

## **Council Forum**

**6<sup>th</sup> October 2022**

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

#### **Purpose of the Report**

To update the Council Forum on the progress of the Policy and Corporate Resources, Health and Social Care, Children and Education and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

#### **Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022.**

The first meeting of the Committee was held on 1<sup>st</sup> September. The meeting looked at two of the major issues facing the service are and how these would affect the services provided to residents by the National Health Service, Partners and the Council.

#### **Integrated Care Board.**

The Committee received an in depth briefing on the revised arrangements for Health services delivered in the Lancashire and South Cumbria area. The Integrated Care Board had been established and come in to effect on 1<sup>st</sup> July and were responsible for the commissioning and delivery of health services in the whole area. The Clinical Commissioning Groups had been abolished and revised structures implemented that work on local neighbourhood areas. The Committee were informed of the issues relating to the deprivation of the borough and how the new systems were Intended to ensure that services were best provided where need was greatest. The Committee would be looking to see the positive outcomes of the creation of the Integrated Care Board and the changes that the new structures would seek to reduce health deprivation in the borough.

#### **Adult Social Care.**

The Committee looked at the work of the Adult and Social Care portfolio area the activity and performance and the changes in demand. The Committee looked at how the department managed demand and the structure of the department and pathways to care.

The Committee looked at how changes in legislation would affect the delivery of services and the strategic context for the reforms. The health and care act set out a 10 year vision for the reforms to provide individuals with choice and control, access to outstanding quality and personalised care and support. The Committee were informed of the charging reform and how this would affect service users and reform the way that the care market would be sustainable for the future. The impact of the reforms was outlined and how the service would need to adapt to meet the challenges. The Committee would continue to monitor the changes in Social Care and the implications for services users and providers to ensure that the challenges faced would be met.

The Committee were informed of the Care Quality Commission inspection provision that was contained in the Health and Care Act to be carried out in the near future and the assurance framework that would be used to assess performance of Key Stakeholders. Details were still to be finalised and would go live for the process to be fully activated in April 2023. Work had commenced on his area and the Committee were made aware of progress.

#### **Work programme for the Committee.**

Members discussed the work programme for the new Committee and how they could make a difference and add value to the work of the executive. The Committee were informed that the

People Overview and Scrutiny Committee had looked at the work of the executive member at their last meeting and had agreed to 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 the next meeting of the committee in December.

**Councillor Jacqueline Slater, Chair of the Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The first meeting of the Committee took place in September and looked at a number of key issues affecting the portfolio and services to children and education.

Youth Forum.

The Committee received an update from the youth MP, Deputy Youth MP and members of the Youth Forum. The Committee were informed about the work on the Young Inspectors project which aimed to involve young people in reviews of service provision that affected services to their peers. Training had taken place and a development framework was being drawn up. Work was ongoing with young people relating to poverty and the effects of this on Mental Health and Wellbeing and this was being discussed with Voice Forums. The forum were working on this year's takeover challenge with three key areas of focus-

- Adverse Childhood experiences
- Child Food Poverty
- Mental Health and Wellbeing.

The aim of the takeover challenge was to raise awareness and generate ideas which could be fed back directly to youth MPs. The Committee welcomed the progress and report of the youth MP and Forum.

Achieving Excellence Update.

The Committee received an update on the achieving excellence board and the progress to date. Members received and noted the terms of reference of the board and the time line for reporting and delivering on the key areas. The Post Inspection Action Plan setting out 10 areas of recommendations was also considered and the executive member addressed member's questions on the processes and how this would deliver improvement.

The Committee noted the terms of reference of the Achieving Excellence Board and the progress to date and agreed to receive regular reports on the progress on the post inspection plan and the 10 areas of recommendations.

Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership Annual Report.

The Committee received a presentation from Stephen Ashley, Independent Scrutineer, of the Safeguarding Assurance Partnership on their annual report for the year ending 2021. The partnership was a Pan Lancashire covering Lancashire, Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen and the 12 districts that constitute the Lancashire footprint. The Partnership was made up of the key safeguarding partners together with relevant agencies who were required to keep children safe. The Committee were informed of the way the partnership worked and how reviews of practices were carried out on the death of a child. These reviews were shared and disseminated to seek to prevent harm. The Committee looked at how the partnership developed the workforce to assist in keeping children safe with briefings and training. The Independent scrutineer was satisfied that partners had structures and processes in place as

required by law and that they were working together effectively, work was undertaken by frontline staff and there was openness and transparency of the CSPA executive board which has enabled progress to be made. The Committee welcomed the Safeguarding Annual report and the findings.

#### Early Years Speech and Language.

The Committee were informed of the work that was ongoing on improving speech, Language and communication as part of the early year's strategy. The strategy highlighted the fact that the white paper on early years highlighted that high quality early years education, particularly early language skills can greatly improve a child's attainment throughout primary school. One of the authorities key focuses were on school readiness to give them the best start to their education. The borough wide initiative was to improve outcomes for all children in all settings with targeted support. The strategy would also focus on children who have English as an additional language. The Committee welcomed the development of the strategy for early year's speech and language and would wish to see how the strategy makes a positive influence on the outcomes for early year's development over time.

#### **Councillor Sylvia Liddle, Chair, Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

#### Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Committee commenced their work programme by looking at the issue of Flooding and how the Council works to mitigate the risks to residents and businesses through their work.

The Committee were informed that the Council, as the Highways Authority, were responsible for the maintenance of 30,000 gullies and had a statutory duty to maintain these. The highways drainage was designed to drain a 1in 5year rainfall event however this was becoming more frequent. The Committee were informed that the Council was also responsible for 52 debris screens and how these were checked when an alert trigger was issued. The Committee were informed that over 21,000 residents and 2,159 homes were within the areas of flood risk with 12.58km of highways and 47.32 ha of agricultural land at risk.

The Committee were informed of the trigger mechanisms that the Council received that led to actions being taken to seek to minimise risk of flooding. This included checking on debris screens, looking at potential areas of flooding and drains in that area to ensure that they were functioning efficiently. The Council would also seek to give assistance to owners and partners where flooding occurred and assist with access properties where necessary.

The Committee looked at how the borough had been affected by flooding in recent years and how this had shaped delivery of services. Critical drains in flooding areas were identified and were maintained twice a year and inspected during weather warnings and heavy rain forecast. Following flood events the Council would investigate all reported flooding and carry out repair work to adopted drainage assets where required. Members looked at the way that work had been funded and how the Council accessed grants for this. The issue of the size of drains was discussed and how increasing the size of drains would be extremely expensive. Members were informed that whilst flooding occurred in a number of places this flooding receded in a very short period of time.

Members drew attention to areas where the felt that work needed to be carried out and how individual drains that were blocked and had not been cleared. The Director drew attention to the work carried out on critical drains and how critical drains were the ones that mattered in terms of flooding. The issues relating to access to drains such as parked cars was raised and

how by working with local members this may be improved. Members also drew attention to the level of service that was accessible and questioned whether this was enough to meet demand.

The Committee were informed that discussions were to take place with community tidy groups about the picking up of leaves that could affect drainage and water dispersal. It was hoped that this would assist in the issues in the borough.

#### Update on Household Recycling Centre and New Sites for Burials in the Borough.

The Committee were updated on the issues that they had identified as part of their work programme. The Executive Board at its meeting in September had agreed that the proposals for the new Household Recycling Centre had put on hold as the cost identified had escalated to exceed the budgetary provision due to the economic climate. Members were informed that the work on the new burial sites was progressing and tests were still being carried out on the water table and would be complete in the near future. Water table measurements had to take place for a full year to ensure that land identified was suitable and reports would be submitted to the Executive board when these were completed. The Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee would also be kept informed when possible.

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

#### Policy and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Committee met on 21<sup>st</sup> September and looked at the progress of the Council Capital and Revenue Budget. The meeting had been re-arranged at short notice which had meant that the Executive Member had been unable to attend. The Director of Finance outlined the content of the reports that were presented to the Executive Board which detailed that

- a) The total cost of the Council's capital investment programme for 2022/23 has now increased from £35.691 million, as approved by Finance Council on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022, to £52.400 million at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022. The net variation of £16.709 million (detailed in Appendix 2) reflects;
  - An increase of £13.526 million in respect of variations to the programme following the finalisation of the outturn position for 2021/22,
  - budget increases of £0.827 million (of which £0.462 million is funded by transfers from existing capital scheme budgets) made to reflect the approval of schemes during the first quarter of the year,
  - further variations during the first quarter of the year, for which approval is requested (£2.818 million),
- b) As at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022, the capital expenditure across the portfolios was £1.102 million (representing 2.10% of the current, revised projected capital spend).
- c) The estimated capital receipts expected in 2022/23 is £3.445 million; £0.985 million has been received in the first three months of the year.
  - In accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules, all Portfolios are required to examine their revenue budget position on a monthly basis. Quarterly reports are submitted to the Executive Board for review and action as necessary along with a final report, detailing the financial outturn for the year.

The development of the budget is a key element of the Council's financial governance processes. The requirement for the Council to monitor its budget during the year is set out in s28 of the Local Government Act 2003 with s28(3) requiring the Council to take action, as it considers necessary, if there has been a deterioration in its financial position.

With regard to the revenue Budget position the Committee were informed that the Council agreed the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2022/23 which was subject to changes for a range of reasons as the financial year progresses. The Committee were provided with a detailed analysis of those budget adjustments that have occurred during the period to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022. The impact of these adjustments on the Council's Budget for 2022/23 was summarised. Members discussed the position that the Council was in and the potential position at the conclusion of the financial year. Detailed questions relating to individual items in the budget would be responded to by the Director and the Committee would continue to monitor the progress throughout the year as a part of their work programme.

Work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

The Committee reviewed the work of the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees and progress they had made on their work programmes. Task groups had been established by two of the Committees to progress their work and would be reported to the Committees in December.

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

Call-in Committee, 29<sup>th</sup> September 2022.

The Call-in Committee meets on 29<sup>th</sup> September to review a decision of the Executive Member for Growth and Development. The outcome of the Committee will be reported to the Council Forum Meeting.

**Kevin Connor, Chair of the Call-in Committee.**