

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 4th September 2017

Present: Councillor Lythgoe (Chair)
Councillors Bromley, Essex, Haworth, Johnson, Kempson,
Kenyon, McMahon, Morris, Robertson

In Attendance: Sam Plum, Director of Business
Clare Law, HR Manager
Jenni Cook, Committee & Member Services Officer
Richard Peters, Community Paramedic

Also Present: Councillors Ashworth, A. Barnes, Hughes, Oakes and Walmsley
2 members of the public
0 members of the press

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted Councillor L. Barnes (Haworth sub), Councillor Janet Eaton (Essex sub) and Paul McHenry, Head of Operations.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 17th July 2017 be agreed as a correct record.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business.

5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chair agreed to deviate from the Procedure for Public Speaking and allow the members of the public to ask questions as the reports were discussed.

6. CHAIR'S UPDATE

6.1 There was no update from the Chair.

7. UPDATE FROM THE COMMUNITY PARAMEDIC

7.1 Richard Peters (Community Paramedic) gave an presentation to the committee which outlined his first year in the role, following the work carried out by the Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group and the future of the role across the north west as follows:-

- The post had been initially funded by CQUIN for 6 months.
- 20-30 hours of the post was dedicated to 999 response with the rest of the hours used for other work:
 - Primary care availability and home visits
 - Promotion of alternative care pathways
 - Work with local care homes
 - Support and work with frequent callers
 - Heart start sessions
 - Work on community defibrillators
 - Work within the community to raise the profile of the Community Paramedic by representing the service at community events and meetings.
- Following evaluation of the role the North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) had agreed to permanently fund 12 posts across the North West, with Rossendale confirmed as one of those posts.

7.2 Members and members of the public asked questions and discussed the update as follows:-

- There were no borders between areas on operational days and the Community Paramedics worked across the whole of the North West. The closest person would respond to a call-out.
- The role was a senior role when compared with that of a paramedic and had supervisory aspects.
- Response times and targets remained difficult to meet across East Lancashire and the new categories of response targets were outlined. Rural areas were difficult to resource.
- Work was undertaken with doctor's surgeries who called ambulances frequently.
- Work was ongoing with NWAS and the hospitals with regards to resources being tied up when transferring patients from ambulances to A&E.
- Patients with mental health issues did present a challenge in terms of ensuring they received the appropriate support following a call-out.
- It was suggested that the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny wrote to the Chief Executive of NWAS to express the Committee's thanks for the support and continuation of the Community Paramedic role and to seek assurances of the permanence of the role, the ongoing work to improve ambulance response times.

Resolved:

1. That the presentation was noted and Richard Peters was thanked for his hard work over the past 12 months.
2. That the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny would write to the Chief Executive of NWAS as outlined above.
3. That the Community Paramedic would update Overview and Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis.

8. DOG FOULING TASK AND FINISH GROUP UPDATE

- 8.1 The Head of Operations had been unable to attend this meeting. As a piece of work had been prepared to present to members, this item would be deferred to October's meeting.

9. OPERATIONS PERFORMANCE UPDATE

- 9.1 The Director of Business gave a brief overview of the work carried out by the Operations Department as follows:-

- The Operations budget was £4,921,490 and the department had 75 employees.
- The areas covered by the Operations Service were outlined.
- 2.9 million household collections were carried out annually, along with 8,000 garden waste collections and 1,000 assisted collections. Missed bins made up 0.022% of the collections on an annual basis.
- The recycling rate was low and officers were looking at ways of increasing recycling.
- There was no waste transfer station in the Rossendale area and refuse wagons continued to travel to Whinny Hill.
- The Street Cleansing service was outlined, with 173 miles of adopted highway being swept on an annual basis. It took 9 weeks for a street sweeper to go round all roads and 13 weeks for all pavements.
- 700 litter bins were emptied, which included dog waste bins.
- There was one Environmental Enforcement Officer employed by the Council who worked closely with Planning Enforcement. Between July 2016 – July 2017 there had been 2100 incidents of fly tipping reported.
- The work carried out by the Parks Team was outlined and there were 40 play areas within the borough. During the winter months the Play Strategy would be reviewed. In addition to works in the parks, the team supported community events, responded to complaints and enquiries and some staff were being trained as social media champions to respond to the increasing contact via social media.
- Bereavement Services averaged around 200 internments per annum with three cemetery staff.

- 9.2 Members and members of the public asked questions and discussed the update as follows:-

- Driving to Whinny Hill added to maintenance costs for refuse vehicles and work was ongoing to resolve the waste transfer issue.
- Where possible waste operatives did not travel to Whinny Hill in the refuse waggons and carried out litter picking duties instead, however there were instances where this was not practical.
- The contribution made by Civic Pride was noted and although it was difficult to capture and quantify the contribution for performance management purposes, around 3,000 bags of rubbish had been collected by them last year.
- With regards to fly-tipping, investigation and prosecution took place wherever possible and successful prosecutions were publicised.
- Issues around Himalayan Balsam were noted and this was a notifiable plant. The plant was in the watercourses around Rossendale which made it very difficult to eradicate.
- Thanks were noted to the Team for frequent emptying of the dog waste bins.
- The Council had handed over responsibility for the allotments to the various allotment societies; however any specific issues could be looked into.
- Apprenticeships and the workforce were discussed and it was noted by the HR Manager that it was difficult to recruit Apprentice mechanics.

Resolved:

That the presentation was noted.

10. CABINET RESPONSE TO THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT TASK AND FINISH GROUP REPORT

- 10.1 The Chair noted that this group was still ongoing as stated in the Task and Finish Group report. The remit of the group had widened to take in business planning and performance management.
- 10.2 The HR Manager outlined the work undertaken so far since the Corporate Strategy had been agreed at Full Council in July 2017. Business planning workshops had taken place with Senior Management Team, Portfolio Holders and Managers. Business plans had been reviewed and the importance of identifying corporate risk had been reinforced. Key performance indicators would be agreed by the end of September 2017 with the quarter 1 and 2 reports being presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee in November 2017. Performance appraisals would be moved to October-December which would move into line with the Corporate Strategy and budget planning process. A baseline survey of residents would also be carried out to feed into the process.
- 10.3 Members and members of the public asked questions and discussed the response as follows:-
- The Covalent system was no longer in use and a simpler form of recording and reporting was being developed which would use a dashboard system and red/amber/green reporting.
 - The Council had moved away from using Infusion for customer surveys and was now using 'Smart Survey' which would give officers more input and control. Questions would be asked to ascertain if the council was meeting its corporate priorities in the eyes of customers.

- The Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) would continue to be reported on by the Planning Department.

Resolved

That the response was noted.

11. CABINET RESPONSE TO THE COMMUNICATIONS TASK AND FINISH GROUP REPORT

- 11.1 Councillor Walmsley outlined the launch of the new website which had been successful, save for a few teething problems. The website was a significant method of communicating with customers, although customers would always need alternative methods to contact the Council. The effectiveness of the website would need to be evaluated and once this had been done, a new Content Strategy and new Customer Service Standards would be produced. Once this had taken place then a final meeting of the Task and Finish Group could be convened to review the new documents prior to approval. This was anticipated to be in Autumn.
- 11.2 Members and members of the public asked questions and discussed the response as follows:-
- It was confirmed that the content on the new website was up to date. Staff had been trained as content editors to write entirely new text and information for the site.
- 11.3 It was noted that written reports were preferable to verbal updates and the Chair agreed that this was desirable and written reports would be required for Overview and Scrutiny Committee, save for exceptional circumstances.

Resolved

That the response was noted.

12. THE FORWARD PLAN

- 12.1 The Fairness and Equalities Strategy had been moved to October's Overview and Scrutiny and November's Cabinet as this was a bigger piece of work that originally thought.

Resolved:

The Forward Plan was noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and closed at 8.15pm

Signed: _____

Date: _____