

Lancashire County Council

Internal Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Friday, 15th March, 2019 at 10.00 am in Cabinet Room 'B' - The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston

Present:

County Councillor David O'Toole (Chair)

County Councillors

J Rear	P Rigby
B Dawson	A Riggott
S Holgate	M Salter
E Lewis	D Whipp
E Nash	G Wilkins

County Councillor Bernard Dawson replaced County Councillor John Fillis for this meeting.

1. Apologies

There were no apologies.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None were disclosed.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 January 2019

Resolved: That the minutes from the meeting held on 18 January 2019 be confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

4. Local Authority Funding and Income Generation Update Report

The Chair welcomed Neil Kissock, Director of Finance; and Khadija Saeed, Head of Corporate Finance, to the meeting.

The report presented an update on the actions taken by officers in response to the Internal Scrutiny Committee task group recommendations for income generation in support of the council achieving financial sustainability.

The task group had recommended that consideration could be given to exploring and undertaking feasibility studies in the following areas:

- Traded services
- Statutory and non-statutory services
- Property portfolio
- Commercialisation

Members felt that part of the problem in trying to increase income generation was the lack of capacity needed to market opportunities within the county council due to staffing reductions over the years. . In terms of the service challenge it was important to ask every service what was required regarding additional investment.

The committee suggested that a new task and finish group could be set up with a broader remit, still working within the right parameters and linked to the External Scrutiny Committee looking at issues such as low carbon technology, and the commercialisation of Lancashire County Council's land and site usage.

Regarding capital receipts, the committee was informed that over the last three years Lancashire County Council had invested a significant amount of capital receipts in terms of setting the budget. Flexibility for this investment was to be extended by central government for another two years. Within the MTF5 Lancashire County Council was assuming £15m of capital receipts would be generated and spent on areas identified in the budget report. If these capital receipts were not generated the county council would need to fund it from its reserves.

Resolved: The Internal Scrutiny Committee;

- i. Note the progress detailed in the report.
- ii. Consider setting up a task and finish group between the Internal Scrutiny Committee and the External Scrutiny Committee looking at a broader remit including low carbon technology and the county council's land and site usage.

5. 'Does Local Government Work for Women' Task and Finish Group Report

County Councillor Erica Lewis presented a report on the findings of the 'Does Local Government Work for Women?' Task and Finish Group.

Following a notice of motion submitted at the 26 October 2017 meeting of Full Council on the Fawcett Society and the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU) report 'Does Local Government Work for Women?', the county council requested that the Internal Scrutiny Committee established a task and finish

group to further explore the findings of the report and make recommendations as to good practices which could be adopted by the county council. If the task group's report was agreed by the Internal Scrutiny Committee it would then be presented at the Full Council meeting on 23 May.

The committee was informed that consideration would be given by the council on the outcome of the 'Standards in Local Government' review that was currently being undertaken and its potential implications. A review of the terms of reference of the Conduct Committee be considered to ensure that the membership of the committee reflected the nature of the complaint where it related to discrimination.

It was pointed out that there was a protocol for Members and Co-opted Members on language and behaviour. It was suggested that more training could be offered to councillors on the Equality Act 2010. It was highlighted that local government needed to be at the forefront of driving change. It was important to get the balance right between changing culture and imposing structures.

The committee was informed that women made up only 33% of councillors in local government. This number had only increased by 5% over the last 20 years. Childcare allowances and caring costs were welcomed by the committee as this would lead to more inclusive membership and inclusive participation within the county council.

The question of gender balance on committees was raised and the task group had looked at the lack of women on committees and it was pointed out that one of the recommendations of the report was for political groups to keep their membership of committees under review.

A progress report on the implementation of the task group's recommendations was requested for after the Full Council meeting on 23 May 2019 as some of the constitutional decisions would then have been considered.

Resolved: The Internal Scrutiny Committee:

- i. Support the recommendations of the Task Group.
- ii. Consider the appropriate mechanism for reviewing the responses to the Task group's recommendations and request a progress report on the implementation of the recommendations after the Full Council meeting on 23 May 2019.

6. Report of the Budget Scrutiny Review Panel

The report provided an overview of matters presented by the Budget Scrutiny Review Panel at its meetings held on 3 and 29 January 2019.

A question was raised regarding the spending of the Apprenticeship Levy. There was concern that if the levy was not spent by April the remaining funds would go back to central government.

Members stated it was important to have as much engagement with the Cabinet as was possible. A request was made for future reports to have the names of Cabinet Members and officers who attended the meetings. It was important to have the right people at the meeting in order to have effective scrutiny.

Resolved:

- i. The Internal Scrutiny Committee note the report of its Budget Scrutiny Review Panel.
- ii. A list of Cabinet Members and officers who attended the Budget Scrutiny Review Panel be circulated to the committee.

7. Internal Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2018/19

The work plan for the Internal Scrutiny Committee for the 2018/19 year was presented. The topics included were identified at the work planning workshop held on 2 July 2018.

The committee was informed that the Blue Badges item scheduled for the meeting on 17 May 2019 would now be postponed to the meeting on 15 November 2019. This was due to the new criteria only going to Parliament in April 2019 which would result in implementation being much later in the year.

An item not yet scheduled for the Internal Scrutiny Committee was the Winter Service Review, including an update on the road surface treatment level trigger. It was suggested this item be brought to the meeting on 17 May 2019 if the data was available.

Resolved:

- i. The report presented be noted.
- ii. The Winter Service Review item be brought to the Internal Scrutiny Committee meeting on 17 May 2019 if possible.

8. Urgent Business

There was no Urgent Business.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Internal Scrutiny Committee would take place on Friday 17 May 2019 at 10.00am in Cabinet Room B (The Diamond Jubilee Room) at the County Hall, Preston.

L Sales
Director of Corporate Services

County Hall
Preston