

## **POLICY AND CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 26TH JULY 2021**

**Present-** Councillor Harling, in the Chair, Councillors Bateson, Patel, A, Liddle, Floyd, Patel, Z, Hussain, S, and Rowat.

**Also Present-** Quesir Mahmood, Executive Member, Digital and Customer Services,  
Paul Fleming, Strategic Director, Resources.  
Paul Conlon, Democratic Services.

### **1. Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting.

### **2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2021.**

The minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the chair. Attention was drawn to the item relating to the review of the call-in process and the resolution of the Committee that a politically balanced task group be established to look at the issue. Members were conscious that the lack of opposition members on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Standards Committee meant that this was not possible.

**RESOLVED-** 1. That the minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the chair.

2 That the Committee note the difficulties in setting up a politically balanced task group to review the call in process as agreed at the last meeting due to the lack of opposition members appointed to serve on the Scrutiny and Standards Committees and the Standards Committee be informed that this cannot be proceeded with at this time.

### **3. Declaration of interests**

There were no declarations of interest made at the Committee.

### **4. Digital Response to the Pandemic in Blackburn with Darwen**

The Executive Member, Digital and Customer Services and Strategic Director attended the meeting and updated the Members on the work on the delivery of the digital strategy and how this had developed rapidly to meet the needs of the Council and its partners to deal with the pandemic and support residents of the borough.

The Committee were updated on the Council's web site that had been redesigned in 2019 and the applications behind the front pages. The Committee were informed that in February 2019 the Council had signed up to the National Local Government Digital Declaration. This was a

set of principles and approaches and allowed us to access free GDS training credits which were used to develop our capability around Agile Service Design and User Research. This also brought the Council together with many peers and opened up sharing and learning across the country. The Committee looked at the efforts that were directed to ensure that those left behind in the digital delivery of services and engagement were being supported and enabled. The Committee were shown how the Council now used data to understand the needs of residents and how services were used and accessed. Members asked if the digital development could assist in tracking member's case work and this was something that would be looked at as process management. This may free up members to work with those that could not get access digitally. The Committee were reminded that people would remain at the heart of the design process and this followed the Gov.uk model that was highly successful.

**RESOLVED-** The Committee would continue to look at the implementation of the digital strategy and seek to ensure that it met the needs of the organisation, the residents and service users in the Borough without leaving anyone behind.

### **5. Work Programme for the Committee.**

The Committee looked at suggestions received for the work programme for the Committee.

**RESOLVED-** That the Leader of the Council be invited to attend the next meeting of the Committee to address the progress on the Councils key aims and objectives as agreed by the Policy Council. The Executive Member of Finance and Governance would also be invited to present to members the progress on the 2021/2 budget and the outturn of the 2020/21 budget.

### **6. Progress of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.**

The Committee received an update on the work of the People and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committees. The Committees had continued their work on the issues relating to

- the Impact of Covid on the residential care market and how the Council had supported the sector,
- Cemeteries and Burials in the Borough,
- the development of a new Household Recycling Centre and,
- The Economic Recovery of the Borough.

**RESOLVED-** That the work of the People and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committees be noted.

Chair at the meeting where the minutes were signed.....

Date.....