

MINUTES OF: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 16th January 2023

Present: Councillor Johnson (Chair)
Councillors Coogan, Janet Eaton, Foxcroft, McMahon, Marriott, Morris,
Rooke, Procter and Woods (sub)

In attendance: David Moore, Interim Director of Economic Development
Joanna Wood, Committee and Member Services Officer
Inspector Valentine, Lancashire Constabulary
Angela Stuttard, Together Housing
Wendy Malone, Calico
Simon Parry, Your Housing

Also Present: Councillors Ashworth, Hughes and Lythgoe
1 member of the public
4 members of the public via Zoom.
1 press

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillor Thompson (Councillor Woods subbing).

2. Minutes

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting on 14th November 2022 be approved as a correct record.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Urgent Items of Business

There were no urgent items of business.

5. Question Time

There were no public questions.

6. Chair's Update

6.1 A briefing note had been circulated to committee members for information only regarding GP practice appointment accessibility. This was to keep members updated on the progress of the recommendations of the task and finish group. It was noted that some recommended were still ongoing, and the committee would continue to monitored progress.

6.2 In relation to queries raised at the previous meeting, an update was provided on the situation with the toilets on the bus station regarding the new food outlet. It was confirmed that the food outlet was installing their own toilets as part of the fit out.

6.3 When the Authority Monitoring Report was presented at the last meeting, it was agreed to find out the reasons for the approval of two hot food takeaways. It was confirmed that both

applications were approved prior to the adoption of the Local Plan in December 2021, so they were assessed against the policies of the Core Strategy.

ORDINARY BUSINESS

7. Annual Update from Lancashire Constabulary

- 7.1 Inspector Valentine provided the committee with an annual update which included the current command and division structure, number of service calls and time taken to answer calls, time taken to arrive for Grade 1 and Grade 2 calls, crime and non-crime statistics, anti-social behaviour update and an update on the local priorities for Rossendale.
- 7.2 In response to members' questions the following clarification was given:
- The categorisation of non-crime was explained in relation to domestic violence. For example, when a call was taken in relation to an argument heard in a neighbouring property, it would be classed as non-crime. However, once an officer had attended and been able to assess the situation, the classification may change to being crime related, depending on the specific circumstances.
 - In relation to anti-social driving, to be able to prosecute evidence such as CCTV footage was required, as opinion could not be used to make a prosecution.
 - Clarification was given on the staffing structure and the changes that had occurred affecting the policing numbers. A recruitment drive was currently taking place.
 - Shopper engagement was low when the Police were available in the supermarkets. This would continue to be monitored going forward.

Resolved:

The committee noted the annual update, and thanked Inspector Valentine for attending. Formal thanks was given for all the hard work that the Police Force in Rossendale do.

8. Housing Updates

- 8.1 Together Housing, Calico and Your Housing representatives provided the committee with housing updates regarding monitoring the condition of their housing stock, data held regarding the number of properties not meeting the Decent Homes Standard, and the robustness of their complaints processes for those reporting issues with housing conditions. They also incorporated responses to specific questions that had been submitted in advance of the meeting.
- 8.2 In response to additional members' questions the following clarification was given:
- In relation to the Ombudsman the majority of recommendations had been completed, there were just two outstanding.
 - The complaints process/policy had been changed recently and reviewed by the Housing Ombudsman. A new policy had been in place since 1st December.
 - It was confirmed that customers were on the scrutiny review groups.
 - An internal scrutiny review was set to start in April.
 - Improvement teams were in place as well as a risk register to help prevent recurring issues.
 - Gas Safety checks took place in each property once a year and all staff are trained to complete a "property sweep" whilst attending to help flag any other issues within the properties.
 - Leaflets and face to face discussions were taking place with customers in relation to damp prevention.
 - In relation to hardship, they were working with customers and other organisations who may be able to help them. They were also signposting customers to other sources of help.

- The Housing Associations confirmed they would be willing to attend a further meeting once the information had been digested.

The Housing Associations confirmed that a full written response to the questions asked would be sent to the Council by Wednesday and would include responses to any follow up questions raised at the meeting.

Resolved:

The committee noted the update, and thanked all the Housing Association representatives for attending.

9. The Forward Plan

9.1 Members were updated on the Forward Plan and Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for February.

Resolved:

The Forward Plan and Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme items were noted.

(The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 8.30pm)

Signed.....
(Chair)

Date