

**POLICY & CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE
Monday, 15 July 2024**

PRESENT – Councillors, Councillor Tony Humphrys (Chair), Jackson, Sidat and Whalley.

ALSO PRESENT – The Leader, Councillor Phil Riley, Executive Members Vicky McGurk and Mahfooz Hussain, Officers – Corinne McMillan, Tony Watson and Phil Llewellyn.

RESOLUTIONS

1 Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed all present to the Meeting, and asked all to introduce themselves.

Apologies were received from Councillors Hussain S and Hussain W, Connor, Fazal and Slater.

The Chair passed on thanks to his former Chair Kevin Connor, and also to Phil Llewellyn, who was attending his last meeting of the Committee ahead of starting a new job at another local authority.

2 Minutes of the last meeting

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 11th March 2024 were agreed as a correct record.

The Chair noted that at the last meeting, Digital Inclusion had been identified as an item that would be appropriate to revisit at a future point.

3 Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were received.

4 Work Programme 2024/25

The Leader and Executive Members for Finance and Governance and Digital & Customer Services presented their priorities and objectives for 2024/25 as follows:

Leader:

- **The Lancashire Devolution Deal/Lancashire Combined Authority**

The approval of a Combined County Authority for Lancashire will present an opportunity for more control and influence over local growth and have a positive impact on residents and businesses of the borough. Supporting the implementation of the proposed Lancashire Combined County Authority, creation of a new Business Board, establishing an

economic strategy and skills plan and strategic transport framework to drive shared priorities.

- **Local Plan 2021-2037**

Drive forward the Local Plan for 2021-2037, including bringing forward new residential and employment land opportunities the adopted Local Plan affords the Borough and supporting policy development measures.

- **Ongoing delivery of the Council's Strategic Asset Management Plan 2023-2026**

A strategic view of our asset portfolio will help deliver our corporate priorities, grow our borough and achieve best value and return from all our assets.

Finance & Governance:

- **Budget**

Continue working to achieve a balanced and sustainable budget.

- **Recruitment and Retention**

Address the ongoing challenges faced by local government by developing targeted approaches to improve recruitment and retention.

- **Council Services**

Give value for money in the services the Council delivers, endeavouring to be fair and equitable.

Digital & Customer Services:

- **Cyber Security**

The implementation of the Cyber Security strategy and improvements to our cyber defence to ensure long-term resilience against cyberattacks.

- **Health & Safety and Civil Contingencies**

Continue to deliver the CAA statutory functions and support the implementation of Martyn's Law. Ensure support and guidance is provided to council departments so they are compliant under health and safety legislation.

- **Digital Inclusion**

Councils play a crucial role in addressing digital exclusion and the development of a strategy will enable us to address the lack of access, helping to create a more connected, accessible and equitable community.

The development of a borough wide approach to tackling digital inclusion, including refreshing the Digital Inclusion Network, implementing the Peoples Network, creating options to support residents with device access, increasing the skills offer and improving connectivity.

After each relevant presentation, following discussion, the presenting Members and supporting officers left the meeting.

Members then considered the areas they would like to scrutinise, and whilst Cyber Security was not chosen, the Chair requested that the Executive Member come back to a future meeting with an update.

RESOLVED –

That the following items be chosen for the Committee’s Work Programme:

- **Strategic Asset Management Plan** - (priorities, reduction strategy, investment strategy for remaining buildings, energy reduction plans for assets) -16th September 2024
- **Recruitment and Retention of Staff**– (including current strategy, what needs to change and use of agency staff in the Council) -6th January 2025
- **Digital Exclusion Update** - (one year on from last update, plus look at use of funding opportunities for Blackburn and Darwen to improve public Wi-Fi). – 10th March 2025

Signed:

Date:

Chair of the meeting
at which the minutes were confirmed