

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Minutes

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting of Wyre Borough Council held on Monday, 23 November 2020 via Remote Access (WebEx).

Overview and Scrutiny Committee members present:

Councillors Ibison, Matthew Vincent, I Amos, R Amos, Ballard, Collinson, Cropper (left during item 6), E Ellison, Fail, Leech, Longton and O'Neill

Officers present:

Peter Foulsham, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager (left after item 6)
Emma Keany, Democratic Services Officer
Clare James, Corporate Director Resources and Section 151 Officer
Garry Payne, Chief Executive (left after item 5)
Marianne Unwin, Assistant Democratic Services Officer
Duncan Jowitt, Democratic Services Officer

No members of the public and press viewed the meeting.

15 Declarations of interest

None.

16 Confirmation of minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Monday 16 March 2020 were agreed as an accurate record.

17 Covid-19 update

The Corporate Director Communities, Marianne Hesketh, submitted information that updated the committee on some of the work the Council had undertaken during the Covid-19 Pandemic in 2020.

The Chief Executive, Garry Payne, attended the meeting to present the report and responded to questions from committee members.

Mr Payne updated the committee on some of the roles he had undertaken during the Pandemic such as chairing the Warning and Information Cell of the Lancashire Resilience Forum. He also provided an update on action planning on a local and county level, and the partnership working that had occurred.

The Chief Executive expressed his gratitude, which was echoed by the Chair and committee, to staff members due to their response to the required effort during the Pandemic. He spoke on how well individuals had adapted to the differing demands that had arisen and how he was proud of all the work that the Council had undertaken to ensure the borough was well provided for.

There were questions and comments from the committee on the mention of the footfall counting solution (at page 12 of the agenda), the flu-jabs that were delivered at Thornton Little Theatre, provisions for future Covid-19 vaccination programmes and venues, and issues of fly-tipping and the quick action taken by officers.

The Chair thanked the Corporate Director Communities and Chief Executive for their update and to Mr Payne for his attendance.

18 Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme 2020/21 - update and planning

The Corporate Director Resources, Clare James, submitted a report updating the committee about the delivery of the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2020/21. The Democratic Services Officer, Emma Keany, provided a verbal update to the committee.

Previously commissioned task groups were considered and it was agreed that:

1. The Residents Parking Permit Scheme task group be removed from the list of task groups due to its report being sent to Cabinet in March 2020, therefore concluding its work.
2. The District Environmental Enforcement task group be reconsidered in January in light of the information on the extension deadline that would be sent to members after the meeting.
3. And that the Poulton to Fleetwood Link task group would reconvene once stakeholders and the relevant local authorities had created a feasibility study.

The committee discussed its ideas and priorities going forward, after an 8 month break as a result of the Pandemic response. Ideas for future task groups were considered such as the YMCA contract for the borough's leisure facilities, Tourism, the Business Plan, a Scrutiny review and a look into the council's Covid-19 response.

The Chairman thanked Garry Payne, Clare James and Emma Keany for their contributions.

19 Fees and charges- draft

The Corporate Director Resources, Clare James, submitted a report on the proposed fees and charges for the 2020/21 financial year, which she introduced.

Ms James discussed various aspects of the report such as modest increases for the use of Marine Hall, Thornton Little Theatre and Mount Pavilion (5.1.5), the care and repair service handyperson charge (5.2.2), the decrease in fees at the outdoor market at Cleveleys (5.3.3) and proposed removal of the £5 discount for direct debit payments for green waste (5.5.4).

The committee asked questions on the available hardship funding for those who use the Care and Repair service and how to access the funding, car parking charges (5.2.1), issues that may arise due to the introduction of an increase to green waste payments, Marine Hall (5.1.5), and the desire for a new column to show the percentage increase using the CPI (consumer price index).

The Chair thanked the Corporate Director Resources for her report.

20 Cost profiles - benchmarking results 2020/21

The Corporate Director Resources (and Section 151 Officer), Clare James, submitted the Cost Profiles – Benchmarking Results 2020/21 report that was before Cabinet on 18 November 2020.

Ms James introduced the report and highlighted the key areas to the committee. The committee raised questions around the borough's leisure provision, a request for a statement on the progress of the YMCA contract and some thought into how a member's task group would provide the most effective work.

The Chair thanked the Corporate Director Resources for her report.

21 Annual schedule of planned investment in assets- 2020/21

The Corporate Director Environment, Mark Billington, submitted the Planned Maintenance and Investment Projects Schedule - 2020/21.

The Corporate Director Resources (and Section 151 Officer), Clare James, attended the meeting, presented the report and responded to questions from committee members.

Ms James stated that the report reflected the February 2020 position for the schedule of planned investment. She updated the committee on the progress of the schedule and the reasons as to why some of the had not been progressed, due to the Pandemic and its impact on workloads, and to the fact that the condition survey on Fleetwood Leisure Centre had stated that none of the work was urgent so the work would be reviewed when compiling the 2021/22 schedule. It was also confirmed that the schedule would be brought back to the committee in early 2021.

Committee members asked questions regarding the process for creation of the schedule and how the work was budgeted.

The Chair thanked the Corporate Director Resources for her attendance and

wished to pass on his thanks to the financial team for their work during the pandemic.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and finished at 7.26 pm.

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