

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 14th October 2019

Present: Cllr Johnson (Chair)
Cllrs Adshead, L. Barnes, Brennan, Bromley, Kempson, Kenyon,
Morris, Pendlebury and Procter

In attendance: Clare Law, HR Manager
Tony Watson, Operations Manager
Phil Seddon, Head of Finance
Alison Wilkins, Locality Manager
Kevin Ruth, RTB
Tim Webber, RTB
Steve Riley, RTB
Jenni Cook, Committee and Member Services Officer

Also Present: Cllrs A. Barnes, Haworth, Lythgoe and Walmsley
0 press
1 public

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE & SUBSTITUTIONS

- 1.1 Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Gill (Councillor Adshead substituting), Councillor Janet Eaton (Councillor Pendlebury substituting) and Zieda Ali (Co-opted Member).

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 16th September 2019 be approved as a correct record.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

- 4.1 The Chair confirmed that there were no urgent items of business.

5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

- 5.1 The Chair noted that she would allow questions to be asked on each item as it was discussed.

6. CHAIR'S UPDATE

- 6.1 The Chair provided the following update:-

- The Chair welcomed Cllr Bromley to the committee who had taken up the vacant Labour place.
- An update had been circulated that addressed actions from the September O&S Committee.
- Suicide Rates Task and Finish Group – the Chair confirmed that she was holding a scoping meeting this week with the relevant officers. Following this, the task and finish group would be set up.

7. OPERATIONS PERFORMANCE UPDATE

7.1 The Operations Manager provided members with information regarding the previous quarter's performance data and also provided a recycling update as follows:-

- The recycling rate had plateaued, however this was not too dissimilar to other areas in East Lancashire. The presence of more terraced housing meant that there was less garden waste than more rural areas such as West Lancashire.
- A Government consultation was ongoing to which the Council had responded. This would have implications for local authorities going forward and the Government would have more of a steer on this in 2020.
- Waste audits had been carried out to tackle the issue of contamination and the sanctions for this were outlined. 3,700 stickers and leaflets had been given out, 400 residents had got to the second stage of letters, and it was noted that no-one had got to the 3rd stage whereby their bin would be temporarily removed.
- The annual calendar would be given out to all residents in December which would inform of collection days and clarification on what goes in each bin.
- The cost-share agreement with Lancashire County Council (LCC) had ended, resulting in a loss of £550kpa to the authority.

7.2 Members and members of the public commented on the report as follows:-

- Libraries were confirmed as commercial waste so there was no obligation for the council to collect free of charge.
- It would be a matter for LCC to arrange for recycling of tetrapaks.
- There were no powers to force large companies such as supermarkets to recycle; this should be part of their ethos.
- The Council did not have selective licensed areas in Rossendale, and therefore had no powers to encourage landlords to get their tenants to recycle. More work could be done to give information out when new homes are occupied.
- Work was ongoing to make the annual leaflet more informative and pictorial.
- The green waste tonnage had dropped a little due to the time of year.
- Officers would continue to promote recycling in the run-up to Christmas.
- The direction of travel was recognised and the Operations Team were thanked for their work.

Resolved:

That the update was noted.

8. RTB UPDATE

8.1 The Representatives from RTB provided members with an update as follows:-

- The history of the RTB Partnership was outlined and this had been officially formed in February 2013, primarily to help the council to develop the Valley Centre site.
- The projects delivered were outlined:-
 - Spinning Point Phase 1
 - Delivery of 55 new homes across Rossendale with an investment of £6million.
 - Ongoing development of the New Hall Hey site.
 - Delivery of Heron Place, Whitewell Court, Millstream Close, Norfolk Close, with work currently ongoing on Rockcliffe Road, Bacup.
- Projects in the pipeline were confirmed as:
 - Spinning Point Phase 2, Park Avenue and Foxhill Drive.
- Work was ongoing on Plot 5 at Futures Park to deliver a manufacturing facility.
- The topography of Rossendale did present some challenges for developing new, feasible sites.
- Where feasible, developments included affordable housing and/or shared ownership.

8.2 Members and members of the public commented on the report as follows:-

- The provision of bungalows was discussed and it was noted that these must be viable and cost-effective to provide. Any potential sites could be investigated.
- Councillors had received positive feedback on Spinning Point Phase 1.
- The importance of social housing provision was noted and the Planning process had the power to request provision were feasible.
- A “Viability in Planning – Affordable Housing and S106 Monies” session was taking place 16th October and this would be useful for members to attend.
- The Dark Lane site was noted to be providing 100% social housing.

Resolved:

That the update was noted and RTB agreed to attend O&S Committee on an annual basis.

9. HOLIDAY HUNGER PILOT PROJECT REPORT

9.1 The Locality Manager introduced the report which updated members on the work of the Holiday Hunger Pilot Project. Key points raised were:-

- The project had arisen out of notice of motion to full council and a subsequent O&S Task and Finish Group.
- The pilot project had been delivered in a short timescale and had involved the Communities Team and community/voluntary sector groups.
- The schools selected to take part were based on a criteria of the schools with the highest number of children on free school meals.

- The scheme had been split into different areas and these were summarised as follows:-
 - Haslingden –free packed lunches had been available Monday-Friday, to be collected from Haslingden Community Link. 20 families registered for the scheme and 30 children benefitted – 675 packed lunches had been provided over the 6-week holiday.
 - Bacup – weekly food parcels were available from two schools throughout the holidays. Play activities were provided. Raft had rented a storage unit to support this project. 30 families accessed food parcels during the holidays and a total of 74 children benefitted from the scheme.
 - Whitworth – financial support had been given to two schools for a summer holiday club and fresh food from Monday sessions in Bacup had also been donated. 20 children attended the holiday club.
 - Waterfoot – financial support had been given to St Ann’s Church in Edgeside for their project. Around 16 packed lunches had been provided daily.
- The funding for the pilot project was outlined.
- The key learning from the pilot project was outlined and work was required for tackle the stigma families may feel from accessing schemes. Adding play activities assisted with this.
- To take future schemes forward, a sizeable external funding bid would need to be considered.

9.2 Members and members of the public commented on the report as follows:-

- Thanks were noted to the Communities Team for their hard work in a short space of time.
- Financial support would have been available from the Council if required; however considerable officer time had been donated to the scheme.
- Should the project run again then more time would be required to organise it.
- The need for the project was noted.

Resolved:

That the report is noted.

10. THE FORWARD PLAN

10.1 The Forward Plan had been published with the agenda and tabled upcoming Cabinet decisions that the committee could consider for the O&S Committee. The Sundry Debt Management Policy Review had been submitted to this committee, rather than November’s committee.

11. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

The Finance Manager provided clarification on why this item should be heard in private session.

Resolved:

That the public and press be excluded from consideration of Item 12 – Sundry Debt Management Policy (Review October 2019) because of the possibility of the disclosure of the following exempt information:-

- The policy contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of the Council.

12. SUNDRY DEBT MANAGEMENT POLICY (REVIEW OCTOBER 2019)

- 12.1 The Finance Manager introduced the revised policy which required the Committee's recommendation for approval to Cabinet.
- 12.2 Members discussed the Policy and the Finance Manager answered questions raised.

Resolved:

That the revisions to the Sundry Debt Management Policy are recommended for approval to Cabinet.

The meeting started at 6.40pm and finished at 8.25pm

Signed: _____

Date: _____