

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Date of Meeting:** 16<sup>th</sup> January 2017

**Present:** Cllr Lythgoe (Chair)  
Cllrs Lynda Barnes, Bromley, Janet Eaton, Johnson, Kempson, Kenyon, Lythgoe, McMahon, Robertson and Ms Z Ali (Co-opted Member)

**In Attendance:** Jenni Cook, Committee & Member Services Officer  
Ken Masser, Rossendale Leisure Trust  
Christine Ashcroft, CLAW  
Lisa McDowell, CLAW  
Cllr Alyson Barnes  
Cllr Oakes  
Cllr Walmsley  
2 members of the public  
1 member of the press

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### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence had been submitted.

### 2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

**Resolved:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2017 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

### 4. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business.

### 5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chair agreed to deviate from the Procedure for Public Speaking and allow the members of the public to ask questions as the reports were discussed.

### 6. CHAIR'S UPDATE

6.1 The amendments requested to the HR Policies at the last meeting had now been done and information on this had been circulated.

6.2 The Chair noted that a member of the public, Mr Atherton, had raised a questions at both the last O&S and Council regarding the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) and

this had been answered in writing by the Planning Manager and the Forward Planning Officer. Mr Atherton noted that this response meant that the public would have to look through a large amount of information online once the AMR was published.

- 6.3 A date needed to be agreed for the Co-opted Member, Ms Ali, the HR Manager, Councillor Lythgoe and Councillor Essex to meet to consider Equality Impact Assessments and the Equality Policy.

## **7. POLICE PRESENTATION – CRIME FIGURES**

- 7.1 Unfortunately Inspector Holgate was not present and the crime figures were unable to be presented.

### **Resolved:**

That Inspector Holgate is invited to the next meeting of Overview and Scrutiny.

## **8. LEISURE REVIEW**

### Rossendale Leisure Trust (RLT)

- 8.1 Ken Masser introduced the report that had been circulated with the agenda and provided an overview of the main areas of the Trust's activity over the past year and noted how efficiently the leisure services were run when compared to the percentage grants received by other local authorities. He highlighted the challenges posed by the national minimum wage and the reorganisation of the management team to put the Trust in an efficient position. It was noted that a large amount of Trust employees were Rossendale Residents.
- 8.2 The success of the Grip and Go was a particular highlight of the year, with customers coming from as far afield as Birmingham and even London. A new project using the outdoor space at Cribden House School was in progress and this would provide outdoor adventure activities, including paintballing.
- 8.3 Members and members of the public raised questions and discussed the update as follows:-
- The report was a useful overview of the key achievements and future plans of the Trust, and the Trust was on track to achieve a zero grant position 2 years ahead of schedule.
  - The Cribden House project sounded excellent and the Trust would update Overview and Scrutiny on this once it was up and running. It was further noted that paintballing was planned for the site; however this would take some time due to health and safety legislation.
  - The Trust was well linked in with the some tourist matters, in particular the Adrenaline Valley plans, however it was noted that the Trust could look into creating links with hospitality providers to work in with a tourist package. The Chair and the Leader of the Council commented on the excellent work done by Trust Management and Board and the good relationship that now exists between the Trust and the Council.

- The Trust were asked if accounts could be provided and it was agreed that last year's audited accounts could be circulated and the current accounts would also be circulated, once audited.

#### Community Leisure Association Whitworth (CLAW)

- 8.4 Lisa McDowell provided members with an update on activity at the Riverside and noted that they had won the 'Best Kept Public Hall' competition in 2016. Investment had taken place within the venue on new lounge/reception furniture and further investment of approximately £18k was planned with regards to new carpets throughout.
- 8.5 It was noted that the 2016/17 financial year figures for events were slightly disappointing due to poor attendance and cancellations, however for the first time in several years the New Year's Eve event had sold out, with an increase in bar takings. For the 2017/18 financial year, there was already an increase in wedding bookings and uptake of the wedding packages offered. Five school proms were booked in with another two expected and events which bring their own followings, such as Gin Festivals were being looked into.
- 8.6 Members and members of the public raised questions and discussed the Riverside update as follows:-
- The Riverside worked with the Whitworth Tourism Committee and had hosted the Sports Awards in 2016. Ken Masser noted that attendees at the event had been impressed with the quality and professionalism of the venue.
  - To further lift income boxing events were planned which was another event with its own following.
  - The impact of St Mary's Chambers was discussed; however this had not have much effect on the Riverside as a lot of their bookings came from the Rochdale/Greater Manchester area.
  - The pie charts provided within the report were referenced and the actual figures for bookings would be provided.
  - In terms of diversity, the Riverside hosted Asian Weddings and Hennas and it was noted that work could be done to tie in with other diversity dates and events such as Chinese New Year, Black History Month etc. For future figures, Lisa agreed to try and provide a breakdown with regards to diversity.
- 8.7 Christine Ashcroft provided members with an update on the Leisure Centre and swimming pool facilities and progress over the last 12 months. Financial information was circulated to members. She paid tribute to the volunteer work and community events that the leisure centre is involved in, such as the Skyline Walk and the Sports Festival and in particular the work of Mr Joe Furtardo.
- 8.8 The Sports Council had signed the lease on Leavengreave Sports Pitch and it was expected that the leisure centre would handle the bookings for this facility once up and running. It would take approximately 12 months to bring this up to standard.
- 8.9 Significant investment had taken place, with £41,485 (plus VAT) spend on new changing rooms and £8k for a new hyproliser, which had been met by reserves. It was noted that CLAW had been informed that they were not able to capitalise the changing room costs. Further investment was required with regards to an air

handling system, as this would tackle the condensation problem, with the knock on effect that the heating costs for the pool would then subside.

8.10 Members and members of the public raised questions and discussed the CLAW update as follows:-

- Councillor Alyson Barnes agreed to pick up why CLAW had been told they could not carry out works via the Council to offset VAT with the Head of Finance.
- The Sports Council had taken over the lease of Leavengreave Pitch and this was at no cost to CLAW. It was noted that the FA had taken soil samples of the pitch and changing rooms would be required on the site. Grant funding would need to be looked into for this.
- Discussion took place on school swimming and this provided benefits to the pool facility, as well as to children learning to swim. It was noted that it was part of the national curriculum that children were able to swim 25 metres before they attended High School, however this was not often the case. The pool also provided group and one-to-one lessons.
- The Chair thanked the CLAW representatives for their work done in putting the reports together and for attending the meeting.

8.11 Rossendale Leisure Trust and CLAW were thanked for their work and it was noted that it was important to support the community via the provision of leisure facilities.

**Resolved:**

That the updates are noted.

**9. DRUG AND ALCOHOL PROVISION IN ROSSENDALE TASK AND FINISH GROUP REPORT**

9.1 Councillor Robertson introduced the Task and Finish Group Report which had looked into the provision of services in Rossendale for people with drug and alcohol problems. The Group had spoken to local service providers, being Inspire, Young Adaction and the Council's Housing Options Team and a visit had taken place to the Inspire facility at Hyndburn.

9.2 Following the meetings and visits, recommendations had been made which included the provision of a room in the One Stop Shop to allow Inspire to hold weekly outreach sessions and that Inspire and Young Adaction provide more promotional literature to the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and the Council.

9.3 Members and members of the public raised questions and discussed the report as follows:-

- The AB&D Centre in Bacup was suitable for use by Inspire and this information would be passed on and it was noted that some work was being done via the recovery centre at Stubblelee.
- Accommodation within Rawtenstall was discussed and it was noted that there was a mobile service; however the use of a building was required. The Unitarian Church on Bank Street was suggested and Inspire would be informed of this building.

- Discussion took place on people presenting having taken novel psychoactive substances (NPS) and it was noted that the ambulance service dealt with many of these cases. Inspire was a service for those who wanted to stop taking substances.
- It was noted that substance abuse was rife in many communities including the BME community and work needed to take place at grassroots level with marginalised groups.
- The figure of 800-1000 homeless cases each year was queried. It was noted that the definition of 'homeless' used by the Council's Housing Options Team and the public perception of homelessness probably differed. The Housing Options Team would be asked to provide clarity on these figures at the next meeting.
- It was noted that it would be useful to have the professionals involved in the reports at meetings in order that they can answer queries.
- Facilities for young people were queried and it was noted that services were provided by Young Adaction up to the age of 25 and it was not thought that there was a lower limit on the age at which help would be provided.

9.4 The Chair noted that the report could be accepted in principle, subject to some minor formatting changes. Members should let Jenni Cook have any comments on the report.

**Resolved:**

That the Committee approves the Drug and Alcohol Task and Finish Group Report and recommendations in principle and following the Chair's final approval, the report will be sent to the organisations who contributed to the report for their comments and then to Cabinet Agenda Setting for a formal response.

**10. REVIEW OF THE 101 SERVICE TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

10.1 Councillor Walmsley introduced the Task and Finish Group Report which had looked into the service provision, following concerns raised about response times to 101 calls and the subsequent increase in 999 calls.

10.2 A useful visit had taken place to the 101 headquarters at Hutton and the 101 officers had been extremely open and honest to members about the challenges faced and solutions. Recruitment of permanent staff was taking place to provide stability and continuity and more links were being formed with mental health services.

10.3 Recommendations had been made to the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Cabinet/Council with regards to targets and in particular investment into modern systems that link into technology and CCTV infrastructure.

10.4 Members and members of the public raised questions and discussed the report as follows:-

- A collaborative approach to CCTV was required with the police and the Council.
- An update was requested in September 2017 to see if the recruitment put in place had made a difference.

- Councillor Alyson Barnes requested that this report go to Cabinet for a formal response.

10.5 The Chair noted that the report could be accepted in principle, subject to some minor formatting changes. Members should let Jenni Cook have any comments on the report.

10.6 Thanks were noted to the former Scrutiny Officer, Pat Couch and the elected members and colleagues that had taken part in this work.

**Resolved:**

That the Committee approves the report and recommendations in principle and, following the Chair's final approval, that the report be sent to Cabinet, the Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner for comments.

**11. PORTFOLIO HOLDER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES – PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR REGENERATION AND LEISURE**

11.1 Councillor Alyson Barnes provided the committee with an overview of her roles and responsibilities in relation to her role as the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Leisure. Since 2011 the focus had been primarily on investing in and regenerating town centre areas and it was noted that this often took a long time. Areas such as Waterfoot and Bacup were starting to improve and the Bacup THI project was ongoing.

11.2 Councillor Barnes outlined how the Council had taken the approach of investing a small amount of money in order to bring in large amount of grant funding, for example £200k had been used for Bacup THI to bring in £2m of funding. In addition £2k had been invested into the Rawtenstall to Whitworth cycleway project, and this had brought in £2m of investment.

11.3 Work was taking shape in Rawtenstall town centre with regards to the old town hall building and the bus station, and also on the New Hall Hey Site. Once the town hall building was renovated, Green Vale Homes would move in; giving them a presence in the town centre.

11.4 It was the aim of the Council to work with local businesses in an approachable manner and regular meetings took place with the East Lancs Chamber of Commerce and work was taking place to encourage businesses to expand and remain within the Borough. Solomons was used as a good example of this.

11.5 Work was ongoing with leisure partners, as had previously been outlined. In addition to working with Ski Rossendale, the Council worked closely with the Whitaker in terms of supporting them with some funding and support with lottery bids. A bid had been submitted to utilise the outbuildings into an Art Centre. Work was ongoing on the Trailhead Centre and Councillor Barnes was confident that this project would be delivered.

11.6 Works on the town centre were outlined and it was anticipated that hoardings would be up on site by the end of January. The following end dates were also provided:-

- February 2018 – Old town hall renovation complete and Green Vale Homes onsite.
- May 2018 – Phase 2 of the bus station works would be ongoing.

11.7 Lancashire County Council had released its property strategy and it was confirmed that Bacup Library would not close and move and there was confidence that Whitworth Library would also remain.

11.8 Members and members of the public raised questions and discussed the update as follows:-

- It was noted that a lot of hard work had taken place by councillors and officers.
- The achievements listed were impressive and it was often easy to forget the positives that had been achieved.
- Members enquired if an improvement had been made with regards to shop facilities in Bacup and it was noted that the THI project was only half way through and would take time to complete. The issue of empty buildings in the town was being address, and it was noted that many of the significant buildings were in private ownership.
- The Waterfoot arcade was discussed and it was noted that this was, again, in private ownership.
- Discussion took place on encouraging self-sufficiency with regards to leisure and heritage partners and it was noted that there would always be a role for the Council in terms of working together and promoting Rossendale.

**Resolved:**

The update was noted.

**12. THE FORWARD PLAN**

12.1 The Committee noted the information within the Forward Plan and agreed that there were sufficient items on the agenda for the next meeting. The next meeting would focus on the 2017/18 budget setting.

**Resolved:**

The information was noted.

**The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and closed at 8.10pm**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_