

**REGENERATION AND NEIGHBOURHOODS  
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2014**

**PRESENT** – Councillors *Surve* (Chair), *Roberts*, *Entwistle*, *Whalley*, *Casey*, *Daley* and *Whittle*

**Also Present –**

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Cllr Maureen Bateson | Executive Member for Regeneration                     |
| George Bell          | Associate Director – Capita Highways & Transportation |
| Simon Ross           | Senior Finance Manager                                |
| Gifford Kerr         | Head of Service support to the Committee              |
| Paul Lee             | Head of Service Support to the Committee              |
| John Addison         | Principal Scrutiny Officer                            |
| Sonya Palmer         | Scrutiny Officer                                      |

**RESOLUTIONS**

**20. Welcome and apologies**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Apologies were received from Councillors H.Khonat, S.Khonat, C.Rigby and Hollings.

**21. Minutes of the Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2014**

**RESOLVED –**

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2014 be agreed as a correct record subject to the inclusion of Cllr Whalley.

**22. Declarations of Interest in items on this Agenda**

There were no Declarations of Interest received.

**23. Regeneration Portfolio Budget and Challenges**

The Chair welcomed the Executive Member for Regeneration and the Senior Finance Manager, responsible for supporting the Regeneration portfolio, to the meeting. The Executive Member provided an update to the Committee on the budget and the challenges ahead for the portfolio.

The Executive Member presented to the Committee an overview and update on items within the portfolio Budget, highlighting a number of items for Members attention.

It was reported that the portfolio was currently predicting a break even budget position for 14/15 and that it was key to maximise income streams and bring forward 15/16 savings wherever practicable.

Members were advised that significant savings needed to be made from the budget, £2m of which was for concessionary fares and ring-fenced, leaving a budget amount of £5m.

It was reported that the Council would look to make savings through services and look at staffing structures and how to work more efficiently.

Members questioned whether the Council received any contributions from the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP). It was reported that Local Authorities could submit bids to secure additional funding, however it was recognised that the whole of the North West would be competing for the bids and some authorities struggled to stand out due to a lack of resources for the bidding process.

Members held a discussion regarding the Blackburn and Darwen Markets. The Executive Member advised the Committee that market traders had traded during a difficult period but had continued to support the markets. It was added that the Council were working towards attracting as many stall holders as possible and raising the profile of the markets.

Members were advised that the 6 day market in Darwen was doing well but there was concerns regarding the 3 day market which was not generating as much footfall as hoped.

#### **RESOLVED-**

That the Executive Member for Regeneration and the Senior Finance Officer be thanked.

#### **24. 20mph Speed Limit Pilot**

The Executive Member for Regeneration and the Associate Director for Capita Highways and Transportation provided the Committee with a presentation on the 20mph speed limit pilot.

Members were provided with the background to the 20mph speed limit pilot. It was reported that in 2006 Local Authorities were encouraged to introduce 20mph zones and again in 2013 to encourage drivers to naturally drive at 20mph.

It was reported that the key objectives from the Department for Transport in relation to the 20mph speed pilot were:

- The provision of up-to date and consistent advice to traffic authorities
- Improved clarity which will aid greater consistency of speed limits across the country

- Enabling the setting of more appropriate local speed limits, including lower or higher limits where conditions dictate
- Achieving local speed limits that better reflect the needs of all road users, not just motorised vehicles
- Ensuring improved quality of life for local communities and a better balance between road safety, accessibility and environmental objectives especially in rural communities
- Improved recognition and understanding by road users of the risks involved on different types of road, speed limits that apply, and the reasons why
- Improved respect for speed limits, and in turn improved compliance; and
- Continued reductions in the number of road traffic collisions, injuries and deaths in which excessive or inappropriate speed is a contributory factor

Members noted that the pilot started in August 2013 in Mill Hill and were advised that Mill Hill had been chosen due to the area being well defined which included local schools, community centres and terraced properties.

Members were also provided with information relating to the statistics of the quarterly speed surveys which highlighted a slight decrease in speed during the pilot period but not as big a reduction as the Council would have hoped for.

The Executive Member informed the Committee that research had shown that 20mph speed limits work best where there are recorded low speeds, for example a street where the average speed is 24mph would be more likely to reduce to 20mph.

In response to questions raised by the Committee regarding Police enforcement it was advised that the pilot was self-enforced with traffic calming measures with no Police involvement.

Members held a discussion regarding Police Enforcement and questioned why they could not support the pilot. The Executive Member advised the Committee that the Police did not have the equipment for 20mph enforcement.

Members held a lengthy discussion regarding the public's perception of road speeds, lack of knowledge and bad habits. Members agreed that residents needed re-educating on road safety and speed awareness. It was suggested that this could be carried out to parents via schools.

Members raised questions in relation to the cost of the pilot scheme and were advised that the Council had spent £40k on the implementation of the pilot and signage. In response to questions as to whether the pilot would work, the Executive Member advised the Committee that the pilot had only been operating for 6 months therefore it was too soon to evaluate, however, the Executive Member would come back to the Committee after the trial period with her findings.

## **RESOLVED-**

That the Executive Member for Regeneration and the Associate Director for Capita Highways and Transportation be thanked.

### **25. Performance & Downsizing of Environment Task Group**

The Principal Scrutiny Officer presented to Members an end of topic report for the Performance and Downsizing of Environment (with Highways) task groups.

Members agreed that they would consider the report, next steps and additional information before recommendations.

## **RESOLVED –**

1. That the end of topic report for the Performance and Downsizing of Environment (with Highways) be noted.

### **26. Committee's Work Programme**

The Principal Scrutiny Officer reminded Members of some issues and discussions that had taken place with the Executive Members, highlighting the main issues of debate that had been raised.

Members were also reminded of what topics they had covered so far and were asked to consider the Committee's work programme for the remainder of the municipal year.

Suggestions were made to look at the following:

- The working partnership between Blackburn University and the Council
- The day to day running of parking including Civil Enforcement Officers and the 'free after 3' parking incentive which was costing the Council approximately £100,000.

Members agreed that any suggestions should be emailed to the Principal Scrutiny officer for discussion and agreement at the next Committee meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> January 2015.

The Chair of the Committee provided Members with an update from a recent taxi inspection visit with Local Authority Officers and the Police and was provided with an update in relation to the process of a taxi inspection visit.

## **RESOLVED –**

1. That Members email the Principal Scrutiny Officer with suggestions for the Committee's Work Programme for the remainder of the municipal year

2. That the update from the Chair of the Committee on Taxi Inspection visits be noted

Signed.....

Chair of the meeting at which the Minutes were signed

Date.....