

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 15th June 2020

Present: Cllr Johnson (Chair)
Cllrs Janet Eaton, Gill, Kenyon, Marriott, Morris, Procter, Steen

In attendance: Clare Law, HR Manager
Carolyn Sharples, Committee and Member Services Manager
Jenni Cook, Committee and Member Services Officer

Also Present: Cllrs Neal, Bromley and Haworth
0 press
1 public

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE & SUBSTITUTIONS

- 1.1 Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Kempson (Cllr Steen substituting), Cllr L. Barnes, Cllr Sue Brennan (Cllr Marriott substituting) and Z. Ali (Co-opted Member).

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 6th March 2020 be approved as a correct record.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

- 4.1 The Chair confirmed that there were no urgent items of business.

5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

- 5.1 The Chair noted that she would allow questions to be asked on each item as it was discussed.

6. CHAIR'S UPDATE

- 6.1 The Chair noted as part of her update that RIPA had not been used during the last quarter.

7. QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE REPORT (JANUARY – MARCH 2020)

- 7.1 The HR Manager outlined the report and highlighted the following:-
- Clean and Green Rossendale – all projects rated 'green' with the exception of recycling. Essential services continue to be provided during the Covid-19 outbreak. Successful consultation had taken place to develop the Love

- Parks Projects, enforcement work continued and community engagement had been critical in creating a legacy to support the environment and health and wellbeing going forward.
- A Connected and Sustainable Rossendale the Welcomes Sustainable Growth – Covid-19 support had been provided to businesses, with 200 enquiries and issuing 1,327 grants worth £14.3m. Work on Spinning Point Phase 2 would not continue and the negative impact of Covid-19 on the economy endorsed this decision. A car parking strategy would be worked on. A £7m bid for the Rawtenstall Gyratory had been submitted, along with a £50k bid towards the business case for the Rossendale Rail Link.
 - The Digital Strategy had been rolled over to next year; however the in-cab technology in Operations was now fully implemented.
 - Council Tax/NNDR continued to be monitored in respect of Covid-19 impact.
 - The Planning Team had continued to determine planning applications and was one of the top performing councils in the country.
 - Proud, Health and Vibrant Rossendale – the work on Rossendale Connected had resulted in over 2,000 contacts being made with vulnerable people and a partnership of near 50 organisations were meeting regularly. The Hub had now moved into the Council building and the frequency of calls was reducing.
 - The Strategic Housing Team had assisted a record number of people, with 127 disabled facilities grants completed and support given to 400 households to prevent or relieve homelessness.
 - Corporate projects – 40% were green, 40% amber, with 20% marked as red.
 - Performance Indicators were summarised, along with compliments, complaints and corporate risks.

7.2 Members and members of the public commented as follows:-

- The LCC budget was marked as a red risk for the council, due to any impact of LCC service cuts on the Council.
- A review of projects would be carried out by the Chief Executive and some, such as Spinning Point may be taken out of future reports.
- Thanks were noted to the teams highlighted in the performance report, particularly Economic Development, Planning and Rossendale Connected.
- Sickness levels with regards to Covid-19 amongst staff were clarified.
- Discussion took place on Zoom and face-to-face meetings and the information provided by Cllr Steen would be looked into.
- Staffing arrangements were noted and it was noted that some services would need to look at moving more online, going forward.
- The impact of Covid-19 on Operations services could be monitored at the next quarterly report and if the impact were significant, they could be asked to a future O&S to update member.

Resolved:

The report and performance levels were noted.

8. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20 AND THE WORK PROGRAMME 2020/21

8.1 The Committee and Member Services Officer outlined the Annual Report and Work Programme and highlighted the following:-

- The Annual Report set out internal, external and pre-decision scrutiny that had taken place, along with the organisations that had attended O&S.
- Task and Finish work was noted, which included holiday hunger and work on suicide rates.
- A RAG status had been added to the Annual Report for Task and Finish Group recommendations. Most of these were green, with amber statuses being due to Covid-19 delays.
- The Work Programme set out an outline of work that the O&S Committee could carry out during the next municipal year. Suggestions had been received and discussed and these were noted in the Appendix.
- Members were advised they may wish to concentrate on one or two subjects and a large piece of work would be the Council's Covid-19 response.

8.2 Members and members of the public commented as follows:-

- Scrutiny in Day was discussed and it could be an idea to move it to later, to allow for greater attendance, but this would be done on an availability basis.
- No work could take place on Empty Homes/AAAW until the police investigation had concluded.

Resolved:

1. The Annual Report and Work Programme was noted.
2. The Annual Report and Work Programme would be put before Full Council in July.

9. TASK AND FINISH GROUP – SUICIDE IN ROSSENDALE: UPDATE ON RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 The HR Manager outlined the report which was an update on work carried out to implement recommendations agreed by the Task and Finish Group, with the following highlighted:-

- Of the 12 recommendations agreed by the Task and Finish Group, 9 had been implemented, with 3 ongoing. These were delayed due to the impact on Covid-19.
- PPU were able to add suicide awareness training to the Taxi Driver training and this would be implemented when the trainer was able to do so.
- Some training sessions had been postponed but would be delivered when the council was able to hold these sessions again.
- 86% of staff and 52% of members had carried out some form of suicide awareness training.
- Information obtained from Public Health England stated that Rossendale experienced 18 suspected suicides from April 2019, making it the 6th highest district in Lancashire and South Cumbria. As at 12th May 2020, there had been no suspected suicides.

- 9.2 Members and members of the public commented as follows:-
- A Samaritans notice was now installed at the bridge near the Woolpack.
 - Haslingden High had obtained funding for a Counsellor.
 - Changes of attitudes towards suicide and mental health were happening, but there was still a long way to go.

Resolved:

The update was noted.

10. THE FORWARD PLAN

- 10.1 The Forward Plan had been published with the agenda and tabled upcoming Cabinet decisions that the committee could consider for the O&S Committee.

Resolved:

The update was noted.

The meeting started at 6.30pm and finished at 7.30pm

Signed: _____

Date: _____