



Overview and Scrutiny Committee Minutes

Notes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Monday 11 January 2016 at the Civic Centre, Poulton-le-Fylde.

Committee members present:

Councillor R Amos
Councillor E Anderton
Councillor C Birch
Councillor Fail
Councillor Hodgkinson
Councillor Ibison
Councillor Jones

Councillor McKay
Councillor Ormrod
Councillor Robinson
Councillor Smith
Councillor Matthew Vincent
Councillor Michael Vincent (Chairman)

Other councillors present:

Councillor I Amos
Councillor Gibson, Leader of the Council (for Item 4)
Councillor Murphy, Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder

Officers present:

Garry Payne, Chief Executive (for Item 4)
Philippa Davies, Corporate Director of Resources
Pete Mason, Head of Contact Centre
Peter Foulsham, Scrutiny Officer

OS.70 Apologies for absence

None.

OS.71 Declarations of interest

None.

OS.72 Minutes of meeting held on 9 November 2015

Councillors E Anderton, Fail and Matthew Vincent proposed amendments to the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2015. Following a vote on each amendment none was carried.

Councillor Fail continued to express his dissatisfaction with the minutes as agreed.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 9 November 2015 confirmed as a correct record.

OS.73 Minutes of meeting held on 7 December 2015

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 7 December 2015 be confirmed as a correct record.

OS.74 Business Plan 2015-2019 (update 2016)

Councillor Peter Gibson (Leader of the Council) and Garry Payne (Chief Executive) presented the council's Business Plan 2015-2019, which had been updated for 2016.

Councillor Gibson referred members to a list of new projects that are part of the Plan, and highlighted, in particular, the promotion of the new Enterprise Zone at Hillhouse International Business Park and projects that were part of the 'Healthier Wyre' theme.

Garry Payne informed the committee that the Business Plan would be considered at the Full Council meeting on 3 March 2016, followed by the Council Tax setting for 2016/17 which, along with the Revenue and Capital Estimates essentially supports the delivery of the Business Plan.

An officer would be identified for each action in the Plan and all project plans, with progress reports, would be available to councillors on the intranet. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee would continue to receive quarterly reports to enable councillors to monitor the performance of each of the actions.

In response to questions and comments from committee members, Councillor Gibson and Garry Payne made the following comments:

- The Enterprise Zone will complement Blackpool's development at Squires Gate; we expect to attract firms to the area.
- The council will work closely with Fleetwood Town Council to support Team Fleetwood and other initiatives in the town.
- The council prioritises facilitating clean energy opportunities, as demonstrated by recent meetings about the barrage and links with Associated British Ports regarding offshore wind.
- Decisions will need to be taken about assets; assets that are not

- performing could be disposed of, while others will be invested in.
- The request for a clear measure to be considered for the Business Plan priority “*facilitate clean energy opportunities*” was noted.

After further discussion the committee made the following proposals regarding the Business Plan:

- (i) That the wording of the third action under the heading Enterprising Wyre be reconsidered in order to better reflect the involvement of Fleetwood Town Council (that action currently being ‘*We will support “Team Fleetwood”, Fleetwood’s coastal community team to rejuvenate Fleetwood Town Centre*’)
- (ii) That the measure ‘*Satisfaction with sport and leisure facilities*’ should additionally include parks and open spaces as they are also used as active leisure facilities. (Garry Payne indicated that satisfaction with parks and open spaces was already assessed as part of the Life in Wyre survey).

RESOLVED

- (i) that the committee’s proposals for amendments to the Business Plan be submitted to the Chief Executive to be considered for inclusion in the current draft, prior to the Full Council meeting in March 2016, and
- (ii) That Cllr Gibson and Mr Payne be thanked for attending the meeting.

OS.75 Cost profiles – benchmarking results 2015/16

Philippa Davies, Corporate Director of Resources, submitted a report. She explained that the council’s external auditors had a responsibility to consider how the authority secured financial resilience and challenged how it secured economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

Information was available via statistics published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountability (CIPFA) which enabled councils to compare their costs with a ‘Nearest Neighbour Group’ of councils which are considered by CIPFA to have similar characteristics.

Ms Davies said that the nearest neighbour comparisons used Original Estimates for the forthcoming year, but were still helpful indicators that encouraged questions to be asked about the differences in the way in which services were delivered from one council to another. The comparisons had previously been used by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to identify possible areas for review, perhaps the most influential of which had been a review of waste management services that had resulted in a new contract being agreed with Veolia and the bringing in house of street cleansing services.

RESOLVED

- (i) that Philippa Davies be thanked for her report, and
- (ii) that the report be noted.

OS.76 Employment in Wyre

Councillor Pete Murphy, Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder, updated the committee on the Enterprise Zone at Hillhouse Business Park. Wyre Council's involvement in its development was limited at this point with the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership and the Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Development Company taking leading roles at this early stage.

In response to a question about improving transport links to the new Enterprise Zone Councillor Murphy said that £50m had been allocated by the government for improvements to the A585, to be completed by 2020.

Referring to the Employment in Wyre task group recommendations, Councillor Murphy confirmed that the council continued to work closely with Blackpool and Fylde College and that links with employers, through Wyred Up and the Fleetwood Business Club in particular, remained strong.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

OS.77 Welfare reform

Pete Mason, Head of Contact Centre, presented a report detailing ongoing reforms and other likely changes to welfare benefits over the next five years.

The migration of claimants onto Universal Credit had been very slow as a result of the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) rolling out the scheme nationally. The DWP's new target date was 2021 so the migration was likely to continue very gradually until that date.

Other welfare reforms and their likely implications for residents and the council were addressed in detail in Mr Mason's written report.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

OS.78 Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2015-16

The Corporate Director of Resources had submitted a report.

The Chairman, Councillor Michael Vincent, referred to Lancashire County Council's proposed budget cuts and specifically the recommendations that

the committee had made to the Cabinet following their meeting on 7 January. Councillor Michael Vincent proposed that a more detailed review of the likely impact of cuts to public transport be undertaken as a matter of urgency, also taking into account the impact of the withdrawal of free accessible transport for all adults attending day centres from 1 September 2016.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Officer be asked to convene a group of members to review the impact of cuts to public transport services as a matter of urgency.

OS.79 Date and time of next meeting

RESOLVED that the next scheduled meeting of the committee be held at 6pm on Monday 8 February 2016 at the Civic Centre, Poulton-le-Fylde.

The meeting started at 6pm and finished at 7.43pm.

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