

**Minutes of** **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Meeting date** **Thursday, 7 July 2022**

**Committee Members present:** Councillor John Walker (Chair), Councillor Roy Lees (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Sarah Ainsworth, Aidy Riggott, Kim Snape, Jenny Whiffen, Dedrah Moss and Arjun Singh

**Committee Members present virtually (non-voting):** Councillors Hasina Khan, Samir Khan, Michelle Le Marinel and Ryan Towers

**In Attendance:** Councillors Terry Howarth, and Alex Hilton

**Officers:** Jennifer Mullin (Director Communities), Rachel Stewart (Housing Solutions Manager), and Matthew Pawlyszyn (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

**Apologies:** Councillor Alan Platt

A video recording of the public session of this meeting is available to view on [YouTube here](#)

**1 Minutes of meeting Thursday, 17 March 2022 of Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Decision: The minutes were approved as a correct record.**

**2 Declarations of Any Interests**

No interests were declared.

**3 Public Questions**

There were no public questions.

**4 Executive Cabinet Minutes**

**Decision: The minutes of the Executive Cabinet held Thursday, 16 June 2022 were noted.**

## 5 Notice of Executive Decisions

**The notice of Executive Decisions was noted. Members raised that in addition to receiving the full list of executive decisions monthly, they also received a list of decisions to be made by the Executive Cabinet.**

## 6 Health Scrutiny

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee welcomed Councillor Alex Hilton to provide a verbal update, which featured the new hospital programme announced by the government.

The Government directive was to build 40 new fit for purpose, and state of the art hospitals. The Royal Preston Hospital and Lancashire Royal Infirmary were both identified as having aging infrastructure, increased maintenance costs and struggled to meet the demand of modern health care.

In March 2022, a short list of four options were published

- A New Royal Lancaster Infirmary with partial rebuild of Royal Preston
- A New Royal Preston with partial re-build of Lancaster
- Investment into both hospitals with partial rebuild
- Two brand new hospitals

The Health Scrutiny Committee favoured two new hospitals being built, however no option was formally endorsed by the Committee. The project required further detailed analysis, land availability exploration, and consideration for planning, footprint, and affordability.

The new hospitals program would continue to engage and consult with stakeholders, staff, patients, and population in general and elected members

The budget itself for the programme had not been announced by central government, but the BBC had reported potential shortfalls in finances due to the current situations.

Assurances were made that if new hospitals were to be built, there would be a short but phased transition across the sites.

Timeline estimated that construction would start in 2025, with plans to open in 2030.

The concept of a worker housing scheme was discussed to attract staff to the hospital, in addition to the state-of-the-art facilities.

Chorley Hospital was to continue to receive investment by Lancashire Teaching Hospital Foundation Trust. There were no plans to close Chorley Hospital.

It was emphasised that in addition to the super hospitals, local care would still be present, with diagnostic hubs and existing hospitals for tests and procedures.

The Committee were updated by Members of Lancashire County Council that Scrutiny underwent changes at the County Council, and that the Health Scrutiny Committee was restricted to be the Health and Adult Services Committee. The District representation would remain the same.

It was clarified the purpose of the Committee was to scrutinise any matter related to the planning provision, operation, or provision of health service. The scope of what could be explored was narrower than common perception. The focus was on matters that the County Council can influence and had responsibility for.

The next meeting on 13 July involved the upcoming work plan, Cllr Margaret France would be in attendance.

Members raised concern with the difficulty many residents had accessing NHS dental services in Chorley, and it was remarked that due to the pandemic, people found themselves removed from NHS list's and were unable to get back on preventing access or requiring private care.

## **7 Quality of Housing Provided by Social Landlords - Monitoring Report 2**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee welcomed Director of Communities – Jennifer Mullin, Housing Solutions Manager and Executive member for Homes and Housing Councillor Terry Howarth.

A brief overview of the report was provided, highlighting the recommendations and actions taken.

Learning sessions around housing issues with Members was undertaken by Rachel Stewart, the first was completed in September 2021, and the next should take place in the autumn.

The Council had worked with Jigsaw, Access, Progress, onward homes, and other housing providers to increase the uptake of disabled facilities grants by 50%.

Lancashire County Council confirmed that they have employed additional occupational therapists to work in Central Lancashire to work through the backlog since Covid.

It was recommended that the Council lobbied government for greater regulation of RPs. Significant reform was underway with the introduction of a green paper and white paper and now a bill introduced in June 2022. Expectations have been set for social housing, and there were significant changes in the White Paper and guidance from the government. The Council would not be the regulatory authority, but continued collaboration would take place to ensure adherence.

A Good Homes Charter had not been created, the process was delayed due to the Covid pandemic and new legislation.

Jigsaw have committed to acknowledging letters in five working days, with a response in a further 5. Jigsaw have also created an email address specifically for Councillors to use in relation to a resident.

The Select Move Coordinator was in post, and their role had been to work with the registered providers, the Steering Group and the Select Move partnership to progress the Charter ahead of legislative reforms. The timescale for implementation was not known, but a proactive approach was being taken.

Ward walks had previously occurred and with enough interest could be organised in the near future.

The two recommendations not taken forward were for a resident's association and a social housing sector. It was felt with the delays caused by Covid-19, the role of the Select Move Coordinator was able to deliver the aims of both recommendations and was able to keep up with changes to legislation to provide the oversight recommended.

The report was noted.

## **8 Scrutiny Reporting Back: Chorley Council's Annual Report on Overview and Scrutiny in 2021/22**

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee introduced the '*Scrutiny Reporting Back: Chorley Council's Annual Report on Overview and Scrutiny*', highlighting the previous year's activity, and thanked the Members of the Committee, and the Democratic and Member Services Officer for their work over the previous year.

**Decision: The report was noted.**

## **9 Reports from the Task and Finish Groups**

Vice Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group, Councillor Sarah Ainsworth provided a brief update on the progress of the Task Group.

The Task Group had not met since the previous Overview and Scrutiny Committee, but the next date was set for Monday, July 25.

It was highlighted that there was a delay in the distribution of the survey, which was a disappointment to the Chair of the Task Group. The survey went to 2500 users of Select Move. The survey would be open for a month, and early indication suggested a good rate of response. The survey results to be discussed at a meeting in August.

The final report is due to be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 6 October 2022.

## **10 Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme**

Members discussed the Work Programme that was created following a training and workshop session.

The topic of customer services was not added to the work programme as the first Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel featured Executive Member for Customer, Streetscene and Environment, Councillor Adrian Lowe, and Director (Customer and Digital) Asim Khan.

It was clarified that the topic of Cycling, it had been agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 17 March 2022, during the 'Sustainable Public Transport Second Monitoring Report' that

*'The Committee endorse the proposed Cycling Project (paragraph 10) as an appropriate way to develop the cycling offer in the borough which supersedes the original recommendation to develop a cycling task group.'*

It was confirmed that there will be an agenda item for 'Crime and Disorder Scrutiny' but due to a change in staff, organising a date and topic was ongoing. A suggestion was made for the Police and Crime Commissioner to be invited, but it was believed that a Member Learning Session involving all Councillors would be more effective.

**Decision: The Work Programme was noted.**

Chair

Date