

**CORPORATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

HELD: 3 DECEMBER 2015

Start: 7.30pm

Finish: 8.35pm

PRESENT:

Councillors: Dowling (Chairman) West (Vice Chairman)

Mrs Atherley	G Hodson
Barron	Hudson
Mrs Blake	McKay
Blane	Oliver
Delaney	O'Toole
Greenall	Westley

Officers: Assistant Director Community Services (Mr D Tilleray)
 Deputy Assistant Director Housing & Regeneration (Mr I Gill)
 Head of Leisure and Cultural Services (Mr J Nelson)
 Technical Services Manager (Mr C Brady)
 Economic Regeneration Manager (Ms P Huber)
 Arts Development Manager (Ms H Juste)
 Assistant Solicitor (Mr N Astles)
 Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer (Mrs C A Jackson)

In attendance: Councillor J Hodson (Portfolio Holder for Planning)

35. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Bailey and L Hodson.

36. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4, Members noted the termination of membership of Councillor Mrs Marshall and the appointment of Councillor D Westley, for this meeting only, thereby giving effect to the wishes of the political group.

37. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

38. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

39. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 15 October 2015 be received as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

40. A MARKET STRATEGY FOR ORMSKIRK REVIEW

The following three items, as part of this review, were considered.

41. REGENERATION, LEISURE AND THE NIGHT TIME ECONOMY

Consideration was given to the presentation by the Economic Regeneration Manager and Arts Development Manager which was supported by a series of slides as contained on pages 207 to 220 of the Book of Reports.

Ormskirk Town Centre Strategy

The Economic Regeneration Manager provided an update relating to the Ormskirk Town Centre Strategy, the draft of which had been approved by Cabinet at its meeting in September 2015 and reported that partner endorsement was being secured. She informed Members that four sub-groups had now been established namely, Market and Car Parks; Building and the Public Realm; BID and Marketing.

She then went on to explain the projects that the Marketing Sub-Group would be tasked with, to include: visitor profiling; shopping habits; perceptions; competitor analysis and the unique selling point (USP). It was envisaged that these would underpin the branding and subsequent marketing of Ormskirk.

An update in relation to events previously reported during the course of the review was provided. Actions delivered in the latter part of 2015 had included the Events Marquee and the expansion of events at the Chapel Gallery to include a vintage/handmade fair and the introduction, for Christmas 2015, of a "storyteller" narrating the Fairy Tale of Ormskirk, through banner and illuminated installations in empty shops.

It was acknowledged that the High Street was changing from the traditional shopping only purpose and its potential was now seen as more of a leisure destination.

The Arts as a tool for Regeneration

The Arts Development Manager explained that by looking at the experiences of other towns and cities who had explored an alternative approach, through innovative arts programmes, a quality experience for visitors could be achieved. It was explained that by drawing on a town's local heritage as an inspiration for an event the outcome could bring positive memories and encourage revisits.

Cultural Tourism – West Lancashire

Members heard of the great potential in Ormskirk to attract visitors. Examples included the changes proposed at Chapel Gallery, as part of its exhibition and events programme and the potential of the High Street as a leisure destination.

In relation to the “High Street”, the various options to accomplish a change, through animating and improving the environment were referred to including: the introduction of visual sculpture; creating opportunities for animation (the festive displays in empty shops were an example of this); through the performing arts (street entertainers; drama; dance and storytellers) and exhibitions, arts and craft markets (Ormskirk Handmade and Vintage Fair).

It was emphasised that the provision of quality experiences within town centres for its visitors was likely to encourage revisits. The impact of the annual Motofest in Ormskirk town centre was cited as evidence of this.

Reference was also made to the success of the Sunday Summer Vintage and Handmade Fairs piloted in 2013/14 that saw an increase in visitor numbers to Chapel Gallery from 29,000 to 37,000, despite the small exhibition space.

In conclusion, the Arts Development Manager referred to potential ideas /actions for the future. These included the development of an annual fairy tale event; arts and crafts; vintage and handmade stalls alongside the more established traders on the Market, with an outcome, through the provision of a mix of activities, of an increase in the footfall across the town, including Chapel Gallery, thus attracting more visitors and adding to their overall experience of Ormskirk.

Thanks was expressed to the Economic Development Manager and Arts Development for their informative presentations.

RESOLVED: That the presentations be noted.

42. THE MARKET AND MOOR STREET IMPROVEMENTS

The Technical Services Manager gave an oral update on the Market and Moor Street Improvements, including an update on the refurbishment work undertaken by Lancashire County Council on the gullies, an issue identified at the previous meeting.

The Market and Moor Street Improvements

It was reported that resurfacing had been completed; bins installed and installation of the benches and lit street trees were scheduled to be completed during December.

In relation to improvements to the gullies, bonded aggregate had now been inserted and colour-matched to the channels. It was understood that Lancashire County Council (LCC) would be monitoring the effectiveness of the aggregate.

Comments and questions were raised in relation to:

- Moor Street Improvements – effective drainage / performance of the gullies.
- Ormskirk Town Centre traffic management in the pedestrian area – methods to restrict vehicle access / indiscriminate vehicle movement; the effectiveness of enforcement; advantages/disadvantages and types of more physical solutions; restrictions for heavy goods vehicles.

- Derby Street Railway Bridge – proposed works; vehicle restrictions; impact on business deliveries; diversion of traffic.

In relation to questions raised on vehicle enforcement orders in force in the Town Centre, Members were informed that issues affected by these were regularly raised with Lancashire County Council (LCC), as the responsible highway authority.

During discussion on traffic management safety in the pedestrian area, solutions to deter misuse of vehicle access in / through the town centre were put forward including: narrowing the access points to the area; installation of gates; installation of automated barriers or rise/fall bollards. It was acknowledged that any proposals for more permanent “solutions” would need to include measures to allow access by the emergency services and delivery vehicles.

It was agreed that traffic management safety in the pedestrian area was an issue requiring further consideration and the Technical Services Manager was asked to provide further detail in relation to ideas raised and information on the Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) covering the Town Centre.

In answer to a Member question relating to maintenance of the gullies and the drainage problems that had been referred to, the Technical Services Manager undertook to raise the issue with LCC.

In relation to the Market, the Technical Services Manager stated that, since the provision of trade/stall data, earlier in the review, the popularity of stall trading on “Thursdays” had risen with a larger variety of goods now being made available. The demand for stalls by traders on Saturday remained high. The monitoring of the performance of the two market days would continue.

It was further reported that the wet weather had had an impact on some improvements. However, with the provision of the new canopies, a re-launch of the Market was planned for Spring 2016.

- RESOLVED:
- A. That the presentation be noted.
 - B. That a further update on The Market and Moor Street Improvements be provided to the next meeting.
 - C. That information on Traffic Management Safety in the Pedestrian Area of Ormskirk Town Centre be sought in relation to issues raised for consideration at the next meeting.
 - D. That clarification in relation to the maintenance of the refurbished gullies be sought from LCC.

43. NEXT STEPS

Consideration was given to the timetable, as set down in the Project Plan for the Review.

The date and the proposed content, as put forward by the Deputy Assistant Director Housing and Regeneration, of the Workshop in January 2016 was considered.

RESOLVED: A. That arrangements be put in place for the Workshop to be held on 19 January 2016.

B. That, in relation to the next steps of the review, the proposals for the next meeting, to be held on 18 February 2016 be confirmed and the Project Plan be amended to include consideration of Traffic Management Safety in the Pedestrian Area of Ormskirk Town Centre.

44. ITEMS FROM THE MEMBERS' UPDATE

There were no items under this heading.

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Chairman