

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD AT NELSON TOWN HALL
ON 11TH MARCH 2025**

PRESENT –

Councillor C. Church (Chair)

Councillors

*R. Anwar
D. Cockburn-Price
D. Gallear
M. Stone
Y. Tennant*

Officers in attendance

Lynne Rowland Committee Administrator

(Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M. Ammer and S. Land.)

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23. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

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

24. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions from members of the public.

25. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 16th January 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

26. POTENTIAL REVIEWS

(a) Fixed Penalty Notices for Dog Fouling and Littering

At a previous meeting of this Committee, Members had agreed to ask the Executive to advise on any proposals for carrying out proactive enforcement in relation to dog fouling and littering.

This followed District Enforcement's withdrawal, in 2023, from the agreement to deliver enforcement and behavioural change services for the Council, which commenced on 4th July 2022 and was expected to run for three years.

In response, Members were advised that the Executive had agreed an Operational Services Enforcement Policy, which was submitted for information. The Policy was designed to provide an

effective enforcement service, which covered the removal of waste from private land, littering, failure to clear fouling, fly-tipping and other environmental crimes.

Members agreed that it was a worthy policy but acknowledged that littering and fly-tipping continued to be a problem in the Borough. One particular problem area was in the vicinity of Victoria Park Lake, Barrowford where food waste was being tipped in piles on the path surrounding the lake, for the ducks to eat. Peaks in the volume of food dumping directly corresponded to sightings and complaints of rats in the area.

This issue had been debated by Barrowford and Western Parishes in December 2024, where it was agreed to ask this Committee to consider the varying types of environmental offences causing concern within the Borough's greenspace during future discussions around enforcement options. It was noted that there had been an improvement since being considered by the area committee, but the problem still remained.

During discussion, the Committee agreed that further action was necessary and agreed to focus on ways in which to relay key messages about the hazards related to littering.

RESOLVED

That –

- (1) the Assistant Director, Operational Services be asked to review the way in which key messages around littering/fly-tipping have previously been delivered and assess what has worked well/not worked well;
- (2) other Councils be approached for information on similar campaigns and their success rate;
- (3) a competition be developed in which local schools be invited to assist in promoting key messages by way of posters and TikTok videos, whilst ensuring compliance with any age restrictions.

(b) Homelessness

At the request of Council, the Committee was asked to consider carrying out a review of homelessness, including its causes and options for local solutions.

It was noted that, at its meeting on 20th March, the Executive was being asked to determine a way forward in relation to the Council's provision of homelessness temporary accommodation and to agree the Pendle Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-2030.

To avoid duplication it was felt that the Committee should await the outcome of the Executive meeting prior to making a decision on whether to carry out a review.

RESOLVED

That the decision of the Executive be reported to the next meeting of this Committee.

27. TASK AND FINISH GROUPS

At the last meeting of this Committee it was agreed to set up a task and finish group to commence the review of empty homes in Pendle.

Since that meeting, following information that Council was due to consider whether to account for one new Empty Homes Officer in the 2025-26 budget, it had been agreed to postpone the review until the new municipal year.

The Committee was advised that the post had been approved at the Special Budget Council meeting on 27th February and would be advertised shortly.

RESOLVED

That, once appointed, the new Empty Homes Officer be invited to a future meeting of this Committee.

28. EXECUTIVE RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS

Mechanical Street Cleansing (Compact Sweepers)

Following the conclusion of the scrutiny review of mechanical street cleansing (compact sweepers), the recommendations of this Committee were submitted to the Executive for consideration and response. The matter was discussed at the Executive's 30th January meeting where it was agreed to refer the report to Full Council for consideration.

It was reported that the Council considered the recommendations at its Special Budget Council meeting on 27th February.

Based on evidence presented during the course of the review, the recommendations included a proposal to reduce the mechanical street cleansing resource by two vehicles and redeploy the drivers of those vehicles to litter pick the areas of need. The recommendation would have meant increased costs of £6,120 in the first year, followed by decreased costs of £48,664 in the following two years.

It was noted that, at the Council meeting, a motion to not accept the recommendations was lost, with no further motion put forward. However, a decision to remove the required £6,120 from the General Fund Revenue Budget 2025/26 effectively meant that the recommendations had not been accepted.

Members felt that the matter should be referred back to Council for further consideration but were advised that, as the matter had been before Council within the preceding six months, this may not be permitted.

RESOLVED

That, if the rules allow, the matter be referred back to Council for further consideration.

29. WORK PROGRAMME 2024/2025

The Committee's updated work programme was submitted for information.

30. EXECUTIVE WORK PROGRAMME/FORWARD PLAN

The Executive Work Programme and Forward Plan for the four-month period commencing 1st March 2025 was submitted for consideration.

CHAIR _____