



# West Lancashire Borough Council

Report of the Corporate and Environmental Overview & Scrutiny Committee  
**'Community Involvement in Service Delivery'**





## Community Involvement in Service Delivery - Report of the Corporate and Environmental Overview & Scrutiny Committee

### FOREWORD by the Chairman Councillor Nikki Hennessy



"The Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee carried out a review of 'Community Involvement in Service Delivery' in 2017/18. This report sets down the outcomes of the work undertaken by Members of the Committee during that period.

We started the scrutiny project in October 2017 with an overview presentation from the Director of Leisure and Wellbeing, to assist our understanding of how Community groups could be involvement in Service Delivery. We have gained knowledge from the excellent briefings provided by a number of Officers, who have been very helpful in assisting us to explore the issues.

We would like to thank all those who have been involved in the review in particular those Members and Officers who took the time to attend meetings.

In addition to the information provided by Officers of the Council, we would like to thank External partners who provided detail in respect of Community Involvement in Service Delivery both locally and wider afield.

Mrs Marion Gelder	Chief Executive of Lancashire Association of Local Council's
Mr Gregg Mitton	Chief Officer CVS

## **THE REVIEW**

### **BACKGROUND**

Following the submission of topics by the public, Members and the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and the subsequent scoring exercise, the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 12 October 2017 agreed to undertake a review entitled 'Community Involvement in Service Delivery'.

The Project Plan (Appendix B) was agreed and considered at each meeting.

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

1. To undertake a review entitled 'Community Involvement in Service Delivery'
2. To undertake an examination of the potential for community groups (including Parish Councils) to take on certain services, currently provided across the Borough by WLBC, in their locality.
3. To present a report of the Committee's findings to Cabinet and Council, as appropriate.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1) That in relation to the transfer of assets to community groups, consideration should be given to a formal in-house support mechanism being established as part of the process, for groups to access support following the transfer of facilities, with bi-annual or quarterly monitoring meetings put in place for this purpose.
- 2) That in the interest of prudent financial management, the £15k revenue funding given to Abbey Lakes each year be reviewed in the context of the overall programme of grants given to voluntary organisations.
- 3) That the option of offering groups insurance under a bulk insurance scheme be investigated.

Note: item 1 above to be clarified to confirm this relates only to when the Council transfers services to community groups.

### **Membership of the Committee 2017/18**

**Chairman:** Councillor N Hennessy

**Vice Chairman:** Councillor D Evans

Councillors: M Barron, Mrs M Blake, T Blane, P Cotterill, S Currie, G Hodson, J Kay, D McKay, M Nixon, N Pryce-Roberts, Savage, West and Westley.

### **Membership of the Committee 2018/19**

**Chairman:** Councillor N Hennessy

**Vice Chairman:** Councillor M Nixon

Councillors: D Evans, P Cotterill, S Currie, M Blake, G Hodson, Lockie, West, N Pryce-Roberts, Marshall, A Owens and Cummins.

## **INFORMATION GATHERED**

### **Meeting of the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2017 in the Cabinet and Committee Room, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk**

Members agreed to undertake an in-depth study entitled 'Community Involvement in Service Delivery' and confirmed the Project Plan for the review.

#### **Presentation 1 – Community Involvement in Service Delivery**

Members considered information presented by the Director of Leisure and Wellbeing.

Members received an overview of proposals for the review to look at how community groups could be involved in service delivery in their local communities. Members acknowledged it was anticipated that a Guidance /Information pack would be developed to provide support information for community groups wishing to get involved in the management of a local service.

### **Meeting of the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2018 in the Cabinet and Committee Room, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk**

#### **Presentation 2 – 'Transferring a Community Service to a Local Community Group - Leisure and Wellbeing**

Members considered information presented by the Director of Leisure and Wellbeing, on the experience of transferring a community service to a local community group.

The presentation included reference to the:

- Examples of community transfer – Community buildings, outdoor sports facilities and Outdoor activity facility;
- The process undertaken and the lessons learnt, particularly in relation to the Community Resource Centres in Skelmersdale, the Civic Hall, Ormskirk and Abbey Lane Playing Fields, Burscough;
- Potential transfer opportunities.

#### **Presentation 3 – Transfer of Service Delivery - Street Scene**

Also at the January meeting, the Deputy Director of Street Scene, provided a presentation on Street scenes experience in relation to the transfer of service delivery. The Committee was advised that experience was limited as services didn't lend themselves easily to transfer, as groups in the main did not have the necessary infrastructure to support such involvement.

The Committee learnt that Street Scene was working in partnership with Total Reuse, a local social enterprise organisation based in Skelmersdale, providing the physical collection part of the bulky household waste collection service, with the Council providing the administration. Items are refurbished, when appropriate, and offered for sale or donated to community groups and good causes. Income generated from sales was used to create training programmes.

The Committee were advised on the work undertaken with local volunteer groups such as the Scouts', parish councils and neighbourhood clean-up campaigns in providing equipment, materials and the removal of any waste collected and that national clean-up campaigns were promoted by the service such as the Keep Britain Tidy initiatives "The Great British Clean" and "Clean for the Queen" offering local action groups advice and once again the provision of equipment and the removal of waste. Requests being dealt with on an individual basis.

### **Meeting of the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 1 March 2018 in the Cabinet and Committee Room, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk**

#### **Presentation 4 – Legal and Procurement Matters**

At the March meeting a presentation from the Borough Solicitor on the legal and procurement barriers that could be encountered in relation to the transfer of services to the local community was received by Members.

Information received by the Committee included;

- The transfer of services, assets, resources
- Financial support and governance matters
- An overview of the Social Value Act in relation to procurement
- Community Right to Challenge under the Localism Act 2011
- Procurement matters
- Issues associated with the perception of inadvertently granting state aid
- Powers of authority and relevant legislation
- limitations of powers (ultra vires)
- Details of the Council's estate – land, industrial units, shopping centres, community centres, meeting rooms and playing fields
- Title issues – restrictive covenants, conditions, clawback payments
- Disposal issues – freehold transfer, types, length of time, Assets of community value
- Best Value
- Maintenance issues – cost, disrepair and monitoring/inspections
- Staff issues – pensions, terms and conditions etc
- Risk assessments, health and safety, insurance

### **Meeting of the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 12 July 2018 in the Cabinet and Committee Room, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk**

#### **Presentation 5 - CVS – Council for Voluntary Services**

Members considered information from the Chief Officer of the CVS, who had been invited to inform Members what support the CVS could give to community/voluntary groups to help them through the community transfer process;

- Asset transfer can be either change of ownership or management,
- Plan what's important, benefits to community and residents,
- Look at joint owned principle,
- Ensure diligence is done before transfers of assets,
- Lessons from previous asset transfers shared.
- Possibility of accessing funding previously unavailable.

#### Minutes:

Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 12 October 2017, 4 January 2018, 1 March 2018 and 12 July 2018.

#### Web links:

<https://democracy.westlancs.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=142>  
<https://www.westlancs.gov.uk/more/community-centres.aspx>  
<https://www.westlancs.gov.uk/more/your-community/grants-to-voluntary-groups.aspx>  
<http://www.wlcvcs.org/>  
<https://www.westlancs.gov.uk/more/your-community.aspx>

### **OFFICER SUPPORT**

Lead Officer: Heidi McDougall, Director of Leisure and Wellbeing

Scrutiny Support Officer: Cathryn Jackson/John Addison, Principal Overview & Scrutiny Officer

Officers Reporting: Terry Broderick, Borough Solicitor  
Phil Samosa, Deputy Director Street Scene

Legal Officer: Tina Sparrow, Principal Solicitor

### **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no significant sustainability impacts associated with this report.

### **FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial/resource implications arising from this report.

## **Background Documents**

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this report.

## **Equality Impact Assessment**

There will be a direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and/or stakeholders as a result of recommendations that may come forward, if implemented. An EIA would be undertaken as part of that process.

## **Appendices**

- (1) Project Plan