

**CORPORATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

HELD: 23 OCTOBER 2014

Start: 7.30pm

Finish: 9.15pm

PRESENT:

Councillors: Bailey (Chairman)

Ashcroft	G Hodson
Mrs Baybutt	J Hodson
Mrs Blake	L Hodson
Delaney	Kay
Dereli	Mrs Marshall
Devine	Ms Melling
Mrs C Evans	Wright

Officers: Assistant Director Community Services (Mr D Tilleray)
Technical Services Manager (Mr C Brady)
Property Services Manager (Mr P Holland)
Environmental Strategy Officer (Ms T Iball)
Partnership and Performance Officer (Ms A Grimes)
Assistant Solicitor (Mrs T Sparrow)
Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer (Mrs C A Jackson)

15. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor McKay.

16. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

In accordance with Council Procedure 4, Members noted the termination of membership of Councillor Mrs R Evans and the appointment of Councillor Kay, for this meeting only, thereby giving effect to the wishes of the Political Groups. The appointment of Councillor Devine to the Committee, resulting from a vacancy, was also noted.

The service of the late Councillor Barry Nolan to the Committee was acknowledged and recorded.

17. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

19. DECLARATIONS OF PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of a Party Whip.

20. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 16 July 2014 be received as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

21. MINUTES OF THE MEMBER DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Member Development Commission meeting held on 18 September 2014 be noted.

22. WORK PROGRAMME 2014/15

The Chairman informed the Committee that the West Lancashire Leisure Trust (WLCL) /Serco report, presented annually by representatives from WLCL and Serco, had been rescheduled for consideration at the next meeting on 4 December 2014.

The following two items were considered.

23. THE INVESTMENT IN RENEWABLE ENERGY BY THE COUNCIL

Consideration was given to the presentation by the Environmental Strategy Officer, Ms Tina Iball, on The Investment in Renewable Energy by the Council. The presentation was supported by a series of slides as contained on pages 167 to 183 of the Book of Reports.

The presentation included reference to:

- Build type challenges – Fabric of properties.
- Grid connection challenges – properties off the gas grid; solutions (alternatives to storage heaters.)
- Renewable Technology Considerations – feasibility (property type/ compatibility/ viability/ sustainability); external funding; aesthetic/planning considerations.
- Current Investment in Renewable Technologies – Air Source Heat Pumps; Biomass Communal Heating System; Solar Photovoltaics (PV); Solar Thermal Hot Water.
- Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) – Eligibility for RHI income.

During the presentation reference was made to projects undertaken, with outcomes: Stockley Crescent (air heat pumps); Oakgate Close, Tarleton (biomass heating system); Victoria Close/Beechwood Court/The Dell (Solar PV) and also the recent Whitburn and Waverley Heating Feasibility Study on Technologies (choice - Individual Gas Boilers).

The Environmental Strategy Officer concluded her presentation by making reference to possible future investment in renewable technologies.

Comments and questions were raised in respect of the following:

- Solar Panels – installation options.
- Air Source Heat Pumps – feasibility; aesthetics/noise/vandalism considerations.
- Future roll out of a renewables programme – pace of programme/life span of existing heating installations.
- CO² emissions – savings to date.
- Publicity – generating interest; publicising successful outcomes and benefits.
- Size of Schemes – approach in relation to: new houses/ established flats/ alternative renewables/ cost benefit analysis/larger scale “renewables” projects.
- Exploration / investment in renewable energy at planning development stage.
- Reporting mechanisms – publicity; updates; advertising benefits to tenants; energy incentives.

It was indicated that the suggestion relating to the inclusion of renewable energy as a topic (task group or review) for future consideration, would be retained with others submitted during the course of the year. Topics submitted being subject to a satisfactory scoring outcome and resources.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

(Note: The Chairman declared an interest, as a result of his employer’s interest in “municipal energy”, when this was referred to in discussion.)

24. A MARKET STRATEGY FOR ORMSKIRK TOWN CENTRE

Consideration was given to the following as part of the in-depth review.

Presentation 1

Members received a presentation from the Technical Services Manager, Mr C Brady, on The Role of Ormskirk Town Centre Market. This was supported by data as contained on pages 185 to 191 of the Book of Reports.

In the presentation it was explained that the two days (Thursday and Saturday), that Ormskirk market was operational, were distinctly different. The information circulated showed: the number of stalls provided on each day; the licensed traders and the casual traders; the commodities sold and mix of trades. Also circulated was ‘The National picture – all markets’ produced by the National Association of British Market Authorities (nabma).

Reference was made to recent changes undertaken to the market layout including relocation of food traders’ stalls from the Market Way car park, behind Moor Street, onto Moor Street itself that had resulted in those market traders reporting a rise in their food trade takings as well as an increased take up by food trade stalls. Other improvements over the past few years had included the provision of new stalls and covers.

The Thursday market is currently well supported by traders, however, the number of permanent /casual stallholders trading on a Saturday was lower than on a Thursday and therefore the variety of commodities offered smaller. The main reasons suggested for this was the competition from other nearby local markets also operating on Saturdays, which Thursday traders attended, coupled with the variety of goods offered by them.

In relation to the aesthetics of the market, the Technical Services Manager referred to the potential use of “pop-up” / gazebo-type stalls, popular in other street markets. However, the practicalities and longevity of use of these types of stalls needed to be balanced against the, often blustery, weather conditions that existed in the location.

He went on to explain that the environmental proposals for the improvement of Moor Street, provided the opportunity, through the review, to look at:

- The impact of the Moor Street improvement works on the current market layout.
- The opportunities open to market traders, including those available to permanent traders / casual traders / start up traders.

Mr Brady made reference to ‘The Environmental Improvement of Moor Street, Ormskirk’ circulated, that provided a visual example of how the Market stalls could be positioned on Moor Street on Market Days. The review provided an opportunity to seek views in relation to:

- What type of layout should effectively be used? (back to back; one each side of street)
- Restricting vehicle access on Market Days.
- Consultation on proposals coming forward with Market Traders.
- Opportunities that could be afforded to Casual Traders.
- Attracting New Traders /commodities.
- Promoting Ormskirk Market as a destination.
- Creation of a “Events Space” in a central area of Moor Street.
- Improvements / knock-on effect on the town centre retailers.

Members raised questions/comments in relation to:

- Charges to Market Traders.
- Initiatives to attract more traders (examples included a regular “Continental Market”; “Local Produce” Market.)
- Prohibiting vehicles access through Ormskirk Town Centre (enforcement / restricted access during market operational times; provision of barriers or gates (Aughton Street); provision of clear signage.
- The changing face of the Town Centre (street scene; footfall; segregation of shared pedestrian/cycle routes; design of “safe” routes; opportunities for out-of-town shoppers (coach park; visitor parking; pick-up/drop-off points)
- Economic considerations – footfall; types of shops/retailers in the town centre; Ormskirk’s identity (“historic market town”); effect of national trends; the “shopping” experience.

The Technical Services Manager reported that a revised Traffic Regulation Order would be sought as part of the Moor Street improvements restricting the movement of vehicles through Ormskirk Town Centre.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Chairman made an undertaking to meet with various Members to discuss further the lines of enquiry for the Review.

It was agreed that as Workshop Session should be held in January 2015, with an opportunity to meet with representatives of Ormskirk Market Traders and that an Interim Report, on work undertaken on the Review during 2014/15, come to the final meeting of the municipal year.

RESOLVED: That the Project Plan, as circulated, be revised to include:

- (i) Meeting 3 (4 December 2014) - Identify the next steps in the Review.
- (ii) Workshop Session to be arranged in January 2015.
- (iii) Meeting 4 (19 February 2015) – Interim report to conclude work undertaken in 2014/15.

25. QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (Q1 2014/15)

Consideration was given to the report of the Transformation Manager which detailed performance monitoring data for the quarter ended 30 June 2014.

The Policy and Performance Officer attended the meeting and provided an overview of the current position referring to details as set down in the report. The report had previously been considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 16 September 2014.

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

- TS1 (Rent Collected as % of rent owed (excluding arrears b/f) – Anticipated effect on PIs / performance following the introduction of Universal Credit (UC)
- WL114 (% LA properties with CP12 outstanding) – Currently only one outstanding matter that had required statutory intervention.

RESOLVED: That the Council's performance against the indicator set for the quarter ended 30 June 2014 be noted.

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Chairman