

MINUTES OF: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 7th March 2022

Present: Councillor Johnson (Chair)
Councillors Eaton, Foxcroft, Kempson, Kenyon, Procter, Rooke and Thompson

In attendance: Ken Masser, Chief Executive – Rossendale Leisure Trust
Adam Allen, Director of Communities
Anne Storah, Principal Planner- Forward Planning
Mandy Lewis, Director of Economic Development
Carolyn Sharples, Committee and Member Services Manager

Also Present: Councillors Adshead, Ashworth and Lythgoe.
1 member of the public
By remote access – 1 member of the public.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted from Co-opted member Z. Ali and Councillors Gill and Morris.

2. Minutes

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 1st February 2022 be approved as a correct record.

3. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Foxcroft declared a non-pecuniary interest that he was a board member of Rossendale Leisure Trust.

4. Urgent Items of Business

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

5. Question Time

A member of the public asked questions about S106 monies and it was confirmed that S106 was not formed by one pot of money. It was various commuted sums attributed to be spent on different matters according to what was set out in each individual agreement, such as highway work, schools, greenspace etc., and all with separate time limits to be spent.

In relation to affordable housing there were different types of contributions such as on site provision via a legal agreement, or contributions in lieu of a commuted sum for use on a particular site.

6. Chair's Update

6.1 At the last meeting clarification had been requested on two of the performance indicators. In relation to the number of licensed premises inspected, it was confirmed that whilst there were no licensed premises inspected, the comments in the update related to risk based inspections for compliance with the covid restrictions. Therefore the information reported was correct but needed further clarification in the comments section. The second query related to the Growth Corridor Masterplan. Management had made a decision to re-

prioritise the economic development workload so the review date of Q4 2022/23 was correct.

- 6.2 At the November meeting it was agreed that the street cleansing routes would be shared with members and it was confirmed that this would be done in the next few weeks now that the routes were working effectively.
- 6.3 At the November meeting, members discussed vehicles using Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) and asked for their oil disposal suggestions to be looked into. The oil used was produced to specific criteria based on vegetable oil so it was not possible to use waste oil from other uses. It was agreed at the Council meeting in February to fund the roll out of HVO to all vehicles and this would happen in April. This would reduce carbon emissions from all the vehicle fleet by 90 percent.

In response to comments and questions from members it was confirmed that:

- The Economic Development Team were concentrating on the Levelling-up bid which included a focus on the highway network and other transport strands which is why other work was being prioritised. This work was being undertaken with other stakeholders in line with the guidance procedure.
- The stakeholders were wider than Lancashire County Council (LCC), who were just one stakeholder of a much wider group.
- It was essential to get enough detail provided in the quarterly report performance indicator comments. Members relied on the detail of the reports to keep informed regarding service area performance and accurate explanations would be helpful to avoid misinterpretation.

ORDINARY BUSINESS

7. Rossendale Leisure Trust Annual Report 2022/23 and 2021/22 Action Plan Update

- 7.1 The Chief Executive of Rossendale Leisure Trust (RLT), Ken Masser, provided members with an update on the work of the Trust over the last year and introduced the Annual Report and key challenges for 2022/23.
- 7.2 In response to members' questions the following clarification was given:
- There were a number of new board members: 6 new directors in the last 12 months (4 women, 2 men). There were representatives for the Whitworth facilities and also other trustees with expertise in governance, diversity and inclusion.
 - Initial indications were positive regarding the impact of the new gym with positive sales for January and February, however this would need to be continually monitored over the next 12 months as contracts came to an end and due for renewal.
 - At present the new gym appeared to have a different audience.
 - It was a good addition to the health and well-being offer and whilst it would be a challenge for the Trust it had the potential to boost performance and compliment what was on offer.
 - There had been significant funding support during covid from business rates, and both government and Council grants.
 - For the current year, financial performance was better than expected however there were challenges for the coming year and still work to do on a detailed forecast with significant mitigation steps to take.
 - Sustainability was being explored as well as investment in facilities required over the next 5 year period. Sustainability would become increasingly difficult with ageing facilities.
 - Investment would make facilities more efficient and sustainable from a carbon footprint perspective.
 - The Trust has grown and absorbed additional facilities and were now reviewing the current shared IT and finance facilities which has become increasingly challenging.

- The Whitaker team and the board had been in consultation with the Arts Council in relation to becoming a National Portfolio Organisation (NPO).
- A number of reports had been circulated regarding the Holiday Activity Fund Programme.
- There was a need to review social return on investment and more work to be done on how success was measured and articulated.
- There would be community consultation/ engagement to review facility development and to look at gaps in the market.

Resolved:

The committee noted the annual report and action plan update.

8. Single Use Plastic Strategy

8.1 The committee considered the Single Use Plastic (SUP) Strategy, which was presented by the Director of Communities, Adam Allen. There were 3 key elements to the strategy: our own use and audit, events and the use of SUPs, and community use and impact.

8.2 In response to members' questions the following clarification was given:

- Notice displays were not required for every single planning application, so the number of planning notices on display using a plastic covering would be much smaller than the number of applications received.
- The Plastic Free Working Group had been incorporated into the Climate Change Group which was comprised of both senior officers and members.

The Climate Change Champion, Councillor Adshead thanked the Communities Team and those involved in the audit and preparation of the strategy and noted that the next step was implementation.

Resolved:

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommend Council to agree the Single Use Plastics Strategy.

9. Authority Monitoring Report (AMR)

9.1 The committee considered the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR), which was presented by the Principal Planner- Forward Planning, Anne Storah. The purpose of this AMR was to report on progress in preparing the (now adopted) Local Plan and the effectiveness of the planning policies in the Development Plan, which for the period covered by this AMR was the Core Strategy. With the adoption of the new Local Plan, the Core strategy has been superseded, and new Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) were being prepared and the Climate Change SPD was being prioritised. The AMR for 2021/22 would be coming to committee later in the year and with monitoring to be focussed on the new Local Plan policies.

9.2 In response to members' questions the following clarification was given:

- The delay in producing the AMR was a result of prioritising the Local Plan, resource issues, changing inspection requirements and associated work.
- Key information was still publicly available in different formats and quarterly returns were still being submitted.
- The main issue impacting on the delivery of housing had been the lack of a Local Plan and allocated sites. Other neighbouring authorities were also struggling with housing delivery.
- Developers work better where there is a Local Plan in place as there is more security when submitting planning applications on allocated sites.
- Availability of labour and supplies were impacted on during covid and the development industry was only just starting to catch up.

- Sites expected to be delivered such as Dark Lane had been put back.
- The AMR for 2021/22 would be brought to the committee in November 2022.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment, Councillor Lythgoe, thanked the Forward Planning Team and all those involved in the massive amount of work on the Local Plan and he noted the phenomenal efforts made by such a small team.

Resolved:

1. To note the contents of the Rossendale Authority Monitoring Report 2018/2019, 2019/2020 & 2020/2021.
2. To agree that the Authority Monitoring Report be brought to Overview and Scrutiny on an annual basis, reporting on delivery of the Adopted Rossendale Local Plan.

10. Adoption of Rossendale Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Assessment and Strategy

10.1 The committee considered the adoption of the Rossendale Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Assessment and Strategy, which was presented by the Principal Planner- Forward Planning, Anne Storah. This was an assessment which was not supported by capital investment, but identified where funding opportunities should be targeted.

10.2 In response to members' questions the following clarification was given:

- It would help lever in external funding, such as from the Football Foundation.
- Parking at Marl Pits had been discussed at length and feasibility would be considered.
- Parking was separate to this strategy.
- S106 needed to be fair in terms of what was asked for.
- The figures used to calculate S106 contributions required updating.
- Once the figures were updated, S106 monies should come closer to covering the cost of any loss of provision.
- The sports covered in the assessment were those identified by the guidance and what Sports England concentrated on, however other sports could have been included.
- The strategy would be monitored regularly and would be updated as new information became available.

It was agreed that the exclusion of rounders provision would be looked into. It was also noted that the adult sports focus by Sports England was predominantly on male sports.

Resolved:

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommend Council to agree the following recommendations:

1. To accept the recommendations set out in the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy, and adopt and keep up-to-date the Strategy and associated Action Plan, in order to inform the Council's policies with regard to the maintenance and provision of playing pitches and outdoor sports facilities, and assist with external funding opportunities.
2. Any future minor amendments to be delegated to the Head of Planning in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

11. Task and Finish Group Report: GP Practice Appointment Accessibility

11.1 The committee considered the Task and Finish Group Report: GP Practice Appointment Accessibility, which was presented by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Johnson.

11.2 Members' commented as follows:

- The co-operation from GPs and those involved had been positive and greatly appreciated.
- It had helped task group members fully understand appointment availability and the work would assist in keeping residents informed.
- Thanks was given to the supporting officer for pulling together a comprehensive report from the meeting discussions.
- An update on the recommendations was planned for later in the year.

Resolved:

1. That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the work carried out by the task and finish group.
2. That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the Cabinet response to the recommendations as detailed at 3.4.
3. That updates on the recommendations, progress and work carried out are reported back to a future committee meeting in line with the suggested timescales.

12. The Forward Plan

Members were updated on the Forward Plan.

Resolved:

The update was noted.

(The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 7.45pm)

Signed.....

(Chair)

Date