

**CORPORATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

HELD: 25 OCTOBER 2012

Start: 7.30pm

Finish: 10.20pm

PRESENT: Bailey (Chairman)

Councillors: Mrs Atherley- Mrs Kean
Mrs Blake McKay
Cheetham Ms Melling
Cropper Nolan
Delaney Oliver
Dereli Pendleton
Mrs C Evans Mrs Stephenson
Fillis Wright
Gibson

Officers: Assistant Director Community Services (Mr D Tilleray)
Head of Leisure & Cultural Services (Mr J Nelson)
Contracts Performance Manager (Mr P Samosa)
Housing Operations Manager (Ms L McGarry)
Property Services Manager (Mr P Holland)
Operations Street Scene Manager (Mr G Peter)
Assistant Solicitor (Mr T Sparrow)
Policy and Performance Officer (Ms A Grimes)
Planning Officer (Mr D Carr)
Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer (Mrs C A Jackson)

In attendance: Chairman, West Lancashire Community Leisure (Mr J Bullock)
Contract Manager, West Lancashire Community Leisure (Mr M Snaylam)

24. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

25. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4, Members noted the termination of membership of Councillors Griffiths, Mrs Baybutt, G Hodson, L Hodson and Coyle and the appointment of Councillors Cropper, Cheetham, Gibson, Pendleton and Fillis for this meeting only thereby giving effect to the wishes of the Political Groups.

26. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1. Councillors Fillis, Gibson and Oliver declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to Agenda Item 7 (West Lancashire Community Leisure (WLCL) / Serco) as friends of the Chairman of WLCL.

2. Councillors Dereli and Oliver declared non-pecuniary interests in relation to Agenda Items 7 and 8 (WLCL /Serco and Olympics 2012 – Securing a lasting legacy for West Lancashire) - references to leisure at Edge Hill University, as employees of the University.
3. Councillor Bailey also declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to Agenda Items 7 and 8 – references to leisure at Edge Hill University, stating that his wife is employed by the University.

28. DECLARATIONS OF PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of a Party Whip.

29. MINUTES

The following minutes were considered.

30. MINUTES – 5 JULY 2012

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 5 July 2012 be received as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

31. SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON 12 JULY 2012

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the special meeting of the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 12 July 2012 be received as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

32. WEST LANCASHIRE LEISURE/SERCO - ANNUAL REPORT

Consideration was given to the presentation by John Bullock, Chairman and Mark Snaylam, Contracts Manager of West Lancashire Community Leisure (WLCL) as contained on pages 167 to 186 of the Book of Reports. The presentation included:

- An introduction from the Chairman of the Trust.
- The Trustees and profile of the Board's responsibilities.
- Changes affecting the management and provision of facilities at Park Pool; Skelmersdale Sports Centre and Beacon Golf Club.
- Activities and initiatives undertaken during 2011/12.
- An overview of 2013 and events planned including 'Road to Rio our Olympic Legacy'.
- An explanation of the dry and wet facilities offered at the Leisure Centres.
- A reflective look at highlights in 2011 including increase patronage; health and safety improvements; capital investment during 2011; development of staff; partnership working and more participation opportunities through Trust funding.
- Income and patronage in 2011 - 5% increase in wetside visits but a 7% drop in dryside visits from the previous year.

- Operational highlights – increase in patronage year on year and from 2004 (21%); community based special events; closer links to National Governing Bodies (ASA) and partnership working with Young Peoples Service to help reduce instances of juvenile nuisance around Skelmersdale; investment in Park Pool Gym of over £1/2 million; refurbished Burscough reception; swimming lesson growth; increase gym usage; improved health and safety scores and improved Quest and audit scores.
- Challenges – including managing energy costs; closure of Skelmersdale Sports Centre; reduction of “dryside” users; increasing patronage with a down turn in the market; moving the operation from ‘Good to Great’ - realise the potential of staff.
- The Way Forward – to increase patronage; business growth; integration of Beacon Park golf centre into the operation; increase swimming leisure usage; continuous improvement and development of staff; working with partners and community groups; offering more participation opportunities through Trust funding.

During the course of the presentation comments and questions were raised in respect of the following:

- Closure of Skelmersdale Sports Centre – help available to club users to find alternative accommodation and the dispersment of the Centre’s equipment.
- Acquisition of Beacon Golf Club, dry facilities and future plans for the site.
- Potential development around Nye Bevan facilities and involvement in the consultation process.
- Current and future approaches / applications relating to energy costs / energy efficiency at the Centres.
- Application of solar panels / wind turbines - energy efficiency and income benefits.
- The impact of the Olympics 2012 on Centre usage and sustainability of that legacy.
- Trust’s endeavours for charitable status or providence society status.
- Opportunities afforded to sports users with disabilities at the Centres.
- Income generated by food and beverage sales.

The Chairman and Contracts Manager of West Lancashire Community Leisure (WLCL) responded to questions and in relation to a comment from a Member on the condition of the wet changing room floor at Park Pool, the Contracts Manager undertook to raise this.

An invitation was also proffered by the WLCL representatives for community groups, including clubs / groups who represented disable and able bodied sports users to make contact with them in relation to the facilities available at the Centres.

During discussion on the provision of sports facilities in Skelmersdale at the request of a Member a proposal was put forward and seconded in the following terms:

“That Council work with West Lancashire Leisure Trust and Serco by forming a cross-party working group to consider all approaches to develop a Centre of Sports Excellence for Skelmersdale.”

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman thanked the representatives from the Leisure Trust for their attendance, informative presentation and contributions to the discussion.

RESOLVED: A. That the representatives from the Leisure Trust be thanked for their presentation and attendance.

B. That the Cabinet consider the following recommendation:

That the Council work with West Lancashire Leisure Trust and Serco by forming a cross-party working group to consider all approaches to develop a Centre of Sports Excellence for Skelmersdale.

33. OLYMPICS 2012 - SECURING A LASTING LEGACY FOR WEST LANCASHIRE

Consideration was given to the report of the Assistant Director Community Services which gave details on progress since the review entitled 'Olympics 2012 – Securing a lasting legacy for West Lancashire' concluded in September 2009.

The Head of Leisure Services attended the meeting and provided an update and response to the recommendations arising from the review since its conclusion.

Member discussed, raised questions/comments in relation to:

- Edge Hill University Ormskirk campus use as a training camp for overseas athletes during the Olympic and Paralympics Games period and the links that had been forged, post-Olympics, with overseas athletes.
- The participation of local schools in activities throughout the Games period .
- The related events in Burscough and Ormskirk resulting from the Torch Relay passing through the Borough.
- Post Olympics business opportunities; sustainability, educational and economic benefits.

The Head of Leisure responded to questions highlighting the links that the University had made with American Samoa and Palau, and other island states, as well as the educational links that were assisting the Oceania states develop their national sports structure; expansion of sports-related courses at the University; the increase in sports participation and football at Sports Centres, the educational links with schools and future opportunities, including 'Road to Rio – an Olympic Legacy' linked to the Olympic/Paralympics in 2016.

RESOLVED: That the update and response to the recommendations arising from the review entitled 'Olympics 2012 – Securing a lasting legacy for West Lancashire' be noted.

34. MEMBERS ITEM - GRASS CUTTING IN WEST LANCASHIRE

Consideration was given to the presentation by the Contracts Performance Manager and Operational Street Scene Manager on Grass Cutting in West Lancashire which the Committee had determined at its previous meeting should receive further consideration. The presentation was supported by a handout, as contained on pages 187 to 188 of the Book of Reports, which gave details of the grassed areas, 1.5 million square metres of open public land, that is maintained by the Council.

The presentation detailed the grass cutting categories and schedules of rates undertaken; the grass cutting season and the areas maintained including verge work undertaken on behalf of the County Council; the maintenance of amenity areas in the Borough; grassed areas within the estates owned by the Council and the Council's responsibilities related to grassed areas within the cemeteries at Liverpool Road Skelmersdale and St Paul's Skelmersdale.

During the course of the presentation comments and question were raised in respect of:

- Maintenance of verges adjacent to roads.
- Maintenance of football pitches.
- Collection of grass for composting.
- Impact of the difficult summer weather conditions on grass maintenance operations.
- Number and deployment of grass cutting teams in the Borough.
- Responsibility of shrubs; bramble control in public areas.
- Road sweepers and leaf clearing operations.

The Contracts Performance Manager and Operational Street Scene Manager responded to comments and questions explaining the processes involved, timescales and measures that have been taken, particularly during the inclement summer wet weather to ensure that the grass cutting schedule was maintained.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

35. CYCLING IN WEST LANCASHIRE

Consideration was given to the following two items.

36. TRAVEL SURVEY EDGE HILL UNIVERSITY

Members considered an update on behalf of the Environmental Safety Officer Edge Hill University in relation to a travel survey being undertaken by the University with students during November 2012, referred to by that Officer in her presentation to Members earlier in the review. It had been confirmed that, as requested by Members, as part of that survey students were being asked detailed questions in relation to where they park. The results were expected in December 2012/January 2013 and a request had been made to the University for feedback on the results of that survey once these were available.

In discussion Members made reference to:

- Safe cycling routes between Skelmersdale to the Edge Hill Campus and Ormskirk.
- Problems for cyclists associated with raised kerbs.
- The increase in cycle use as a result of the success of British cyclists at the London 2012 Olympics.
- Clearer highway signage to warn other road users of “cyclists in the vicinity”.
- Maintenance of cycling signage and routes.
- Imaginative uses of 106 monies - to assist wider surface of cycle paths and improvement of subways connected to cycle paths.

A query was raised in relation to the bye-laws in the town centres that prohibited cyclists from the pedestrian areas and a request was made for more informed information on this.

Clarification was also sought in relation to the use of footpaths by cyclists; the possibility of lowering kerbs at particular junctions in the Borough to assist cyclists’ journeys and the use of subways routes by cyclists.

The Planning Officer (DC) on behalf of the Borough Planner made an undertaking to provide an update to the next meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the update in relation to the Travel Survey being conducted by Edge Hill University be noted.

37. PROJECT PLAN

Members reviewed the Project Plan. It was agreed that as a result of issues raised in the previous item that the review should continue with an update on behalf of the Borough Planner to the next meeting of the Committee and that the draft final report now be submitted to 21 February 2012 meeting.

RESOLVED: A. That the review of the Project Plan be noted.

- B. That an update on the issues relating to cycling as identified in the previous item be provided to the 13 December 2012 meeting and that the draft final report and final recommendations of the review be received at the Committee’s meeting scheduled for 21 February 2012 and the Project Plan be updated accordingly.

38. QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (Q1 2012/13)

Consideration was given to the report of the Transformation Manager which detailed performance monitoring data for the quarter ended 30 June 2012, as contained on pages 135 to 150 of the Book of Reports.

In discussion Members raised questions and comments in respect of the following performance indicators:

- Downturn in some targets.
- WL106 Average time taken to remove fly tips (days) – Council land and public open spaces. Rights / removal of tipped waste on privately owned land.
- BV12 Working Days Lost Due to Sickness Absence – areas affected.
- Rationalising number of PI categories.
- OCL – NI 181 Time taken to process Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit new claims and change events – detail relating to target.

RESOLVED: That the Council's performance against the indicator set for the quarter ended 30 June 2012 be noted.

39. ITEMS AT THE REQUEST OF A MEMBER/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION

Consideration was given to the report of the Borough Solicitor as contained on pages 151 to 165 of the Book of Reports that advised that three items, submitted by Members, attached as Appendices 1 – 3 of the report, and two ideas received for in-depth review.

- (a) At the request of Councillor Nolan an item relating to the use of Section 106 (S106) monies by developers, particularly in Skelmersdale (Appendix 1) had been submitted.

The Planning Officer, who was in attendance, at the request of the Chairman explained the criteria associated with the allocation of S106 monies, making reference to the National Policy Framework. The Assistant Solicitor also detailed some of the legal aspects associated with Section 106 agreements.

During the ensuing discussion Members asked questions and made comments on the use of S106 monies / agreements in relation to:

- public open spaces in the Borough;
- types of developments factories (transport schemes); housing (open space projects);
- Strategic Industrial Locations (SILs);
- timescales relating to the implementation;
- reports relating to Section 106 agreements / monies.

- (b) At the request of Councillor Coyle an item relating to the criteria associated with the allocation of homes and tenancies across the Borough had been submitted (Appendix 2).

The Housing Operations Manager attended the meeting updated Members of the changes taking place in relation to Tenure Reform explaining that more details would come forward in April 2013.

During the ensuing discussion Members asked questions and made comments in relation to:

- Tenants Handbook/Agreement.
- The role of the Landlord Services Committee (Cabinet Working Group).
- Consultation with Members regarding future changes.

- Current Housing Allocation Policy and related mechanisms for debt recovery; bidding for properties; application references.

(c) At the request of Councillor Oliver an item relating to criteria relating to the siting and environmental issues of CCTV cameras across the Borough had been submitted (Appendix 3).

The Assistant Director Community Services explained the rationale in relation to CCTV and made reference to reports on CCTV already considered by Cabinet and the Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

In discussion reference was made to:

- Opportunities to input into the siting of CCTV cameras.
- Issues related to siting of cameras on commercial premises.
- Relocation / expansion of the CCTV monitoring service.
- Environmental implications.

(d) Councillor Dereli provided an overview of the item, listed at paragraph 4.3 of the report, relating to Council Staffing Structures and in discussion reference was made to the following:

- Composition of the Staffing Structure
- Allocation of staff throughout the Council – staff numbers in departments.

In response the Assistant Director Community Services made reference to the recent consideration by Council of the Major Service Review (MSR) item that detailed the changes within service areas. However, to assist the request from the Member for additional information on the Council's staff structure, provision of a Staff Structure Chart would be sought from the HR Business Partner – Transformation.

It was noted that ideas received for in-depth review would need future consideration as part of the Topic Selection Exercise if the Committee chose to undertake a review at a later date.

- RESOLVED:
- A. That the Members' items details in paragraph 4.1 and attached as appendices 1 – 3 be noted.
 - B. The Work Programme attached at Appendix 4 be noted.
 - C. That the Committee does not wish to consider the items submitted at Appendix 1 – 3 at a future meeting.
 - D. That the Work Programme be amended to reflect the continuation of the review 'Cycling in West Lancashire'.

- E That in relation to the suggested items detailed at 4.3 of the report, that these be noted and be retained for future consideration as part of the Topic Selection Exercise if the Committee chooses to undertake a review at a later date.

40. ITEMS FROM THE MEMBERS UPDATE

There were no items under this heading.

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Chairman