

**CORPORATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

HELD: 13 OCTOBER 2016

Start: 7.00pm

Finish: 9.35pm

PRESENT:

Councillor: N Hennessy (Chairman) D West (Vice Chairman)

Councillors: G Hodson
T Blane J Kay
P Cotterill D McKay
C Cooper Ms R Melling
S Currie M Nixon
D Evans A Yates
P Greenall

In attendance: Councillor J Hodson (Portfolio Holder for Planning)
County Councillor J Fillis (Cabinet Member for Highways and
Transportation, Lancashire County Council)
Parish Councillor A Beeston (Lathom South Parish Council)

Officers: Director of Leisure and Wellbeing (Mr D Tilleray)
Deputy Director of Leisure and Wellbeing (Mr J Nelson)
Deputy Director of Development and Regeneration (Mr I Gill)
Economic Regeneration Manager (Ms P Huber)
Partnership and Performance Officer (Ms A Grimes)
Assistant Solicitor (Mr N Astles)
Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer (Mrs C A Jackson)

External attendees: Chairman West Lancashire Community Leisure (WLCL)
(Ms J McNally)
Contracts Manager (WLCL) (Mr M Snaylam)

16 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

17 MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4, Members noted the termination of membership of Councillors Mrs Blake and Pryce-Roberts and the appointment of Councillors Ms Melling and Cooper respectively, thereby giving effects to the wishes of the political groups.

18 URGENT BUSINESS, IF ANY, INTRODUCED BY THE CHAIRMAN

There were no items of urgent business.

19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1. During discussion of item 9 West Lancashire Leisure (WLCL)/Serco Annual Report the following declarations were noted:
 - (a) Councillor Cooper declared an interest as a trustee of WLCL and took no further part in the consideration of this item.
 - (b) Councillor Cotterill declared an interest when speaking on secondary school participation, as a Governor of Lathom High School.
2. During discussion on item 13 Flooding of the Highways Drainage System, Councillor Yates declared an interest, when reference was made to commissioned survey work, through his connection with AARRCH, the Ormskirk Flood Group.

20 DECLARATIONS OF A PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of a Party Whip.

21 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 14 July 2016 be received as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

22 MINUTES OF THE MEMBER DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Consideration was given to the Minutes of the Member Development Commission meeting held on 23 September 2016 as contained on pages 185 to 187 of the Book of Reports.

In discussion reference was made to the following:

- Overview and Scrutiny Training (4 October 2016) – attendance; feedback; input from the external facilitator.
- Member Induction – composition of future sessions; support; scope/information provided.

The Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer provided an overview of the Member Induction process and provided clarification on the issues raised.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Member Development Commission meeting held on 22 September 2016 be noted.

23 PUBLIC SPEAKING

There were no items under this heading.

24 WEST LANCASHIRE LEISURE (WLCL)/SERCO ANNUAL REPORT

Consideration was given to the presentation by Joan McNally, Chairman and Mark Snaylam, Contracts Manager of West Lancashire Community Leisure (WLCL), supported by a series of slides as contained on pages 189 to 200 of the Book of Reports.

In her presentation the Chairman of the Leisure Trust acknowledged the good work undertaken by the Trust Members throughout the year and included reference to:

- Charitable Status obtained.
- Success of 6th Triathlon – participation by 800 plus school aged youth.
- Community Engagement/participation – GP Referral scheme; Chairman's Cup; Schools Triathlon; Outreach Work.

Reference was also made to the Active West Lancs scheme, a partnership initiative with West Lancashire Borough Council, The Schools Sports Partnership, Skelmersdale Community Fund Initiative (SCFI) and CVS Community Food Growing Initiative to help get people fitter across the Borough.

In relation to operations over the previous 12 months, the Contracts Manager referred to the following:

- Funding of the 'Welcome to Health Project' in collaboration with Edge Hill University and the School Sports Partnership.
- Increased patronage (Wetside visits).
- Income generated in 2015 (Wetside; Dryside; Health & Fitness; F & B and operational.)
- Beacon Park – changes at the Golf Club (redevelopment of footgolf course); update on land reprofiling; continued investment in the site, despite drop in operational income; new park design "Pirates of the Carribeacon"
- Burscough, Nye Bevan & Park Pools – Gymnasium refurbishments; upgrade of football pitches; introduction of Walking Football (Burscough); improvements to infrastructure (filter system Park Pool); main sports hall refurbishment (Burscough).

The Contracts Manager went on to highlight the opportunities and challenges for the group, emphasising that Serco Leisure is not for sale and will remain part of the Serco Group of companies.

In conclusion of the review, the way forward for the coming year was featured which included: reference to the challenges to increase patronage; growth of the business; diversification / further development of Beacon Park; increasing swimming lesson usage; continuous improvement of facilities and development of staff; working with partners and community groups to offer more participation opportunities.

Comment and questions were raised in respect of the following:

- Equipment available at Banks Leisure Centre – refurbishment plans.
- ‘Welcome to Health Project’ – possible extension to include secondary school age children.
- Pricing bands of activities across the Centres.
- Upgrade of football pitches – commercial benefits.
- Park Pool Ormskirk – long term future of the facility.
- Beacon Golf Course – decline in golf usage; broadening demographic usage; opportunities for diversification.

The Contracts Manager of WLCL contributed to the discussion and responded to questions. He made an undertaking to take away points made, particularly in relation to possible extension into secondary schools, of the initiative being undertaken in partnership with Edge Hill University in primary schools, on children fitness.

The Chairman of WLCL also contributed to the discussion and provided further clarification on the vision for the future at the Beacon to encourage more footfall in the former ‘hub’ through the provision of refreshments for the park users, including dog walkers and bike clubs.

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

RESOLVED: That the performance of West Lancashire Leisure/Serco for the previous 12 months, be noted and the representatives be thanked for their presentation and attendance.

(Note: Following consideration of this item, the Chairman varied the order of business to allow Agenda Item 13 ‘Flooding of the Highways Drainage’ to be considered next (Minute 28 refers). The minutes follow the order as set down in the agenda.)

25 QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (Q1 2016/17)

Consideration was given to the report of the Borough Transformation Manager and Deputy Director of Housing & Inclusion which detailed performance monitoring data for the quarter ended 30 June 2016, as contained on pages 157 to 170 of the Book of Reports. The report had previously been considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 13 September 2016.

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

- N1 157b (Processing of planning applications: Minor applications) and
- N1 157c (Processing of planning applications: Other applications) – commentary explanation.

The Deputy Director of Development and Regeneration, who was in attendance at the meeting, provided clarification on points raised in respect of the reasons set down in the commentary related to an increase in workloads stating that the impacts reported are kept under review and monitored.

RESOLVED: That the Council's performance against the indicator set for the quarter ended 30 June 2016 be noted.

26 REVIEW TOPIC 2016/17 AND CONFIRMATION OF THE WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the report of the Borough Solicitor as contained on pages 171 to 177 of the Book of Reports that gave details of the outcome of the Topic Scoring Exercise in relation to topics submitted by the deadline and set down the proposed Work Programme for the Committee for 2016/17.

Members noted the results of the scoring exercise (Appendix A) and the proposals therein, particularly noting the proposal for a presentation on the selected topic.

The Chairman provided additional information in relation to the scoring exercise, thanking the Scoring Panel for their contribution.

RESOLVED: A. That the results of the scoring exercise (Appendix A) be noted and the recommendations therein be actioned and endorsed.

B. That the topic selected for review in 2016/17 Work Programme of the Committee be 'Tourism'.

C. That a presentation on the selected topic be provided and a draft Project Plan for the review be prepared.

D. That the Work Programme for the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee as set out below be confirmed and included on the Council's web site.

'Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Committee conducts in-depth reviews/policy development as set out in its work programme.

The Committee considers, as part of its routine work:

- Items referred from "Members Update" at the request of a Member
- Members items/Councillor Call for Action (CCfA)
- Performance management
- Acts as the Council's Crime and Disorder Committee
- Recommendations from previously conducted reviews

The Member Development Commission will continue its work during 2016/17 as will the 'Public Involvement at Meetings Working Group'.

27 WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17

The following three items were considered.

28 FLOODING OF THE HIGHWAYS DRAINAGE SYSTEM

The Chairman introduced the item, that had been added to the Committee's work programme as a result of concerns from Members on the performance and maintenance of the gullies in the Borough following the flooding that had occurred on Boxing Day 2015 and the lessons learnt.

The Committee welcomed County Councillor John Fillis, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, Lancashire County Council to the meeting for a question and answer session on Flooding of Highways Drainage System.

Prior to the meeting Members had provided a series of questions to the County Council's Cabinet Member. In response to the questions previously submitted County Councillor Fillis had provided a written response, circulated prior to the meeting, as set down at pages 201 to 211 of the Book of Reports.

At the meeting, the County Council Cabinet Member provided an overview of the response by the County and others agencies to the floods that had occurred on Boxing Day 2015. He went on to explain, that through that response experience, the County had reflected on its procedures, referring to details as set down within his written response. This included the responsibilities of the different agencies involved in flood management / water flow which included the Environment Agency (EA), District Councils, Water Companies (United Utilities) and local highways authorities (LCC) as identified in the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (FWMA) and the role of the Risk Management Authorities (RMAs).

In respect of maintenance of the gullies it was explained using past data and also local knowledge, the County had overhauled its gully emptying service and had now produced a schedule of Priority 1 and Priority 2 gullies. Rather than a rotational cleaning, this service was now prioritised. In relation to sandbags, he said that this was the responsibility of District Councils.

In conclusion County Councillor Fillis referred to the LCC campaign and literature that had been produced to assist residents. He also commented that, whilst LCC Highways enforcement powers are limited and site/circumstances specific, if there is any local knowledge of real-life situations then this information can be passed through to him so that specific responses can be investigated and produced.

In discussion questions and comments were raised in relation to:

- Priority 1 and 2 gullies schedules – identification of gully priorities; availability of site lists; future proofing (new housing developments).
- Flood Relief – allocation of resources; monetary assistance (grants); future investment.
- Road drains – maintenance and removal of debris.
- Methods of reporting flooding / drain issues – access to the LCC web-site; preparation in / for “at risk” areas.
- “Gold” Command – composition (police and emergency service led), involvement of local response units.
- Other best practice models – National Flood Forum.
- Commissioned survey work undertaken in a local neighbourhood (Jacob report)
- Use of hydro bags as an alternative to sandbags – provision of emergency “kits”.
- Effectiveness of natural barriers – tree-lines; replanting hedgerows.

In response to the question on the Priority 1 and Priority 2 gullies, referred to in his written response, County Councillor Fillis stated that this information could be provided and noted the comment in relation to fluidity in their composition.

In relation to the “priority” lists it was suggested that there could be a “Priority 3” related to “very blocked drains”. Members referenced the effects of the flooding on the road drainage in their wards that could not take the volumes of water that had been experienced.

In response the Cabinet Member provided feedback on the procedure in respect of the County Council’s response to drain clearance notified to them and spoke of the web-site service where such issues can be reported.

The Director of Leisure and Wellbeing referred to the role and responsibilities of the Borough Council in relation to flood situations which is one of support in liaison with the lead agencies. He referred to the permissive powers in respect of ordinary water-courses within the Borough and that under FWMA the lead role in relation to water-courses had now passed to the lead authority (LCC). The Borough Council has a small number of water-courses for which it is the riparian owner, for example, Hurlston Brook for its length, as it passes through Coronation Park.

In response to the availability / distribution of sandbags, it was recognised that the public’s perception of the effectiveness and availability of sandbags to protect their property was often quite unrealistic. The Director of Leisure and Wellbeing confirmed that it was not the responsibility of the Borough Council to provide sandbags. This responsibility lies with the homeowners themselves.

It was recognised that good communication and information sharing between the agencies is essential as is encouraging residents, particularly those who live in areas which have suffered from flooding in the past, to be proactive in installing flood resilience measures. The Director of Leisure and Wellbeing referred to initiatives

that had been introduced to encourage winter preparation and the improvement measures, following a survey of Council owned properties which had been subject to internal flooding during the recent flood events, to limit damage caused by future storms. The 'Flood Awareness' page on the Council's website also provides a range of information and external links to those responsible agencies.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning, who attended the meeting, with the permission of the Chairman commented on the role of Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs), that can be set up in areas of special drainage (at present Lancashire has only one). It was further understood that LCC and the Environment Agency were also looking at a range of options, of which the final list is still awaited.

The Chairman thanked County Councillor John Fillis, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, LCC for his attendance and response, written and oral, to the questions put to him in relation to flooding and asked Members to pass on details in relation to local knowledge on gullies to him.

RESOLVED: That the presentation by County Councillor John Fillis, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, LCC be noted and that any suggestions in relation to local knowledge and the Priority 1 and Priority 2 gullies schedule be directed to him.

29 WEST LANCASHIRE TOURISM - THE VISITOR ECONOMY

Following agreement by the Committee to undertake a review on 'Tourism', the Economic Regeneration Manager, who attended the meeting provided an introduction and to possible lines of enquiry for Members to consider during the course of the review.

Presentation 1 – West Lancashire Tourism – The Visitor Economy

Members considered information presented by the Economic Regeneration Manager. This was supported by a series of slides as set down at pages 213 to 217 of the Book of Reports.

The presentation gave an overview of the following:

- Background to the West Lancashire Visitor Economy.
- West Lancashire Strategies: Economic Development Strategy 2015-2025 and Ormskirk Town Centre Strategy 2015-2020.
- Marketing and Promotion
- Marketing Lancashire
- Beyond West Lancashire and Lancashire boundaries

In discussion, questions and comments were raised in relation to:

- Seasonal Tourism – impact on local attractions.
- Accommodation promotion – to encourage overnight stays

- Promotion of 'newer' local events – Burscough Heritage Weekend
- Burscough Wharf – attracting canal tourists (moorings; canal side services (restaurants; promotion of local shops)

At the conclusion of the presentation the Economic Regeneration Manager provided information and suggestions for future consideration.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted and the title of the review be revised to 'West Lancashire Tourism – The Visitor Economy'

30 PROJECT PLAN

Consideration was given to the draft Project Plan as set down at pages 181 to 183 of the Book of Reports.

Members agreed the Project Plan, that would be reviewed at each meeting and the timescale to complete its work by July 2017.

RESOLVED: A That the Project Plan be agreed.

B. That arrangements be put in place for a presentation by Marketing Lancashire on the Lancashire visitor economy and how West Lancashire is promoted as a visitor destination, to the December meeting of the Committee.

31 MEMBERS' ITEM

There were no items under this heading.

32 ITEMS FROM THE MEMBERS' UPDATE

There were no items under this heading.

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Chairman