

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT TEAM
HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, NELSON
ON 19TH JULY, 2016**

PRESENT –

Councillor K. Turner – Chairman (In the Chair)

Councillors

<i>G. Adam</i>	<i>K. Hartley</i>
<i>M. Adams</i>	<i>N. McEvoy</i>
<i>W. Blackburn</i>	<i>D. Whalley</i>
<i>S. Cockburn-Price</i>	<i>S. Wicks</i>

Officers in attendance

<i>P. Mousdale</i>	<i>Corporate Director</i>
<i>V. Green</i>	<i>Financial Services Manager</i>
<i>S. Simm</i>	<i>Revenues Manager</i>
<i>G. Whitehead</i>	<i>Community Protection and Localities Manager</i>
<i>L. Rowland</i>	<i>Committee Administrator</i>



11. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Members were reminded of the legal requirements concerning the declaration of interests and that whipping declarations were also required.

12. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions from members of the public.

13. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 24th May, 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the following addition to the resolution of minute 6 (Youth engagement review planning) –

- (4) That Nelson and Colne College be asked to take an active part in the work of the Panel, by assisting in the organisation of individual meetings.

14. COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

The Council's Lead for Community Safety gave a presentation on the work of the Community Safety Partnership over the last six months. He reminded the Team of the priorities for Pendle as detailed in the Partnership Plan 2016-2019 and provided a brief update on each. Crime figures for the year to April 2016 and from April to June 2016 were also presented.

He continued by providing details on the Burglary Reduction Programme; DNA Scheme in Nelson Town Centre; Organised Crime Project; use of new anti-social behaviour powers; Anti-social Behaviour Risk Assessment Conference (ASBRAC); and Prevent training for frontline staff.

He concluded the presentation by providing information on the challenges ahead, which included the uncertain future of Domestic Violence Services.

Following the presentation he answered questions on a number of issues and participated in discussions particularly regarding the active shop radio scheme in Barnoldswick and the demise of similar schemes in other areas of Pendle; and the restorative justice scheme. It was also suggested that a similar event to that hosted in November of last year be arranged on a 6 monthly basis to communicate the work of the Partnership and encourage volunteers to get involved.

15. LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP THEMATIC GROUPS REPORT

The Neighbourhood Services Manager submitted a report which provided an update on progress of the Sustainable Communities Strategy Thematic Groups for the period June 2015 to June 2016. The report included detailed information on the Pendle Health and Wellbeing Group; Burnley and Pendle Children's Partnership Board; Pendle Community Safety Partnership; and the Vision Board. This was to be considered at the next meeting of the Executive.

It was noted that the beginning of the report referred specifically to health and social care issues and it was felt that it would be more appropriate for this information to be submitted to the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Panel for consideration.

RESOLVED

That the Neighbourhood Services Manager be asked to report the health and social care elements of this annual report to the next meeting of the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Panel.

16. REVIEW MONITORING

Promoting Pendle

Further to a request at the January meeting the Team was advised that, following a meeting of the Task and Finish Group established to deal with issues raised during a recent Corporate Peer Challenge, an Action Plan had been developed. This had been approved by Council and, as a result, a Promoting Pendle Strategy was being developed. This would be presented to a future meeting of the Team.

17. REVIEW PLANNING

Behaviour of Debt Enforcement Officers

Further to a review of the behaviour of debt enforcement officers being included in the Team's work programme, the Financial Services Manager and Revenues Manager presented a report for consideration.

It was explained that the Council's council tax and non-domestic rate 'billing, collection and enforcement policies' had been reviewed in 2014, with revised policies formally adopted by

Council in December of that year. The policies included the requirement for enforcement agents to follow a strict code of practice, to be agreed with the Council.

The Revenues Manager explained in detail the collection and recovery process from the initial billing stage right through to the expensive and laborious process of committal to prison and clarified the point at which the debt was referred to enforcement agents.

It was explained that enforcement activity was governed by government legislation, regulation and a code of practice for members of the Civil Enforcement Association and it was intended to support this with the adoption of a local code of practice.

A draft local code of practice had been prepared in consultation with Liberata who provided the Council's services in respect of the billing, collection and recovery of council tax and non-domestic rates and the firms that currently provided debt recovery services, via Liberata, to the Council. This was submitted as appendix A to the report but in doing so it was acknowledged that it needed further work.

The Team considered the draft local code and discussed various elements including how the draft code was originally framed; how compliance with the code would be monitored and any breaches addressed; training of enforcement agents; identifying vulnerability; level of liaison between Liberata and the firms that provide debt recovery services; customer complaints; fees charged; and how the collection rate was measured.

Although it was necessary for the Council to have a policy in place for enforcement activity, it was stressed that engagement at an early stage was preferable. Members were also encouraged to contact the Revenues Manager directly with any concerns.

RESOLVED

That, whilst recognising further work was required on the document, the broad outline of the draft Enforcement Agent Code of Practice be recommended for approval.

18. ANNUAL EMISSIONS REPORT

The Strategic Director submitted the Council's annual emissions report for approval. The report detailed emissions from the Council's operations which had been captured within one of the following three categories –

- Fuel used in boilers, furnaces or turbines
- Consumption of purchased electricity
- Staff business travel

Overall, the annual performance had been encouraging, showing year on year reductions for the building stock and transport fleet. It was noted that further analysis of staff travel data would be carried out, as this had increased over the year.

Whilst discussing the content of the report, Councillor Hartley offered the use of a Thermal Imaging Camera owned by Barnoldswick Town Council to detect heat leaks from buildings.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the annual emissions report be approved and published on the Council website.
- (2) That all Parish and Town Councils of the Borough be invited to contact Councillor Hartley if they wished to make use of the Thermal Imaging Camera.

19. POLICE AND CRIME PANEL UPDATE

In the absence of the Council's representative on the Lancashire Police and Crime Panel, there was no update on the work of the Panel.

20. LCC HEALTH SCRUTINY CO-OPTEES REPORT

Councillor Wayne Blackburn, the Council's representative on the Lancashire County Council Health Scrutiny Committee provided an update on the work of the Committee. There had been one meeting of the Committee since Councillor Blackburn's appointment in May of this year, at which the closure of the Chorley Accident and Emergency Department and the knock-on effect to other hospitals was discussed. This would be discussed further at the next meeting, in August, when the Lancashire and South Cumbria Change Programme would also be considered.

21. HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY PANEL

The draft minutes of a meeting of the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Panel held on 28th June, 2016 were submitted for information.

22. WORK PLAN

The Team's Work Plan 2016/17 was submitted for information.

Following concerns by a member of the public a further issue was raised regarding provision of end of life nursing care. The Team was asked to consider requesting the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Panel to gather further information on this topic.

During the discussion, reference was made to a previous review of the welfare of elderly people in care homes. As a result of the review, posters of councillor contact details had been produced for display in individual care homes. It was thought that these may need updating.

RESOLVED

That the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Panel be asked to –

- (1) consider gathering information on the provision of end of life nursing care;
- (2) arrange for the posters of councillor contact details for display in individual care homes to be updated.

23. EXECUTIVE WORK PROGRAMME/FORWARD PLAN

The Executive Work Programme and Forward Plan for the four month period commencing 1st August, 2016 was submitted for consideration.

CHAIRMAN_____