

Lancashire County Council

Internal Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Friday, 18th May, 2018 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
J Fillis	A Riggott
S Holgate	M Salter
E Lewis	D Whipp
E Nash	G Wilkins

1. Apologies

There were no apologies.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None were disclosed.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 March 2018

Regarding **Item 6 – Progress Report on the Reopened Libraries**, it was noted that the Committee had agreed to the following Motion. "This committee welcomes the decision to reopen libraries right across Lancashire and places on record its thanks and appreciation to all members of staff to deliver this programme. Furthermore this committee recognises that Lancashire's libraries are now much more than a place to simply borrow a book and that they play a central and valid role in our communities."

It was also noted that members had requested a dedicated phone number for them to contact in emergencies instead of the Emergency 101 number. There had been lengthy waiting times with the 101 number for councillors even with services that were council operated.

Resolved: That the minutes from the meeting held on 16 March 2018 be confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

4. Household Waste Recycling Centres

The Chair welcomed Steve Scott, Head of Waste Management, to the meeting. The report presented explained that the Household waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) service was brought in-house on 1st April 2018 after many years of being delivered by a third party under contract.

Members were informed that addressing these issues would be a priority for the waste team. However, the move to in-house provision also gave the opportunity to conduct a fundamental review of all aspects of the recycling centre service which had generally been in its current format for more than two decades.

It was highlighted that the application of the Waste Hierarchy by local authorities was a requirement of the Waste Regulations 2011. It ranked waste management options according to what was best for the environment. The committee commended the Waste Management Team on the use of the Waste Hierarchy and the way it put it into practice as best it could.

Members were advised that in January 2017 the council bought out the brick and brick contract at the Preston HWRC and opened a reuse shop stocked by waste diverted from the recycling centre.

The Waste Service wanted to push the reuse agenda. It was intended that the council adjusted the focus of its recycling centres to ensure greater reuse of the waste delivered and seek to generate social value. This would mean changes in the way the facilities currently operated. There would be more direct engagement with the public and staff would actively sort through the items delivered. It was intended that a detailed communications and education campaign about reuse be developed, including promotion of the social value that the council was achieving from its reuse activities through media, social media, on the website and at the recycling centres themselves.

It was noted that reuse would not reduce landfill and reuse activities were also resource intensive from a staffing perspective. However, there clearly existed an opportunity to operate recycling centres in a manner which was better for the environment, supported communities, other organisations and Lancashire residents. There was also an opportunity to make better use of the resources delivered to recycling centres which were currently treated as waste.

The committee was informed that the plastics market in the UK now had a surplus of better quality plastics than the hard plastics Lancashire had in its recycling centres. The decision was therefore taken to withdraw the hard plastic skips until there was a guaranteed outlet for them. A trial was running at the moment at two sites in Lancashire with a processor who was willing to take good quality plastics and the staff on these sites would separate the plastics themselves as long as the plastics were clean.

It was noted that since the introduction of the Inert Waste Policy the level of fly tipping in Lancashire had increased. Members enquired if there was a possibility to change the policy in order to mitigate fly tipping. It was confirmed that a lot of

work had been done monitoring fly tipping. Lancashire Waste Partnership had a Fly Tipping Working Group in place to report back to the Waste Partnership.

The committee was informed that arrangements could be put in place regarding access for volunteer litter picking groups taking waste to HWRCs.

Concerns were raised about the security at HWRCs. It was confirmed that the Waste Management Team was aware of the security issues. A multi-agency group had recently been introduced at Chorley HWRC. This group included LCC, the district council, the police and local residents to look at the security problem.

The Waste Management Team confirmed that there had been teething problems regarding transport. There was a new transport contractor in place and trucks were now arriving at sites with skips.

Members questioned the reduction of opening hours at the HWRCs. Reduction of opening hours was not about reducing service but about what service was needed for certain sites to make them more efficient. The Waste Management Team was reviewing the services it had to see how they could be made more efficient.

The committee requested that the portfolio holder inform members what his views on the policy issues were.

Resolved: That;

- i. The report be noted;
- ii. The outcome of the service review be reported back to a future meeting of the committee.

5. Local Authority Funding and Income Generation Task Group Report

County Councillor Jayne Rear, Chair of the Local Authority Funding and Income Generation Task Group, presented a report on the conclusions of the task group.

The focus of the task group was to identify various areas that could potentially provide an increase in income to support the financial sustainability of the county council. The task group considered documentary evidence from both internal services and external sources. Meetings were held with senior officers within the county council representing a range of services.

Once the report had been agreed by the committee, it would then be circulated to all relevant stakeholders, directors and cabinet members. Cabinet members were required to provide a response within two months which would be fed back to the committee.

It was proposed that there would be a proposed verbal update at the July meeting of the committee on any progress with a full written response potentially at a future meeting of the committee.

Members could then consider whether any further monitoring would be required if the response was incomplete or because the satisfactory resolution of the issues depended on information not yet available. Reasons for further monitoring needed to be considered.

Resolved: That;

- i. Recommendations of the Task Group be supported as set out in the report at Appendix A;
- ii. Appropriate mechanism for reviewing the response to the Task Group's recommendations be considered.

6. Work Plan and Task Group Update 2017/18

The work plan for the Internal Scrutiny Committee for the 2017/18 year was presented. The topics included were identified at the work planning workshop held on 23 June 2017.

Members raised the point that when they received reports they did not have anything to measure them against and felt this was hampering their scrutiny. The reports required key performance indicators.

The committee was informed that a work planning session was being arranged for early July to discuss topics for the next municipal year, 2018/19.

It was suggested that the Highways Team come back to the July meeting of committee to give an update on potholes and the winter service plan. It was also suggested to bring forward the item on winter gritting to the summer of 2018. The committee was informed that the topic of flooding was coming to External Scrutiny on 4 June.

Resolved: That;

- i. The report be noted
- ii. Work planning meeting for 2018/19 municipal year 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 20 July 2018 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