

**REGENERATION AND NEIGHBOURHOODS
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Wednesday 12th October 2011**

PRESENT – *Councillor John Pearson (Chair), Daley, Akthar, Oldfield, Solkar, Taylor, John Slater and Browne.*

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Cllr Harling	- Executive Member for Regeneration
Cllr F. Hussain	- Executive Member for Environment
Cllr Jan-Virmani	-Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Customer Services
Sayyed Osman	- Director for Environment, Housing and Neighbourhoods
Brian Bailey	- Director for Regeneration
Lisa Bibby	- Lead Chief Officer
Steve Tingle	- Deputy Lead Chief Officer
Tony Watson	- Head of Environmental Services
John Addison	- Scrutiny Officer

RESOLUTIONS

10 Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were received from Councillors Surve, Sidat, McFall. Gordon, Khonat and Cottam.

11 Minutes of the Meeting held on the 20th July 2011

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Meeting held on the 20th July 2011 be approved as a correct record.

12 Work of the Executive Member

Transformational Agenda Update

The Executive Members for Regeneration, Housing, Neighbourhoods and Environment Portfolios were invited to provide the Committee with a brief overview and update on the Transformational Agenda, including areas that were on target and those areas where targets still needed to be met.

Members asked the Executive Members a number of questions about the Transformational Agenda, focusing on budget pressure within each portfolio and the confidence of the Executive Members to meet their targets.

In response to a question about the current position of the new Blackburn Market, the Executive Member informed the Committee that the Market was doing well and that the Number of stalls filled was ahead of the Council's schedule.

Recommendations Report

The Chair invited each of the Executive Members and officers to provide Members with an update on the recommendations regarding their Portfolio, in particular those recommendations from the relevant, previous year's Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

Priorities and Risks for the Municipal Year

Each Executive Member was invited to highlight their key priorities and risks for the rest of the Municipal year from the lists that they submitted prior to the meeting.

Regeneration priorities;

1. To make the best use of Council powers and assets to maintain regeneration momentum for the short, medium and long term.
2. To achieve successful town centres and thriving markets.
3. To promote economic growth and to improve skills and job creation.
4. To improve the highway infrastructure including road surfaces.
5. To maintain services in the face of funding cuts.

Regeneration risks;

1. Deteriorating economic conditions.
2. Portfolio budget pressures.
3. Another harsh winter.

Environment priorities;

1. Deliver transformation from budget cuts.
2. In light of the cuts maintain best possible standards of cleanliness and quality of urban, street and green space.
3. Reduce waste to landfill.
4. Promote positive behaviour and education to reduce litter, graffiti and fly posting.
5. Future Burial and Cemeteries facilities.
6. Asset Transfers.

Support 'Think Family' and other Corporate initiatives Environment risks;

1. Significant budget cuts leaves service with little contingency or flexibility.
2. Reputation and image of the Borough.
3. Failure to meet key Government targets on waste and recycling.
4. Reduced enforcement and education resource.
5. Growing demand.

Neighbourhoods priorities;

1. Deliver transformation from budget cuts.
2. Improve engagement through connected communities & Neighbourhood management work programme.
3. Maintain quality of customer services.
4. Community safety.
5. Adult skills & employability programme.
6. Community development and capacity building.
7. Advice, guidance and information services.
8. Public protection.
9. Community cohesion.
10. Support 'Think Family' and other Corporate initiatives.

Neighbourhoods risks;

1. Significant cuts to the service leaving little flexibility or contingency.
2. Unemployment and deprivation growing resulting in growing demand for services.
3. Crime and disorder increases during times of recession.
4. Reputation of Borough.
5. Partner resources also stretched putting greater pressure on neighbourhood management.
6. Funding fall out and renewal of 'big' funding contracts.

Housing priorities;

1. Deliver Transformation in light of budget cuts.
2. Finish Griffin clearance and renewal area.
3. Housing needs and homelessness.
4. Private sector housing investment in repair.
5. Landlords, Housing in multiple occupation.
6. Housing for Older People.
7. Welfare reform impact on vulnerable and single people.
8. Home Improvement Agency and Disabled Adaptations.
9. Energy Conservation and affordable warmth.
8. Support 'Think Family' and other Corporate initiatives.

Housing risks;

1. Housing budgets have been hit hardest both in terms of core revenue and fall out of grants.
2. Virtually no Government capital programmes for the immediate future.
3. Repossessions and increased challenges from higher unemployment and welfare reform.
4. Demand for services very high and impacting on other services such as health, families, adults and education.
5. Portfolio faces further cuts in 2012.

Members considered all the information presented by the Executive Members focusing on a number of key areas around waste treatment, growth in the borough, houses of multiple occupation and crime and disorder.

RESOLVED:

That the Executive Members be thanked for there attendance.

13 Task Groups

The Chair presented to Members two draft reports from each of the Committees Task Groups. The Committee was asked to consider the draft reports and their recommendations from the £250,000 reduction in Core fee Task Group as well as the Reduction in the Street Cleaning Task Group.

The reports set out in detail the work of each Task Group, covering scope of the review, identifying areas of concern and active Member engagement with Executive Members and Officers.

Members were informed that the reports and recommendations would be sent to the Policy and Resources Committee for final approval before being submitted to the relevant Executive Members.

RESOLVED:

That the end of topic reports for the £250,000 reduction in Core fee Task Group and Reduction in Street Cleaning Task Group, be approved.

14 Committee's Work Programme

The Chair asked the Committee to consider its work programme for the remainder of year based on what had been presented by the Executive Members.

Members agreed that the Committee should create a number of sub groups to work outside of Committee to scrutinise the portfolios for the remainder of the year. Members held a round table discussion on potential areas that the Committee could scrutinise with a number of ideas coming forward, in particular around HMO'S, promoting growth and selective licensing.

The Committees lead Chief Officer suggested that all the ideas put forward should be sent to all Members of the Committee via an online questionnaire. This would allow Members to consider and suggest ideas. Members also agreed that the results of the questionnaire be presented to the Chair and Vice-Chair to allow them to agree the Committees sub groups based on Members responses.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Overview and scrutiny questionnaire should be sent out to Members the following day.
- 2) That the Committee should be split into sub groups to scrutinise the four portfolio areas.

15 Council Forum

The Committee received, for information a report submitted to Council forum updating the work of all the Overview and Scrutiny Committees. The also continued information on the Transformation Agenda, budget cuts and continued challenge to portfolios.

RESOLVED:

That the report from Council Forum be noted.

Signed.....
Chair of the meeting at which the Minutes were signed

Date.....

(The Meeting ended at 8:11)