

Lancashire County Council

Internal Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Friday, 27th September, 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

M Salter	E Nash
C Crompton	P Rigby
J Fillis	C Towneley
S Holgate	D Whipp
E Lewis	

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from County Councillors Peter Steen and George Wilkins.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None were disclosed.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 July 2019

Resolved: That the minutes from the meeting held on 12 July 2019 be confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

4. Reducing Single Use Plastics in Lancashire - Update Report

The Chair welcomed County Councillor Albert Atkinson, Cabinet Member for Technical Services, Rural Affairs and Waste Management; Mike Kirby, Director of Strategy and Performance; Rachel Tanner, Head of Service Procurement; Clare Joynson, Head of Service Facilities Management; Ginette Unsworth, Head of Service Communications; William Maxwell, Service Development Manager; and Nigel Craine, Head of School and Residential Care Catering, to the meeting.

The report detailed an update on progress by the various services involved in the delivery of this work and the development of a strategy for Lancashire County Council to become a Single Use Plastics (SUP) free authority, where possible and feasible. It was pointed out that a bite size briefing for councillors had been arranged for the 9 October to inform them about the issues of plastic waste and what was being done to address this and the role councillors could play.

Members were informed that Lancashire County Council continued to work with suppliers and colleagues in procurement to source alternative products that could be introduced across the service. The service had recently introduced compostable items to combat SUPs and would keep this under review and seek advice from waste colleagues. The total items now recyclable or compostable that the county council had introduced recently replacing SUPs now stood at 20 items.

The committee highlighted the importance of better educating people in terms of SUPs and recycling. Members were delighted that information on this had been taken into schools but it was also important to educate our elders. The county council along with partner authorities were using a number of methods to promote the new recycling pots, tubs and trays campaign including social media messages, stickers on recycling bins, media relations and leaflets and posters. District councils were helping with the campaign by distributing leaflets and promoting the message on the sides of their vehicles. Information had also been put on bus timetables.

With regards to the 70% reduction of stationary used in school kitchens by the introduction of e-tablets it was noted that the decision had been taken to allow for a number of benefits rather than just based on the implications of SUPs. The benefits of the introduction of e-tablets far outweighed the impact on the environment.

Members enquired about the central distribution hub which was one of the benefits of the sustainable procurement strategy that the Schools and Residential Care Catering team operated against. The hub would reduce the number of vehicles delivering food across Lancashire by approximately 3000 per week and reduce carbon monoxide emissions. The hub required suppliers to adhere to SUP packaging limitations.

Regarding alternatives for the re-use of plastics, the committee was informed that this was an ongoing investigation process and would be considered during the development of the strategy. One suggestion from members which had been considered by the Task Group was the use of waste plastic in the resurfacing of roads.

Resolved: That;

- i. The report presented be noted.
- ii. The relevant officers come back to the Internal Scrutiny Committee to present a further update and the draft strategy on reducing Single Use Plastics in Lancashire.

5. Highway Adoption and the Process Involved

The Chair welcomed County Councillor Keith Iddon, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport; and Neil Stevens, Highways Development Control Manager, to the meeting.

The report presented aimed to describe the process of the local highway authority in considering and adopting a road, having regard to typical issues and other influences that often occur, delaying adoption and who is responsible for un-adopted roads.

A Section 38 was used for the adoption of a road and it was delivered under the Highway's Act. Until a new road was completed to an acceptable standard, it was not eligible to be maintained by Lancashire County Council. Adoption usually took around five years from when construction of a development began. Once roads were adopted into the highway they were then maintained at the public expense.

Members were informed that the Highways Authority had a good relationship with developers but that a lot of developers did not want to start discussions on the requirements of adoption at the start of the planning process.

One complicating factor was a requirement for a newly adopted road to be directly connected to another adopted highway without a gap. This was a problem on large estates with many developers working to different timescales or if the road to be adopted was connected to the rest of the network via a bridge which was not maintained by the county council.

Before Lancashire County Council could adopt a road, highways officers had to be satisfied that it met the standard which they had set for the rest of the road network in the county. That included ensuring that work above and below the surface was up to standard including the need to provide proper drainage of surface water from new developments. Legal agreements with statutory drainage authorities needed to be in place before a road could be adopted.

During the construction phase of a road on a new development, highways officers visited the site to make sure they were satisfied with the work. There was then a minimum twelve month gap between a road being laid and it being adopted, with a checklist having to be completed first. It was pointed out to the committee that the county council nor district councils were in a position where they could insist a developer had to put a road up for adoption. Concerns were highlighted for residents of new developments who often were ill informed at the time of purchase about the process of road adoption were then left with un-adopted roads, often years after the purchase. It was felt that the purchasers should be made fully aware at an early stage of what agreements had been put in place. This was reflected under Recommendation 1 of the report which suggested to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) that a timeline of adoption could be provided to purchasers as part of the planning conditions.

Following a detailed discussion it was agreed that Recommendation 1 would be reworded to provide greater clarity and circulated to members.

Resolved: That in relation to Recommendation 1 of the report that this be reworded in light of the discussion and circulated to members and in relation to Recommendations 2 to 5 that these be approved:

2. Officers inform relevant Councillors at the time of a road being adopted.
3. Officers work more closely with Councillors (residents) in locations where house builders are slow in progressing the adoption process (where there are no issues that cannot be resolved).
4. Officers look at opportunities to strengthen the partnership approach between house builders, utilities (drainage), LPA and the highway authority in strategic development locations to assist where possible to unlock issues and speed up the adoption process.
5. Officers inform the relevant Councillor if a road is NOT suitable for adoption and reasons why.

6. Internal Scrutiny Committee Draft Work Programme 2019/20

The draft work programme for the Internal Scrutiny Committee for 2019/20 was presented. The draft work programmes for all other Scrutiny Committees would be presented to the respective committees at their next meeting and agreed work plans would be shared at the November 2019 Internal Scrutiny Committee meeting.

The topics included were identified at the work planning workshop held on 25 July 2019.

It was requested that committee members email their suggestions for further topics for the Work Plan to the Democratic Officer for Internal Scrutiny. One suggestion raised was the County Councillors' relationship with Lancashire County Council's ICT Services.

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 15 November 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