review, which were agreed at the Executive Cabinet on 20 June 2016.

It was reported that the biggest proportion of sickness absence was within the Customer and Digital Directorate, which was to be expected as it had the greatest number of staff and also contained the majority of the manual workforce.

The highest number of sickness absence days lost throughout the Council was due to stress/depression. The Director of Policy and Governance explained that a person suffering from this type of condition would often require a significant period of sickness absence, as the cause needed to be identified before a remedy could be found. However, members were reassured that the Council was proactive in trying to identifying instances of stress/depression in its workforce to prevent absences occurring and had a number of support initiatives that would be activated as soon as this type of condition was reported.

Members of the Committee also received a summary of the results of the sickness absence surveys which was detailed in the appendix to the report. The purpose of the surveys (which was a recommendation from the review), was to gain an understanding on how the sickness absence policy was being received by employees. The majority of employees felt that the staff sickness policy was fair and that they felt supported by their manager and the Human Resources team while absent from work and on their return. .

**AGREED – That the report be noted, and that the number of work related accidents .**

### **b Final Monitoring Report - Overview and Scrutiny Task Group Review: Single Front Office**

The Committee received the final monitoring report from the Director of Customer and Digital which provided an update of progress made against the recommendations of the Single Front Office Task Group review.

It was reported that all of the recommendations have been implemented, the progress of which included -

- On-line forms were continuing to be developed
- Further digital training being planned as part of the Chorley inner East project.
- Further engagement was due to take place with parish clerk to improve digital access and support for more parishes. Support would also be made available to partners exploring Cyber Cafés opportunities throughout the borough.
- A general review of software would be conducted to ensure information made available to customers as part of the workflows and processes stages, was clear and accurate.

Members of the Committee were pleased with the progress made against the recommendations. However, there was concern that individual staff had not been signposting customers to other organisations correctly. In response the Director of Policy and Governance would raise this issue with the Director of Customer and Digital.

**AGREED – That the report be noted, and that employees from the Contact Centre understood the correct response when referring customers to other organisations.**

### **c Final Monitoring Report - Overview and Scrutiny Task Group Review: Public Transport Issues in Chorley**

Since the Executive Cabinet accepted the task group recommendations in November 2015, there had been significant changes to transport provision within the borough, mainly due to Lancashire County Council's budget review.

The Director of Policy and Governance informed the Committee that the Council had continued to subsidise the 109A/24A and 6/6A services covered in the first monitoring report. In addition the Council was funding a temporary new service (7C), and was working with Lancashire County Council to provide a permanent solution.

A number of the recommendations required the Council to lobby transport service providers, and work with other organisations to improve resident access across the borough were still ongoing. In addition, the Committee was informed that a Chorley transport plan would be considered as part of the Economic Development refresh.

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

#### **17.OS.19 Report from the Task and Finish Group - Rollout of Superfast Broadband by BT**

The Rollout of Superfast Broadband Task Group met on 22 March and appointed Councillor Kim Snape as the Chairperson. Members received a presentation from the Lancashire Superfast Broadband team, which included an update from BT. Members requested further information from Lancashire Superfast Broadband and BT and was able to consider several potential recommendations during the meeting. The next meeting will be held early April, with a view to reporting before the end of the Municipal Year.

#### **17.OS.20 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 2017/18.

**AGREED – that the next review would be on the topic of the Leisure Contract. Membership of the review would be sought following the annual Council meeting.**

#### **17.OS.21 Any urgent business previously agreed with the Chair**

The Chair informed the Committee that Ofwat had been in discussion with United Utilities about its charging policy for schools in response to contact made by Chorley Council.

Ofwat reported that United Utilities had stated that it would consider reviewing its charging policy for schools. Once United Utilities had considered whether to change its policy or not they are expected to report their decision to Ofwat, who will advise the council accordingly.

Chair

Date