

## **Lancashire County Council**

### **Internal Scrutiny Committee**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Friday, 17th May, 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	E Nash
A Cheetham	P Rigby
J Fillis	A Riggott
S Holgate	M Salter
M Iqbal	D Whipp

County Councillor Anne Cheetham replaced County Councillor Wilkins for this meeting.

#### **1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from County Councillor Erica Lewis.

#### **2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**

None were disclosed.

#### **3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 March 2019**

**Resolved:** That the minutes from the meeting held on 15 March 2019 be confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

#### **4. 'Does Local Government Work for Women?' Task and Finish Group Report - Response to Recommendations**

The Chair welcomed the Leader of the County Council, County Councillor Geoff Driver, and Josh Mynott, Democratic and Member Services Manager, to the table.

The report presented explained that in March 2019, the Internal Scrutiny Committee published a task and finish group report on 'Does Local Government Work for Women'.

In accordance with agreed protocols, the Leader of the County Council had been asked to provide a response to the recommendations included as part of the task and finish group's report.

Regarding **Recommendation 11 – Legalise remote attendance at council meetings and use technology to support inclusion**, this was not supported by the Leader as currently the law did not allow for remote attendance at meetings. It was pointed out that the committee structure did allow for substitutions. There also needed to be considerable work done with Facilities Management and ICT to identify future equipment needs and associated costs, before this could be further considered. Some members felt representations should be made to Government to seek a change in the legislation.

In terms of **Recommendation 12 – Childcare and caring costs must be covered**, this recommendation was not supported by the Leader. The county council had a responsibility for safeguarding. The DBS checks were important given the county council's responsibilities around safeguarding, as well as the need to ensure that there were appropriate controls around the claiming of allowances.

The committee was informed that the role of councillors would be promoted widely to all communities, including via schools, in order to attract candidates from all backgrounds. A 'Be a Councillor' information event was being held on 8<sup>th</sup> July at County Hall.

**Resolved:** The Internal Scrutiny Committee receive and accept the responses to the task and finish group report from the Leader of the Council.

## **5. Reducing Single Use Plastics in Lancashire - Response to Recommendations of the Scrutiny Task and Finish Group Report**

The Chair welcomed the Deputy Leader of the County Council, County Councillor Albert Atkinson; Rachel Tanner, Head of Procurement; Clare Joynson, Head of Facilities Management; Ginette Unsworth, Head of Communications; William Maxwell, Service Development Manager; and Nigel Craine, Head of School and Residential Care Catering, to the meeting.

The committee was informed that in January 2019, the Internal Scrutiny Committee published a task and finish group report on reducing single use plastics in Lancashire.

Cabinet Members welcomed the report from the Internal Scrutiny Committee on the important subject of reducing single use plastics (SUPs) in Lancashire. They also thanked members and officers of the Reducing SUPs in Lancashire task and finish group for the time and commitment that they had invested in the thorough research that they undertook as part of the group's work. In accordance with

agreed protocols, the relevant Cabinet Members had been asked to provide a response to the task and finish group's report.

Currently only certain types of plastic were permitted in the county's residential recycling bins. The new system would mean pots, tubs and trays would also become part of the collections across the county and Lancashire County Council was working towards integrating pots, tubs and trays into doorstep collections later this year. Work was now underway to adapt the council's waste recovery plant at Farington so that it could accept a wider range of plastic materials. A major public information campaign was being planned to advise the public of the changes to the system. The authority would work with district councils, which collected rubbish in their own areas, to help residents understand the new system and what they could recycle. The communications team already had a good webpage set up and once the new system was introduced, social media would be used extensively to promote the messages to the public.

A number of initiatives had already been introduced across county council buildings. Plastic cups had been eradicated from meeting rooms. Fruit and veg was now placed in plastic trays only if it was soft and needed protection. The catering department at the county council had replaced 15 out of the 20 single-use plastic products which it had been using.

Another recommendation from the single-use plastics task group which the committee accepted was the promotion of plastic reduction in schools and businesses across the county. Dialogue with schools was now under way and key messages would be shared with businesses once they had been agreed at a corporate level.

In regard to banning the release of helium balloons and sky lanterns from all council owned land and leased premises this recommendation was supported by Cabinet members and consideration would be given to what was required to enforce such a ban. The committee was informed that in respect of organised events where prior permission was required from the council, it might be possible to impose conditions on the granting of permission for the event. The enforcement with respect to individuals or small groups presented obvious difficulties in ensuring that any ban was adhered to.

Regarding the recommendation on investing in moveable signs that could help deter the public from littering from their cars and reminding them to be responsible with their waste, the committee was informed that this would be relooked at with Highways, using the example provided in Pendle.

Regarding dog mess and plastic bags, the committee was informed that biodegradable bags were the best solution but getting this issue to the manufacturers was key to reducing plastic waste.

**Resolved:**

- i. The Internal Scrutiny Committee receive the responses by the relevant Cabinet Members.
- ii. The Committee recommended that the Chief Executive be asked to identify a senior officer to assume the lead officer role to take this work forward.
- iii. A progress update report on reducing Single Use Plastics in Lancashire to be presented to the Committee on the 27 September 2019 meeting.

**6. 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.

There was a request for the work plan to include the topic of the late adoption of roads in Lancashire as there was a lack of clarity on this. Committee was informed that this would be included at the work planning session in July.

**Resolved:** The report presented be noted.

**7. Urgent Business**

There were no Items of Urgent Business.

**8. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Internal Scrutiny Committee would take place on Friday 12 July 2019 at 10.00am in Cabinet Room B (The Diamond Jubilee Room) at the County Hall, Preston.

**9. Exclusion of Press and Public**

**Resolved:** That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that there would be a likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the appropriate paragraph of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as indicated against the heading to the item.

## **10. Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act**

(Not for Publication - Exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. It is considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information).

An annual update report was presented on the framework provided by the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 and Investigatory Powers Act 2016.

**Resolved:** Members note the report and updated corporate policies as presented at Appendices 'A' – 'C'.

L Sales  
Director of Corporate Services

County Hall  
Preston