

SCRUTINY

PROGRESS REPORT ON PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS OF TASK AND FINISH GROUPS

MAY 2010

Introduction

Each year scrutiny reviews are scheduled into the annual work programme for our Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Groups, who conduct reviews by gathering evidence on the topics they are investigating from local people and external organisations.

Once the review has taken place, a final meeting of the Task and Finish Group is organised to bring all the findings together into a formal report with recommendations for improvement.

The report is presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee for approval prior to going to the appropriate Committee for a decision (Cabinet, Council, outside organisation). The appropriate Committee would formulate a response to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee within two months.

In order to ensure that actions arising from previous Overview and Scrutiny Task Group recommendation were implemented, the Scrutiny Support Officer circulated a form asking Officers for a progress update on the recommendations.

All the Officers that were requested to provide an update gave information on the actions and progress to date.

Overview and Scrutiny will now continue to undertake this evaluation on a yearly basis.

Responses to the recommendations contained in each of the following Task and Finish Group reports are detailed in the table on the following page.

- Dog Fouling
- Public Conveniences
- Litter Bins
- Highways
- Grass Cutting

Task and Finish Group	Recommendations	Progress Update
<p>Dog Fouling agreed by Cabinet in June 2009</p>	<p>That the Council would produce a dog fouling policy to be adopted at a future Council Meeting.</p> <p>That the Dog Warden Service be reviewed and a partnership approach be considered to include neighbourhood authorities.</p> <p>That as soon as control orders were issued, a promotional campaign be conducted to raise awareness of being a responsible dog owner (Could you also tell O & S if/how many enforcement orders have been made.</p> <p>That the 'Doing it Right' campaign be integrated into the Pride of Rossendale Initiative.</p>	<p>Yes the policy has been produced but had not yet been presented to Policy Overview and Scrutiny or Cabinet.</p> <p>Discussion ongoing with Pendle and Burnley. Out of hours and daytime kenneling service is currently out to tender.</p> <p>We have issued one fixed penalty notice. Staff have been conducting proactive patrols speaking to dog owners about responsible behavior. Animal Wardens provided experienced staff from Liverpool to accompany our staff when they were patrolling.</p> <p>Instead of caught doing it right, the staff have been out and about chatting to dog owners about dog control orders and giving out dog bags.</p>

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<p>Public Conveniences – agreed by Cabinet in 2008</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the opening times of public conveniences throughout the Borough be extended to inc Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holiday, where possible. 3. That consideration be given to the possibility of re-opening the Crawshawbooth, Edenfield and Bacup facilities in the future. 4. That consideration be given to asking the traders of Bacup Market to allow the public the use of their facilities. 5. That the six month pilot of the Community Toilet Scheme be approved. 6. That consideration be given to a rolling programme of painting and upgrading of public conveniences throughout the Borough. 7. That consideration be given to the future management of facilities with continuous resources being made available to improve and maintain the facilities. 	<p>Budget provision was not made.</p> <p>Status quo still remains.</p> <p>Bacup Market toilets being used on Market days</p> <p>3 month successful pilot in Bacup. Hope to be rolled out in the future. Sign being put up at Bacup toilets indicating where people can access the Community Toilet Scheme</p> <p>No specific changes made to the maintenance programme.</p> <p>No specific changes made to the maintenance programme.</p>

Task and Finish Group	Recommendations	Progress Update
<p>Litter Bins Task and Finish Group agreed by Cabinet in October 2007</p>	<p>That the Glasdon Topsy Jubilee bin be approved as the option to use.</p> <p>That the allocated budget of £20,000 be used to renew defective bins highlighted on the litter bins survey over the next year.</p> <p>That a programme of replacing bins and re-siting bins be developed throughout the Borough. All bins removed will, where possible, be refurbished and used elsewhere in the Borough where required.</p> <p>Where possible the sponsorship of litter bins be explored, particularly in areas where businesses are causing litter problems.</p> <p>That the Area Teams make contact with local businesses to encourage them to promote anti-littering messages to reduce packaging, in addition to promoting the adoption of voluntary codes of practice that may assist them to maintain a cleaner and greener environment.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>No - In light of the current economic climate it was felt that businesses are struggling to make ends meet and survive. Where businesses are causing litter problems they will be spoken to about clearing up outside their premises.</p> <p>This is an ongoing process. The Area Teams continue to patrol and voluntary codes of practice are considered if appropriate. McDonalds have recently signed up to a draft agreement in Rising Bridge and public houses have been spoken to about cigarette litter as a couple of examples.</p>

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	<p>Bins will be installed using the criteria outlined before and in consultation with Members, Operations and the Portfolio Holder for Environment.</p> <p>That the Executive of Business considers attaching relevant conditions to applications submitted by businesses that might generate litter, particularly the provision of litter bins.</p> <p>Dog bins to be phased out on highways and only provided in parks or on open spaces. Dog bins in need of repair will be replaced by litter bins that serve a dual purpose. Bins will be clearly marked with 'dog waste permitted' to raise awareness.</p> <p>It is recommended that dual litter recycle bins not be implemented or pursued at the moment in time.</p> <p>That pole mounted bins be provided only in areas where it is not possible to site free standing bins - on narrow footpaths.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Further clarification needed from legal services</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>

Task and Finish Group	Recommendations	Progress Update
<p>Highways Task and Finish Group presented to Lancashire Locals in early 2007</p>	<p>That Lancashire Local Rossendale be asked to consider conclusion of the A680, Rochdale Road in the surface dressing programme, once the development of the wind farm is complete.</p> <p>That Lancashire Local Rossendale be asked to consider extending the maintenance scheme on the C701 to include Lomas Lane.</p> <p>That Lancashire Local Rossendale be asked to ensure that the B6214 Helmshore Road, works be completed as a matter of urgency as this issue was also raised by residents at a recent Haslingden Area Forum.</p> <p>That following recent work undertaken on the C707 Fearn Moss, the County Council be asked to inspect the site and resolve the surface water drainage issues.</p> <p>That Lancashire Local Rossendale be asked to consider the re-location of a bus-stop which is directly opposite a traffic island on Burnley Road, Loveclough, which is causing traffic congestion.</p> <p>That Lancashire Local Rossendale ask an Officer of the County Council to undertake an inspection of the whole of Eden Avenue and that</p>	<p>Rochdale Road re-surfaced in 2009</p> <p>This was not done. Local repairs have and will be carried out as necessary.</p> <p>This has been completed.</p> <p>There are currently no outstanding surface water drainage issues that LCC are aware of.</p> <p>This will be done as part of the X43 QBC works due to be undertaken in 2011/12.</p> <p>Eden Avenue has been inspected and any necessary repairs have been completed. It is included in the inspection</p>

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	<p>the footpaths be included in the maintenance programme.</p> <p>That Lancashire Local Rossendale be requested to keep residents of Stubbins Vale Road informed of any procedures that are being prepared for dealing with private streets and that the scheme be progressed as a matter of urgency.</p> <p>That Lancashire Local Rossendale be requested to consider changing the current zebra crossing near Rawtenstall Market to a pelican crossing.</p> <p>That Lancashire Local Rossendale ask an Officer of the County Council to undertake an inspection of the roads on Tonnacliffe Way (Horsefield Avenue and Bell Isle Avenue, Whitworth) and Highgate Lane due to their deterioration.</p> <p>That Lancashire Local Rossendale be asked to consider looking at the provision of a dropped-kerb under the railway bridge in Stubbins.</p>	<p>regime and is inspected on a regular basis.</p> <p>The scheme is being progressed and the local County Councillor and district Councillor are being kept up to date.</p> <p>This was completed in 2009.</p> <p>Tonacliffe Way was resurfaced in 2008. There are no plans to resurface Highgate Lane.</p> <p>This has been investigated but due to local topography and the presence of undertakers apparatus it has not been possible to provide the dropped crossing.</p>

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	<p>That Lancashire Local Rossendale be requested to include the pavements and road on Redwood Drive, Cherry Crescent and Craven Street in a future programme of work for improvements.</p> <p>That the annual schedule of works for 2007/08 be circulated to each Borough Councillor so that they are aware of work in their wards once the information has been reported to Lancashire Local Rossendale in March 2007.</p>	<p>Work to repair surfaces on Redwood Drive and Cherry Crescent has been completed. No current proposals for Craven Street.</p> <p>This is circulated via a quarterly Highways Bulletin which members now received through Democratic Services from Jerry Smith.</p>

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<p>GRASS CUTTING TASK AND FINISH GROUP</p> <p>1. That consideration be given to purchasing a sidearm flail (The Committee understand that the Council are in the process of discussion with LCC on this and would like an update if possible)</p>	<p>Yes. However the Task and Finish recommendations have budget implications. Any financial implications outside the Council's approved budget would require approval of full council. However, the Councils approved Medium Term Financial Strategy has agreed to Key assumption 1, being "no supplementary estimates will be approved which commit to costs in future years".</p>	<p>1. Whilst it is recognised that the purchase of the equipment would be beneficial to extending the grass cutting service currently provided by the council, the use of capital or revenue expenditure to purchase new equipment, at the present time is not an option available to the council.</p> <p>The Council's capital programme is approved annually each year as part of the budget process. The 2009/10 programme was approved in Feb 2009 and was agreed on the understanding that adequate capital resources in the form of capital receipts would be forthcoming. Financing for the capital programme was going to be a challenge for the Council and this has proved to be the case. For example the Council anticipated £200k form receipts associated to the disposal of Green Vale Homes housing stock, however at the time of writing there have been no disposals and therefore no receipts.</p> <p>Cabinet and other Members review this situation frequently and Cabinet have set up a separate Capital Monitoring Group to review</p>

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		<p>progress on the capital programme and the delivery of capital receipts.</p> <p>2. Any recommendations for changes or additions to the capital programme would normally be made during the annual budget process in order to get Member consensus on spending in line with Council priorities.</p> <p>3. The Council's capital and revenue programme is approved annually each year as part of the budget process. This is around February.</p> <p>4. Due to the potential for increase in revenue expenditure it's unlikely that purchase can be justified. Further recommendations are detailed in the public realm report.</p>
<p>2. That the Operations Manager considers increasing the number of cuts by both LCC and RBC (The Committee understand that the Council are in the process of discussion with LCC on this and would like an update if possible)</p>	<p>Yes, Rossendale has increased its grass cutting regime in cemeteries by replacing the need to plant annuals with perennials as part of the grave gardening service. The extra labour saved has been used to increase the regime from 10 to 12 cuts</p> <p>Further proposals are also in place to enhance the standards of grass maintenance is to target areas such as Town Centres and areas of high footfall and increase the frequency of maintenance</p>	<p>1. Both Rossendale and Lancashire are working more closely together to ensure that the standard of grass maintenance is consistent across the valley, Currently Rossendale undertake between 3 and 15 cuts per season depending on the location. Lancashire County undertakes 8 cuts per annum.</p> <p>To increase the quantity of cuts untimely a re-profiling of resources needs to be undertaken and or additional revenue required. So far,</p>

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	<p>whilst reducing areas of outlying areas, where a reduction in frequency may not have a counter negative affect and may also improve biodiversity</p>	<p>Lancashire County Council, as part of the negotiations surrounding the residual highways agreement have confirmed that for the next three years they will contribute additional finance to the Pride in Rossendale project. It's anticipated that some of this money can be used to increase the grass frequency to match Rossendale's.</p> <p>2 and 3. The need to review and re-profile profiling of resources is an ongoing process.</p> <p>4. Rossendale is working with LCC on the Public Realm Project. A Report is due to be presented to Cabinet in June.</p>
<p>3. That a co-ordinated approach to grass cutting between all organisations (The Committee understand that the Council are in the process of discussion with LCC on this and would like an update if possible)</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>1. The Lead officer within the operations department is the operations manager; this was implemented as a consequence of the recent organisational restructure. Since this change both Lancashire County Council and Rossendale Borough Council have been in regular contract to ensure the schedules are matched as closely as possible. To make this information more accessible it is proposed that in future the information is available on the website.</p> <p>With regards to Greenvale, recently grass cutting been added to the agenda as part</p>

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		<p>of the partnership monitoring process, with the operations manager now attending regularly. As yet no schedule information has been provided by Greenvale, although a number of meetings have been held with the Environmental Services Manager at Greenvale with a view adopting a joined up approach to grass maintenance.</p> <p>The standard of maintenance provided by the Highways Agency is unlikely to be improved due to the sheer size of the road network they have to maintain. In addition the Highways Agency have quoted that “Wide areas of grassland may appear unmanaged however programmed cutting, over a period years, is undertaken to ensure the balance between the unsightly and unmanaged, and biodiversity. Grassland is a wonderful habitat for many species, including small mammals, reptiles, birds and insects. It also provides a rich tapestry of wildflowers including orchid, oxeye daisy and campion. “ Given that the highways agency only have responsibility for the A56 and A682, the impact of them not increasing the standard is minimal.</p>

Task and Finish Group	Recommendations	Progress Update
		2. All Complete.
4. That the Council and Highways Agency work together to look into sponsorship to improve the Rising Bridge roundabout	No	<p>1. Rossendale is currently working with both the Highways Agency and Lancashire County Council with regards to sponsorship. During this period improvements have been made to the exit and entrances to the Rising Bridge roundabout with dialogue ongoing for improving the centre island.</p> <p>2. Rossendale still need to agree a way forward with the Highways Agency</p> <p>3. We anticipate this being completed 2010/11.</p>
5. That the Council look further into how sponsorship money is collected, allocated and utilised for all roundabouts throughout the Borough	Yes	<p>1. Lancashire County Council receives an income from the sponsorship of some Roundabouts, and whilst no actual figure has been provided it is estimated that this figure is c.£3,000 pa. The current allocation of this income is a 50/50 split between Rossendale and Lancashire. Rossendale Borough Council currently receives c.£1,500 pa in roundabout sponsorship.</p> <p>The current c.£1,500 pa advertising revenue forms part of the Operations team overall budget and is allocated to the overall maintenance of all green</p>

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		<p>space</p> <p>2. All Complete.</p>
<p>6. That consideration by given to looking at new ways of working to provide flexibility of working practice</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>1. Rossendale has increased its grass cutting regime in cemeteries by replacing the need to plant annuals with perennials as part of the grave gardening service. The extra labour saved has been used to increase the regime from 10 to 12 cuts</p> <p>Further proposals are also in place to enhance the standards of grass maintenance is to target areas such as Town Centres and areas of high footfall and increase the frequency of maintenance whilst reducing areas of outlying areas, where a reduction in frequency may not have a counter negative affect and may also improve biodiversity.</p> <p>Discussions are being held with Green Vale on Maintenance exchange on a <i>quid pro quo</i> basis.</p> <p>2. Ongoing.</p>

Recommendation

That Members note the work undertaken to progress with the Recommendations of the previous Task and Finish Groups.