

Report of:	Meeting	Date
Councillor John Ibison, Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Council	3 October 2019

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Periodic Report

### 1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To inform Council about the work that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has undertaken since the last periodic report was submitted on 14 June 2018.

### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the report be noted.

### 3. Background

- 3.1 Since the last periodic report to Full Council the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has met on twelve occasions. One scheduled meeting was cancelled, immediately prior to the Local Elections that were held on 2 May 2019. One additional meeting was held, on 23 September 2019, specifically to consider the implications of the new Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities.

- 3.2 There have been no calls-in since the last Periodic Report was submitted.

### 4. Committee meetings

- 4.1 On 8 January 2018 I was elected as Chairman of the Committee, and have remained in that role since then. Most recently, he has been elected as Chairman for the 2019/20 municipal year. Councillor Matthew Vincent was elected to continue as Vice Chairman for 2019/20.

- 4.2 The committee's work has focused on the delivery of the annual Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme. The committee's Work Programme has remained sufficiently flexible to accommodate other issues as and when they have arisen.

- 4.3** The Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive attended one committee meeting, to introduce the draft Business Plan 2019-2023.
- 4.4** Quarterly Business Plan performance reports have been received from the Service Director Performance and Innovation. The reports have assisted the committee to monitor the delivery of the Business Plan and to identify topics for further scrutiny.
- 4.5** Twelve months after the submission of task group reports to the Cabinet, the committee reviewed the progress of the implementation of the recommendations of the following task groups:
- (i) Food Hygiene
  - (ii) Domestic Violence
- 4.6** The committee continues to fulfil its requirement to scrutinise the work of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) at least annually, receiving a report about the CSP's performance and priorities for the coming year. A report about the Partnership was most recently received by the committee on 18 March 2019.
- 4.7** The council has a co-opted representative on Lancashire County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee, who reports annually to the committee. Since the last Periodic Report to Council, the Committee has received reports on 30 July 2018 and 22 July 2019 respectively.
- 4.8** Other reports received by the committee from officers and representatives of external organisations included the following:
- Fylde & Wyre and Blackpool (Fylde Coast) Clinical Commissioning Group – update (two reports)
  - Digital transformation (two reports)
  - Local Government Association Peer Review – actions taken
  - Statement of accounts
  - Wyre's entertainment venues (two reports)
  - Review of fees and charges 2019/20
  - Cost profiles – benchmarking results
  - Treasury management strategy and policies
  - North West Ambulance Service
  - Training and development for councillors
  - Poulton to Fleetwood rail re-installment feasibility study
  - Budget consultation
  - Public conveniences task group draft report
  - Planned maintenance and investment projects schedule 2019/20
  - Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local Authorities and Combined Authorities (published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government)
  - District Environmental Enforcement Pilot

## **5. Task Groups**

### **5.1 MyHomeChoice**

A task group was established in July 2018 to review the proposed changes to the arrangements for the allocation and letting of social housing in Wyre via the MyHomeChoice Fylde Coast scheme.

The proposed changes were supported by the task group, who confirmed that by reporting to the Cabinet on 5 September 2018. The committee is due to review the implementation of the revised arrangements at their meeting on 21 October 2019.

### **5.2 Flooding**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee commissioned a task group in March 2018 with the following stated purpose:

“To clarify the role of councillors in planning for, reacting to and dealing with flooding events” (Scoping Document).

The task group made ten recommendations to the Cabinet on 28 November 2018, nine of which were accepted. The review of the implementation of the nine recommendations is scheduled to take place at the Committee meeting to be held on 2 December 2019.

### **5.3 Public Conveniences**

In October 2018 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee set up a task group with the following purpose:

“To review the current service provision, including locations and charges and consider options beyond the current contract term with Danfo” (Scoping Document).

The task group submitted its report and recommendations to the Cabinet in June 2019, and the review of the implementation of the recommendations accepted by the Cabinet will take place in July 2020.

### **5.4 Poulton – Fleetwood link**

On 18 March 2019 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to set up a task group to consider all options for a transport link between Poulton and Fleetwood and to recommend a preferred solution.

The first meeting of the task group took place in April, shortly before the May elections, and one has taken place since, primarily to plan a series of meetings with witnesses and stakeholders during September.

It is intended that the review be completed by the end of November 2019.

## **6. Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities**

- 6.1** A Select Committee inquiry in 2016/17 found that in many local authorities scrutiny was less than effective and it called on the Government to issue revised guidance. The new Statutory Guidance was published by the ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in May 2019. It reminds authorities of the powers available to scrutiny committees and highlights the benefits of effective scrutiny, providing practical advice and proposals for improving the function. Local authorities are not required to make any changes as a result of the new Statutory Guidance, but they are expected to consider it, with a view to making any changes that might improve its effectiveness locally.
- 6.2** The committee held an additional meeting on 23 September to consider the implications of the Statutory Guidance for Wyre. The meeting was attended by Dr Steph Snape from North West Employers, a widely recognised expert in the field, who contributed to the discussion.

## **7. Training and development**

- 7.1** In addition to the training opportunity afforded by the recently published new Statutory Guidance, members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee have attended several courses run by the Centre for Public Scrutiny, as well as the Centre's Annual Scrutiny Conference.
- 7.2** Scrutiny members have been regular attenders at the North West Strategic Scrutiny Network, coordinated by North West Employers. This is a forum, which is held three times a year, to discuss and promote best practice in scrutiny. Wyre will host the next meeting of the Network on 29 November 2019.

## **8. Future work**

### **8.1** Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2019/20

The Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2019/20 is reviewed at every meeting of the committee. All members are invited to make suggestions about potential review topics for inclusion in the Programme.

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