

REPORT OF THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR OF POLICY AND CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE.

The next meeting of the Policy and Corporate Resources Committee will take place after Council Forum on the 30th September 2013 and Members of the Committee will be provided with progress updates on the work programmes from all the Overview and Scrutiny Committees:

Policy and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee;

The agreed format for the first three rounds of meetings for all four scrutiny Committees has been successfully delivered. At the third round of meetings in September each of the Committees made recommendations on the reviews they have carried out in the last three months, received responses from their respective Executive Members on recommendations they made in the last municipal year and agreed the continuing work programme for the next three to six months, in addition to receiving a report back on the first six months budget. At the meeting on the 30th September Committee Members will discuss with the Leader of the Council and the Executive Member for Resources the budget position in addition to any recommendations made by the Committee in the last municipal year.

Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee;

The Committee received corporate budget monitoring updates from the Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Young People and the Executive Member for Regeneration. The Committee also received an update from the Executive Member for Regeneration on recommendations made by last years Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee, followed by an update on the Committees progress with its work programme, specifically the Empty Homes strategy.

Children and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee;

At the meeting on the 2nd September the Committee received a briefing on Pupil Premium: The Committee were advised that it remained the decision of the school and not the local authority as to how they allocate the money they receive as Pupil Premium and that the local authority is not in a position to direct how that allocation is made or spent. Members were also advised that often the allocation of Pupil Premium would not be seen by schools as a separate allocation but an intrinsic part of the overall budget; and that whilst there was no one prescriptive way of allocating this provision, some schools are diverse and creative in the application of this funding stream, choosing to support the cost of school uniforms for example. As a potential topic for consideration the Executive Member advised that there remains inconsistent take up of free schools meals across the borough, with opportunity for increased take up to be reviewed by some schools.

The Executive Member for Children's Services answered questions regarding the adoption service, advising That although there were pressures due to adoption fees doubling in costs which will become recurrent year on year,

along with the increase in special guardianship costs, nationally and locally the processes were shortening and bureaucracy where identified was being addressed.

Since the last meeting of Council, as part of pre-decision scrutiny, a cross party working group had met with senior officers from Children's Services to receive a very thorough briefing with question and answer sessions on the hub and spoke downsizing and remodelling consultation, the outcomes of which fed into the report agreed at Executive Board.

Health and Adults Overview and Scrutiny Committee

On September 11th the Committee received responses to last years recommendations relating to the Adult Safeguarding review which was carried out in the first half of the year and the review of Loneliness which was completed in the second half of the year. The Executive Member for Health and Adult Social Care also advised Members of the current budget position. The Committee also received a briefing from the Executive Member and the Director of Public Health on Public Health outcomes for the Borough. From this briefing the Committee agreed further topics for review during the remainder of the year. The review of vaccination and immunisation services which was scheduled for September had been moved to November due to unavailability of key speakers. Members of this Committee (including the Chair and Vice Chair) participated in informal discussions with East Lancashire Hospitals Trust and the Clinical Commissioning Group regarding the Keogh Review Action and Assurance Plans. It is anticipated that a formal joint Scrutiny of the Review could potentially take place in October or November once the outcomes from the Summit are known. Finally work has been underway to re-establish the joint (Lancashire) Health Scrutiny Committee.

Call In

A Call In petition was received regarding the Executive Member Decision Review of Highway Safety Inspection Procedure published on 16th August. The Call In was heard on 4th September. After an hour and a half debate the Committee agreed (8-1) with the original Executive Member Decision.

Jim Shorrocks (Chair)

Carl Nuttall (Vice Chair)