



**Corporate & Environmental Overview &
Scrutiny Committee: 8 June 2023**

Report of: Corporate Director of Transformation, Housing & Resources

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**SUBJECT: OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - TOPIC SCORING EXERCISE
2023/2024, AND TASK & FINISH GROUP OVERVIEW.**

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To advise on the progress of the four Task & Finish Groups (T&FG), previously established under the remit of the Corporate & Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee, and agree that no additional topics be sought for 2023/24, given the proposed changes to the Council's governance arrangements, ie. moving to a Committee system from May 2024.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the decision of the Annual Council held on 17 May 2023, not to establish Task and Finish Groups under the remit of the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee, be noted.

2.2 That given the change of governance arrangements in May 2024, to a Committee system, no additional topics be sought for 2023/24.

2.3 That the work undertaken and current position in relation to the four Task and Finish Groups, as set out in paragraph 4, be noted.

2.4 That the outstanding tasks in relation to 'Community Environmental Improvements, Including Community Orchards T&FG', and the 'Litter Clearance In West Lancs, Including Fly-tipping and Grot spots T&FG', be continued in 2023/2024, and reported directly to this Committee.

2.5 That following the decision at Annual Council, 17 May 2023, work in relation to Ormskirk Market T&FG, and the Shop Front Improvements T&FG, be ceased with immediate effect and it be noted that the £50k budget provision allocation to Shop Front improvements will remain unspent.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 December 2021, the Councils Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee, invited Members, Officers, Parish Councils and the Public, to submit Topic Suggestions for consideration as Scrutiny Topics for inclusion in the Work Programme for 2022/23.
- 3.2 Following receipt of submitted topics, Topic Scoring exercises were carried out, to score each submission against the Councils Core Aims and Objectives. Following initial scoring, Submissions were then put before and considered by a Topic Scoring Panel, and each individual who submitted a Topic Suggestion was invited to attend to make representation to the Panel on 22 February 2022.
- 3.3 The Topic Selected for in depth scrutiny at a Task & Finish Group, was
- 'Litter Clearance in West Lancs, including Fly-Tipping and Grot Spots'.
- 3.4 At the Council Budget Setting Meeting, 23 February 2022, Task and Finish Groups were also agreed to consider the following Topics:
- Community Environmental Improvements, including Community Orchards
 - Shop Front Improvements
- 3.5 At Council on 20 July 2022 a further Task and Finish Group was also agreed to undertake a review of market operation across the borough, which would include potential rent incentives for new market traders to ensure markets continue to be the best possible offer and service within Wellbeing and Place.
- 3.6 At the Annual Council Meeting 17 May 2023, the decision was made not to establish the above Task and Finish Groups.

4.0 CURRENT POSITION OF TASK AND FINISH GROUPS (T&FG)

- 4.1 'Litter Clearance in West Lancs, including Fly-Tipping and Grot Spots'. Have met twice, 21/9/2022 and 26/1/23. The next T&FG meetings were scheduled 20/6/23 and 28/9/23, with September anticipated to be the concluding meeting.
- Much work has been conducted during the life of this project, not least with schools, educating and introduction of a competition for pupils to design a poster, with opportunity to win character themed litter bin for their School.
- Work has started on Grot Spots – Team is currently working in East Gillibrands.
 - School Competition has ended, with over 50 entries. Date to be arranged to judge the entries.
 - All Parish Council's have been contacted in relation to the collaborative working on Community Skip Days.
 - A database of volunteers has been established, and all Parish Councils have been asked to supply details of any known volunteer groups.

- The Volunteer Group Handbook has been compiled and shared with Digital Comms. Arrangements are to be made regarding completing a DPIA.
- Funding has been granted and various items have been ordered including Hi-Vis Vests for voluntary litter groups, Green Litter Bags and litter picking sticks.

4.2 'Community Environmental Improvements, including Community Orchards'.

Has met three times, 28/10/22 and 17/11/22 following which recommendations went to Committee and Cabinet requesting Community Consultation within the surrounding areas of suggested Community Orchards, put forward by our Members; and seeking delegated powers to the Corporate Director of Place and Community, to act upon the outcomes of consultation if over 50% positive feedback. This was due to time constraints to ensure consultation was conducted outside of Purdah in relation to the By-Election for West Lancs MP, and planting to be carried out within the planting season.

Outcomes of consultation were reported to T&FG 16/3/23. The concluding T&FG meeting was scheduled for 29/6/23.

- This Project has nearly reached conclusion.
- Funding has been used to purchase all Tree's and Bulbs, and planting of sites are underway, with two sites planting completed at Thompson Avenue and Brookhouse.
- QR Codes to be displayed, with link to/and Website page, are to be developed, to provide the public with information regarding the type of plants, fruits and harvest times.

4.3 'Shop Front Improvements'.

Has met on three occasions to date. 17/1/23, 31/1/23 and 21/3/23. The initial meeting was adjourned, and officers requested to provide further information/clarity. The remaining Agenda Items were deferred to 31/1/23.

The next meeting is scheduled 29/6/23. This was initially anticipated to be the concluding meeting, however further clarity has been sought from Officers, to assist Members to confidently make recommendations regarding this Project. As a consequence, no work has commenced in relation shop front improvements to date, therefore work has ceased following decision at Annual Council.

Budget provision of £50k, allocated

4.4 'Ormskirk Market'.

No meetings have been agreed for this Task and finish Group. The Project Plan was still in its infancy, awaiting Lead officer input, prior to proposed meeting dates being put to T&FG Members.

Therefore, following Annual Council this T&FG will not commence. There was no budget allocated to this project.

4.5 All Task and Finish Group Meetings Minutes have been submitted to Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee to advise of progress. Recommendations requiring decisions during the project lifespan, and any concluding findings/recommendations were also reported to Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee for endorsement and forwarding to Council and/or Cabinet as required.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.2 No work had commenced in relation to implementing the Shop Front Improvements or Ormskirk Market Projects, therefore those T&FG's ceased with immediate effect.
- 5.3 However given the progress and commitments in relation to works, relations, consultations, and provisions, already undertaken in relation to 'Community Environmental Improvements, including Community Orchards T&FG' and the 'Litter Clearance in West Lancs, including Fly-tipping and Grot Spots T&FG', it is proposed that work continue on those two projects, until conclusion reached, with progress and conclusions being reported directly to Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee, during the 2023/24 municipal year.
- 5.4 £50k Budget allocation was allocated for Shop Front Improvements, which will remain unspent.
- 5.5 The Council are currently preparing to introduce new governance arrangements in 2024, therefore it is proposed that in order to conclude the current work programme, that no additional topics be sought for 2023/24, as there may not be sufficient time to successfully complete a further in-depth review.

6.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no significant sustainability impacts associated with this report and in particular, no significant impact on crime and disorder.

7.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no significant financial or resource implications arising from this report, should the recommendations be supported, the 50k allocation to Shop Front Improvements will be unspent.

8.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 There are no formal risks associated with this report. The Council will continue to carry out its Scrutiny work at the 2 main Overview & Scrutiny Committees.

9.1 HEALTH AND WELBEING IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no health and wellbeing 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

The decision does not have any direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and / or stakeholders. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Appendices

None