

## **Progress of the People and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committees.**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committees September and looked at how the borough was meeting the challenges of the Covid19 pandemic and other issues.

### People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021

#### Lancashire and South Cumbria Pathology Collaboration

The Committee looked at the planned formation of a single pathology service for Lancashire and South Cumbria by 2023. The benefits were outlined, together with the challenges that the delivery of the single service would face. The Committee were informed that the main thrust behind the proposals was to ensure that there was a consistency of service across the South Cumbria and Lancashire footprint and to ensure that the service was delivered as cost effectively as possible using the technology that was developing. The model would use a hub and spoke model with services delivered in hospital where results were needed as an emergency and more routine tests being done in the central hub. The central location was to be developed at Samlesbury, close to the motorway network and also closer to the main users of the service based in East Lancashire and Preston. The Committee looked at how the service would be provided and the demands of all service users would be met, from GPs to hospital trusts. The Committee also focused on the way that areas at the edge of the patch would be served by the service as opposed to at present. The importance of the samples being delivered within time scales was discussed and the ways that this would be addressed. The Committee were informed of the time line for the delivery of the proposed changes and the stages that needed to be completed including the building of the hub. Assurances were given to the Committee that the religious needs of sections of the community to bury bodies as soon as possible would continue to be met under the revised arrangements. The Committee would be kept informed of the proposals and how they affect the residents of the borough.

#### Proposed Enhancements to Acute Stroke Care and Rehabilitation Services for Lancashire and South Cumbria

The Committee received a briefing on the proposals for the enhancements to the acute stroke care and rehabilitation services in the area. The Committee were informed that strokes were the fourth largest cause of deaths in the UK and remained the leading cause of disability. One third of stroke survivors were no longer able to live independently and across Lancashire and South Cumbria there were now over 3,500 strokes per year. The Committee were informed of the current arrangements for stroke care in Lancashire and South Cumbria and that these did not provide the highest quality of care required. The enhancements proposed would seek to ensure that the population of South Cumbria and Lancashire received the best care wherever they lived, all day, every day.

Members discussed the patient's views on the proposals and were informed that the patient wishes had been sought and were in favour of the proposals as they delivered better outcomes for stroke victims in exchange for close proximity. The Committee looked at the way that ambulance support was crucial to the delivery of the proposed service and members were informed that the North West Ambulance Service had been involved throughout the process and enhancements to services were to be made where necessary to deliver this. The Committee supported the proposed enhancements and improved outcomes for patients and would keep the proposals under review.

### Blackburn with Darwen Health Watch.

The Committee invited Blackburn with Darwen Healthwatch to the meeting to look at how both organisations could work better together and add value to each other's work. Sarah Johns, Chief Executive of Blackburn Healthwatch, set out the work being undertaken by Healthwatch and the consultations that they were carrying out. The work on patient experience, Long Covid and Care Homes visits were outlined and possible collaborative ways that the Committee could work with Healthwatch to the benefit of residents of the borough. The Committee were informed that Healthwatch would be invited to attend future meetings where it was felt that the input of Healthwatch would be beneficial and add value to the work of the Committee.

### Additional Meeting of the Committee.

An additional meeting of the Committee has been arranged to take place on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2021 to look at issues relating to Children's Services and Schools. The Committee will look at the return to school in the autumn term and the work that had been carried out to ensure that this had been done safely, the Safeguarding Annual Review, SACRE annual report and the peer review of work on neglect. The committee will also receive an update on the work of the Youth Forum and how they are progressing in their work programme.

### Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

The Committee looked at the way the Council can take action where private owners were failing with their duty to maintain the property and were having a detrimental effect on the whole of the community. The Committee were informed of the interventions that the Council had delivered through compulsory purchase and the properties that had been delivered back into the housing stock for use.

The Committee were informed of the powers that the Council had at their disposal and how these could be used to drive improvements. These were-

- Town and Country Planning Act 1990 – Section 215
- Building Act 1984
- Housing Act 1985, Section 17 – Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs)
- Environmental Protection Act 1990 – Section 59, 80,
- Anti-Social Behaviour Crime & Policing Act 2014 – Section 43 – 58
- Public Health Act 1936 – Section 78
- Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949

The Committee looked at examples that had resulted in improvements in the borough and the way that the officers had worked with land owners to ensure that they fulfilled their legal duties and the steps that had to be taken under each power should negotiations not produce results. The Committee were informed of the limits of powers and the duty of the magistrate's court to consider cases brought by the Council. The Committee discussed the level of fines that were imposed by courts and the way these differed from case to case and personal circumstances. The level of deterrent was discussed and the alternative wordings that could assist in delivering a tougher message that would make people think before they failed to take action.

The Committee discussed the issues that related to adopted highways and cleaning and especially back alleys. Members highlighted the issues that they faced from residents bringing issues to them which related to un-adopted areas and how many of them were unaware of

their responsibilities and requirements as the land owners. That the officers be thanked for their informative and helpful presentation. The Committee agreed that the Strategic Director, Place be requested to draw up a list of the top ten hot spots for member's information and the possible actions that we could use to make a difference in these areas. The Committee also asked that ways of helping communities in keeping areas clean such as assisting in monitoring known dumping hotspots be considered and reported back to the Committee. The Committee also requested that consideration be given to leaflets to be given to residents of areas adjoining non adopted highways informing them of the difficulties that the Council faced in cleaning non adopted back alleys and their responsibilities.

#### Work Programme for the Committee

The Committee agreed that the next meeting would look at the issues relating to trees in the borough. This would include looking at the issues of ash dieback.

Sylvia Liddle, Chair, People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Suleman Khonat, Chair, Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee.