



Report of:	Meeting	Date	Item No.
Cllr Michael Vincent, Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Council	6 April 2017	10

Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Periodic Report

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To inform Council about the work that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has undertaken since the last periodic report was submitted.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the report be noted.

3. Background

- 3.1 Since the last periodic report to Full Council the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has met on eleven occasions. Ten of these were scheduled meetings and there was one additional meeting arranged for a call-in.

4. Committee meetings

- 4.1 Councillor Michael Vincent was elected as Chairman of the Committee on 22 September 2014, with Councillor Kerry Jones elected as Vice Chairman.
- 4.2 The committee's work has been centred on the delivery of the annual Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme. The committee's Work Programme has been a very flexible arrangement during 2016/17, with several topics for review having been identified early in the year, leaving capacity for the Committee to respond to other issues that have arisen during the course of the year.
- 4.3 The committee dealt with a call-in about the proposed fees and charges for 2016/17 for the splash-pad facility in Fleetwood.
- 4.4 The Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive attended two meetings.

The first was to introduce the Strategic Narrative which described a new approach by which the council would deliver its strategic goals, including an essential element of increased commerciality.

The second was to introduce the Council's draft Business Plan 2015-2019, following the 2017 update. The committee made a number of comments and suggestions for amendment, which were supported by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive.

- 4.5** Quarterly Business Plan performance reports have been received from the Service Director Performance and Innovation. The reports have been very helpful in assisting the committee to identify topics for further scrutiny.
- 4.6** The committee has continued to closely monitor the development of the Local Plan by receiving quarterly progress reports from the Planning Policy and Economic Development Manager. Councillor Murphy, the Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder was also invited to a meeting to answer questions about the Local Plan's preparation.
- 4.7** Twelve months after the submission of the task group's report to Cabinet, the committee reviewed the progress of the implementation of the recommendations agreed by the Cabinet of the Engaging with Communities task group. The recommendations of two other task groups will be reviewed in April 2017, namely those that looked at:
- (i) Clinical Commissioning Groups, and
 - (ii) Building Stronger Relationships with Town and Parish Councils.
- 4.8** The committee continues to fulfil its requirement to scrutinise the work of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) at least annually, receiving a report about the CSP's performance and priorities for the coming year. A report about the Partnership was most recently received by the committee on 6 March 2017.
- 4.9** The council has a co-opted representative on Lancashire County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee, who reports to the committee at least annually. The next report is due on 10 April 2017.
- 4.10** Other reports received by the committee from officers and representatives of external organisations included the following:
- Council Tax Discount
 - Proposed cuts to Lancashire County Council's Supporting People funding
 - Fleetwood Market
 - Left Coast
 - Strategic Narrative
 - 'Together We Make a Difference' initiative
 - Engaging with Communities task group – review of

- recommendations
- Proposed fees and charges 2017/18
- Cost profiles benchmarking
- Treasury Management Strategies and Policies
- Switching energy suppliers
- Grant funding and the YMCA
- 2030 Vision for health care in Wyre – Fylde and Wyre Clinical Commissioning Group

5. Task groups

5.1 Localised Council Tax Support (LCTS)

The task group met twice and reported its findings to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 6 June 2016.

The task group considered a number of different options for modifying the council's scheme. The task group concluded that the council's scheme is as good as it can be at the current time. There was a danger of reducing eligibility for LCTS which would then increase the council tax payable and would ultimately result in increased write offs, meaning that the council was no better off.

5.2 Lancashire County Council Property Strategy – Library service consultation

On 12 May 2016 Lancashire County Council's Cabinet agreed to commence a twelve-week public consultation on a proposed property strategy, which ran until 14 August 2016. The property strategy sought to suggest how savings might be made through the property portfolio, detailing how and where the County Council would deliver its services in the future. 238 buildings across Lancashire were subject to the review and there are proposals to continue to deliver services from 132 of them.

A task group was convened to scrutinise the impact of proposed library closures, which were part of the strategy, on the residents of Wyre.

The task group submitted its response, which was endorsed by the Cabinet, to meet Lancashire County Council's deadline of 14 August 2016.

5.3 Food hygiene

The Food Hygiene task group was set up to review the way in which the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme is delivered in Wyre and to identify any actions that should be taken to improve ratings. This followed a series of press reports which highlighted the fact that some food premises in the borough had very low Food Hygiene Standards Ratings.

The task group reported its findings to the Cabinet on 22 March 2017.

The implementation of the task group's recommendations accepted by the Cabinet will be reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in March 2018.

5.4 Domestic abuse

The task group was commissioned to review the current provision for domestic abuse services in Wyre and to make recommendations for improvements that could affect Wyre residents.

The task group carried out extensive scrutiny of the roles and work of the myriad of organisations that contribute to the delivery of domestic abuse services in Wyre and made recommendations to the Cabinet based on a newly commissioned integrated domestic abuse service that commenced under the auspices of the Police and Crime Commissioner on 1 April 2017.

The task group reported its findings to the Cabinet on 22 March 2017.

The implementation of the task group's recommendations accepted by the Cabinet will be reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in March 2018.

5.5 Citizens Advice Bureau

A scrutiny group undertook a review of the CAB's performance and, specifically, the council's contribution to the funding of the CAB, during two meetings held in October and November 2016.

The task group recommended to the Cabinet on 18 January 2017 that the Service Level Agreement with Citizens Advice North West be renewed, with appropriate updating and redrafting to reflect other specific recommendations, for a further period of three years from 1 June 2017, a recommendation that was accepted.

5.6 Parliamentary Select Committee inquiry into overview and scrutiny in local government

On Tuesday 24 January 2017 the Communities and Local Government (CLG) Committee launched an inquiry into overview and scrutiny in local government. The Committee will consider whether overview and scrutiny arrangements in England are working effectively and whether local communities are able to contribute to and monitor the work of their councils.

A Working Group of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee met to discuss the specific points raised by the Select Committee inquiry and submitted a response to the Select Committee, meeting the deadline date of 10 March 2017.

6. Future work

6.1 Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2017/18

The Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2017/18 will be discussed and agreed at the first meeting of the new Municipal Year on 22 May 2017. As always, members are invited to make suggestions about potential task group topics for inclusion in the Programme. Scrutiny is member-led and without suggestions from councillors about task group topics the Programme will not achieve its purpose.

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