

Progress of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees

Report of the Chairs of the Policy and Corporate Resources, People and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

Purpose of the report.

To report on the progress of the People and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

The People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The People Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on 6th June and commenced a busy work programme with two issues that were related to work they started earlier in the year.

The Committee also looked at the work of the two portfolio members and the pressures, priorities and issues relating to their portfolio. The Committee continues to value the work of the youth MP and the youth forum and the role they play in contributing to the work of the Committee.

Youth Forum Update.

The Committee looked at the work being undertaken by the Youth Forum and the Youth MP. The forum were continuing their progress on the training as Young inspectors and this entailed-

Development of a Framework

- Inspection Framework & Plan, Services to inspect, and much more.
- Residential Trips & Collaboration
- Planning & Preparation

Planning for Inspections

- Identifying Inspection timeline
- Training and Planning
- Pilot Inspections & Development

The Youth MP and Deputies were also busy working on a number of issues including-

- Consultations
- MYP Annual Conference
- Make Your Mark Voting
- Projects
- Events

The Committee also welcomed representatives of the Leaving Care Forum who updated the Committee on the work the forum was undertaking. The forum had been launched in April 2022 from members who were part of the senior voice group and were eligible to move up into this age category. They drew attention to work being undertaken by Manchester Metropolitan University where Young people who had previously been looked after in children's homes took part in a consultation with a student from Manchester Metropolitan University to share their experiences. The Committee were informed that after concerns regarding the Bee Active card, a new system was put in place and the age extended to 25. Two representatives from the

Leaving Care Forum attend the Corporate Parenting Specialist Advisory Group and the Corporate Parenting Executive Board to put forward the young people's voice. The leaving Care Forum are currently in the process of devising a new name for leaving care as they feel there are negative connotations attached to the name and being a 'care leaver'.

Adult Safeguarding

The Committee received the annual report of the Adult Safeguarding Board. The Board was required to produce an annual report and although requirement this had been put on hold during the pandemic it had been felt important to have one and acknowledge the work that had been undertaken. The report covered the period up to March 2021 and provided a summary of the work undertaken by the safeguarding board in Blackburn with Darwen. The report stated that there was an efficient system of maintaining contact with the elderly and shielded residents and an efficient system to ensure food deliveries were made to those who needed them. Agencies that were responsible for safe guarding and protecting the most vulnerable adults had been able to maintain their services.

The Committee discussed the long term effects of the pandemic on the mental health of the borough and how this would manifest itself in the future service needs.

Portfolio Responsibilities

In line with the other Overview and Scrutiny Committees members were informed of the revised portfolio responsibilities and how they fit into the remit for the Committee.

OFSTED Review of Children's services.

The Committee received an overview from the Executive Member on the findings of the Ofsted review of Children's Services. The review had taken place earlier in the year and the finding of the inspection would be reported to the Executive Board on 9th June. The review had found many good things in the services delivered and that children in the borough were safe.

The report outlined ten key areas for improvement and an Achieving Excellence Board had been established to look at how the effectiveness of services could be enhanced. The chair of the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been invited to sit on the board. The Committee would receive regular progress reports on the improvement of services and the work of the Board and how improvements would be implemented and outcomes monitored.

Work Programme for the Committee.

The Committee received a presentation on the issues, pressures and priorities of the portfolio areas and the work that was ongoing. The Committee discussed areas where they could add value and support the work of the Executive and agreed that during the year they would-

- Receive regular updates including progress of the Achieving Excellence Board on the actions relating to the Ofsted inspection.
- Receive regular reports from the Youth Forum on the progress of their work programme
- Receive an update on the reconfiguration of Pathology Services for Lancashire and South Cumbria (September)
- Receive information on the establishment of the ICS for south Cumbria and Lancashire including the new roles for partners
- establish a task group to examine Leisure services and leisure centres with a particular focus on how we are seeking to improve use of facilities, how we are

meeting the challenges of the competition and how the refresh scheme is working.(before September)

- Look at homelessness in the borough and the work of agencies that assist people.
- receive an overview of the work of the adult social care and health portfolio areas
- Look at the work of Blackburn Health Watch and look at possible areas of collaboration.
- Review the work being under taken in schools to support pupils who are falling behind due to the continued effects of the pandemic.
- Look at how the borough continues to deal with covid and potential outbreaks.
- Any consultations that we are required to look at due to its potential significant impact on residents of the borough.
- We will also look at the work of the Joint Committee when established.

Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on 13th June. The Committee looked at the work of the two portfolio members and the pressures, priorities and issues relating to their portfolio

Portfolio Responsibilities

In line with the other Overview and Scrutiny Committees members were informed of the revised portfolio responsibilities and how they fit into the remit for the Committee.

Work Programme for the Committee.

The Committee received a presentation on the issues, pressures and priorities of the portfolio areas and the work that was ongoing. The Committee discussed areas where they could add value and support the work of the Executive and agreed that during the year they would look at-

- the proposed Household recycling centre including the layout and design, consultations, how we will educate and engage with residents and prevent fly tipping (this will meet as a task group before September)
- burials – progress on the new cemetery site
- transport to employment on the periphery of the borough
- the growth programme
- progress on the local plan.
- flooding and critical gullies.
- The top 25 fly tipping sites in the borough

Policy and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 20th June 2022.

The Committee met on 20th June and commenced its work as follows-

Update on RIPA Activity, Procedural Guide and RIPA Inspection.

The Committee received a report on the introduction of the RIPA procedural Guide, the adoption of the recommendations made by the investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office, the RIPA training delivered to Officers and RIPA activity and applications. The Committee endorsed the recommendations in the report which would be submitted to the Executive Board for approval of the adoption of the new RIPA procedure and guidance.

Portfolio Responsibilities.

The Committee received the revised portfolio responsibilities which identified the areas that related to their work on scrutiny.

Progress against the Corporate Plan 2021/22

The Committee considered a report outlining the progress against the Corporate Plan 2021/2022 for the six months to year end (October 2021-March 2022). The report had been considered by the Executive Board on 9th June and they had noted the remedial action to improve delivery against the 2019-2023 Corporate priorities which were giving cause for concern. The Leader and the Chief Executive attended the meeting and outlined the actions and progress on the priorities which would be the focus of the scrutiny work for the year. Members were informed of the new arrangements that would be introduced with the introduction of the Integrated Care Strategy which would significantly affect the delivery of Health and Social Care within the borough. Members noted the progress of delivery against corporate targets and will continue to look at performance at future meetings of the Committee.

Development of the General Fund Revenue Budget 2023/24.

Members received a report on the development of the general fund revenue budget 2023/24. The report had been considered by the Executive Board and set out an update on the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan 2023/26 as the start of the process for developing the Councils Budget for 2023/24.

The report highlighted the key risks to the delivery of the budget in 2023/24 and the uncertainty of the funding outlook for the council. The Committee discussed issues that impacted on the budget and made particular reference to sickness absence and how the Council sought to mitigate the effects on the budget by keeping absence to a minimum through numerous programmes. The Committee had looked at sickness absence previously along with wellbeing measures that sought to maximise attendance and agreed to look at this issue as a topic this year. Members agreed to scope the topic and commence work as a task group prior to the next meeting of the Committee in September.

Progress of the People and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committees

The Committee looked at the work of the People and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the work programmes that had been agreed and were now being developed. Progress on these would continue to be reported to the Committee throughout the year.

Councillor Tony Humphrys, Chair of the Policy and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Sylvia Little, Chair of People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Brian Taylor, Chair of Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee.