

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT TEAM
HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, NELSON
ON 17TH JANUARY, 2017**

PRESENT –

Councillor K. Turner – Chairman (In the Chair)

Councillors

*G. Adam
W. Blackburn
S. Cockburn-Price*

*N. McCollum
S. Wicks*

Also present

<i>Ian Clark</i>	<i>Together Housing Group</i>
<i>Councillor D. Whipp</i>	<i>Council's representative on the Lancashire Police and Crime Panel</i>
<i>Iain Lord</i>	<i>Barrowford Parish Council</i>
<i>Mr R. Oliver</i>	<i>Barrowford Parish Council</i>

Officers in attendance

<i>P. Mousdale</i>	<i>Corporate Director</i>
<i>N. Watson</i>	<i>Planning, Building Control and Licensing Services Manager</i>
<i>G. Whitehead</i>	<i>Community Protection and Localities Manager</i>
<i>L. Rowland</i>	<i>Committee Administrator</i>

(Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M. Adams, K. Hartley, N. McEvoy and D. Whalley.)



44. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

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

45. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions from members of the public.

46. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 15th November, 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

47. HOUSING PENDLE

Ian Clark, the Group Director of Strategy and Communications at Together Housing Group gave a presentation on the Group's work over the last 12 months.

He began by explaining that, although Housing Pendle was still used as a local trading name, it was now part of the Together Housing Association and no longer existed as a company.

He explained that the Together Housing Group operated in 26 local authorities across the north of England and had a housing stock of approximately 37,000. Just over 3,000 of these homes were located in Pendle.

An update was given on progress in meeting the objectives of their Corporate Plan which was adopted in 2015. This included ways in which income had been generated, one of which was the fitting of 334 solar PV systems.

He also provided information on the structure of the Group, its vision for the future and the challenges that lay ahead. Amongst other things, this included cuts to Supporting People funding; the Local Housing Allowance cap; and a 1% rent cut.

Reference was made to the Right to Buy Scheme and the difficulty in replacing stock, when sold at a discount. Government discussions had taken place with regard to plugging this gap and the Team was advised of a one to one replacement scheme currently being piloted in areas of the country in respect of this.

Following the presentation he answered questions from Members and provided them with a copy of the Together Housing Group 2015-16 Annual Report.

Councillor Blackburn also requested that his thanks be passed on to all staff concerned for their assistance following a recent fire at his home.

48. 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 January, 2017 were also presented.

He continued by reporting on a local, multi-agency GENGA group that had been established to coordinate action as part of the Organised Crime Project. He also provided statistics on the Anti-Social Behaviour Risk Assessment Conference (ASBRAC) caseload and Community Protection Notice (CPN) cases.

In addressing one of the main priorities of the Partnership, a road safety campaign had taken place. This had included roadshows in Colne, Barnoldswick and Nelson and an event at Burnley Mechanics.

He concluded the presentation by providing information on the challenges ahead. This included new CCTV arrangements in the Borough involving a new monitoring hub based in Blackburn; and the delivery of domestic abuse services following a new Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Universal Victim Service for Lancashire.

Following the presentation he answered questions from Members.

49.

REVIEW PLANNING

(a) Impact of the transfer of facilities to town and parish councils

Further to a light touch review of the impact of the transfer of facilities to town and parish councils being included in the Team's work programme, Members considered a briefing note of the Corporate Director.

It was reported that, for the last four years, the Council had been engaged in a programme of transfers of facilities and services to town and parish councils. In the first two years the programme had covered community halls; public conveniences; and festive decorations and local events.

The 2015/16 programme had involved play areas and Multi-Use Games Areas (MUGAs) located outside of parks; passenger bus shelters; roadside seats; and rights of way (Countryside Access).

As referred to at minute 48, changes to the provision and operation of CCTV had taken place in 2016/17, with a new East Lancashire monitoring hub at King George's Hall, Blackburn going live on 1st December, 2016.

The note provided an overview of progress with the above aspects of the programme.

It was noted that the main feature of the current programme was the transfer of parks and that discussions had taken place collectively and individually with the councils concerned. It was explained that the Council's budget for grounds maintenance in parks had been reduced by £90,000, which was equivalent to a 25% reduction.

Initial feedback to date was provided in the report. It was further reported that Trawden Forest Parish Council had formally agreed to contribute 25% with regard to Ball Grove Park.

The current programme also included the transfer of the Town Hall in Colne to Colne Town Council. A number of other important facilities in Nelson, Fence, Earby and Barrowford were also being dealt with under the programme.

Future considerations included indoor and outdoor markets; leisure facilities; car parks; town centre sweeping; and recreation grounds.

It was noted that a net result of the programme for many of the town and parish councils had been the significant increase in their precepts. This was an issue that was under review by the Government and developments would be watched closely.

It was clear that the current and future programme required considerable work for all concerned, as the nature of the services and facilities to be transferred was complex. The future pace would continue to be dependent on the capacity and resources of town and parish councils.

The Panel acknowledged that in areas with no contribution from the local town or parish council for grounds maintenance in parks, a reduced standard of upkeep would be apparent.

RESOLVED

That progress with the programme of transfers of services and facilities to town and parish councils be noted.

(b) Effectiveness of Section 106 Agreements

Following a suggestion by Mr R. Oliver, a review of the effectiveness of Section 106 (S106) Agreements had been included in the Team's work programme for 2016/17.

Prior to considering a report of the Planning, Building Control and Licensing Services Manager the Chairman invited Mr Oliver to speak on the issue.

Mr Oliver began by making reference to his initial submission and the points he felt should be considered. This was circulated to the Team for information.

He continued by stating that he felt that the system was unclear to the public. He had concerns that Councillors did not have the necessary knowledge to make appropriate decisions. He also made reference to the Council decision not to introduce the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

He felt that proposals from statutory consultees i.e. town and parish councils were not always given due consideration and made particular reference to the comments of Barrowford Parish Council with regard to a major planning application last year.

Following Mr Oliver's comments, the Planning, Building Control and Licensing Services Manager presented his report. He provided information on the legislation and policy on S106 Agreements. He explained the reasons for the Council's decision not to introduce the CIL and advised that this would be reviewed as part of a viability study later this year.

Planning legislation was extremely complex and subject to constant amendments. It was acknowledged that a thorough knowledge was necessary when determining planning applications and accepted that further Member training may be appropriate.

RESOLVED

That the Planning, Building Control and Licensing Services Manager be asked to arrange a training session on S106 Agreements for Members of the Council and representatives of the town and parish councils of the borough.

50. HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY PANEL

(a) Mental Health Care in the Community, Care Homes and Mental Health Wards

A draft report following the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Panel's review of mental health care in the community, care homes and mental health wards was submitted for approval.

In reference to recommendation 8.4 of the report, it was noted that plans were being made for Pendle to host the Mental Health Challenge AGM later this year.

RESOLVED

That the report be approved for submission to Council.

(b) Minutes

The draft minutes of a meeting of the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Panel, held on 13th December, 2016 were submitted for information.

51. COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS STRATEGY

The Neighbourhood Services Manager submitted an update on the implementation of the Countryside Access Strategy 2014-18. There were four main objectives for the strategy and the performance against these objectives was detailed in the briefing note. Progress on specific actions in the strategy was also provided.

It was reported that Pendle Council continued to work closely with Lancashire County Council's (LCC's) public rights of way team. Although it was LCC's statutory duty to maintain the rights of way network and to assert and protect the rights of the public, Pendle Council still retained a power to assert and protect the rights of the public.

52. LCC HEALTH SCRUTINY CO-OPTEE'S REPORT

Councillor Wayne Blackburn, the Council's co-optee on the Lancashire County Council Health Scrutiny Committee reported on that Committee's work over the last six months.

He advised that there had been four meetings since his last update. The accident and emergency department at Chorley Hospital had been a main topic for discussion. A presentation had also been received on Lancashire and South Cumbria's Sustainability and Transformation Plan. He explained that this presentation could be delivered to Pendle Council scrutiny members if required.

A discussion on learning disabilities had also taken place.

RESOLVED

That arrangements be made for a presentation on the Lancashire and South Cumbria Sustainability and Transformation Plan to be delivered to the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Panel.

53. POLICE AND CRIME PANEL UPDATE

Councillor D. Whipp, the Council's representative on the Lancashire Police and Crime Panel provided an update on the work of the Panel.

He explained that, following the re-election of the current Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) in May, 2016 a new Police and Crime Plan had been drawn up. The Panel had agreed a number of minor changes and the Plan was now in place.

He provided the 'in year performance' statistics for the Lancashire Constabulary force area compared with the previous 12 month period. These indicated an increased level of crime. In comparison, it was noted that overall crime figures had increased at a greater level in the Pendle area.

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A major initiative through Lancashire Road Safety Partnership had resulted in a decision to install average speed enforcement cameras on the A682, Gisburn Road (between Barrowford and Blacko). It was hoped that this would reduce the number of casualties.

It was reported that response times to answer calls to 999 and 101 numbers had deteriorated and this was to be discussed further at the next Panel meeting.

Further updates included the Lancashire Victim Service; funding for early action staff; the appointment of a new Chief Constable; and a proposal to increase Council Tax by 1.99% in line with Government requirements.

54. WORK PLAN

The Team's work plan 2016/17 was submitted for information.

55. EXECUTIVE WORK PROGRAMME/FORWARD PLAN

The Executive Work Programme and Forward Plan for the four month period commencing 1st February, 2017 was submitted for consideration.

CHAIRMAN _____