

Lancashire County Council

Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Friday, 18th September, 2015 at 10.00 am in Cabinet Room 'B' - The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston

Present:

County Councillor Bill Winlow (Chair)

County Councillors

A Barnes	M Parkinson
C Crompton	C Pritchard
G Gooch	J Shedwick
Mrs L Oades	V Taylor
D O'Toole	C Wakeford

County Councillor George Wilkins was replaced by County Councillor Graham Gooch for this meeting.

1. Apologies

None were received.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None were disclosed.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 17 July 2015

The Minutes of the Meeting Held on 17 July, 2015, were agreed to be an accurate record.

4. Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Update

The Chair introduced Graham Cowley (Board Director, LEP) and Martin Kelly (Director of Economic Development) to the meeting, who provided an update to the Committee around the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

It was explained to the Committee that governance was important as the County Council was the accountable body of the LEP, and therefore had a responsibility for the investment involved. Reference was made to the Assurance Framework document, which had been created to ensure transparency and accountability of the LEP, and ensured that the County Council did not suffer any reputational damage.

It was noted that the LEP had a number of individual boards which performed specific activities around projects, and it was explained that each board sought to

ensure that all investment was maximised and delivered outcomes, such as social and economic outcomes for the communities of Lancashire.

It was explained that the LEP had a Performance Committee which ensured that decisions made had accountability and challenged the ways in which the LEP was working, and ensured that work undertaken was adhering to governance mechanisms. It was explained to the Committee that the LEP's Performance Committee's role was to challenge internally, and was described as an audit function of the County Council focussed upon risk and financial issues. Members were informed that Lancashire Leaders were asked to identify a Leader to in sit on the Performance Committee. It was explained that the Leader of Preston City Council, Cllr Peter Rankin, had agreed to perform this duty.

It was explained that the boards' immediately below the Board of Directors were regarded as operational boards which were tasked with driving the investment it had been supplied with.

Members queried the involvement of the Homes and Community Agency (HCA) and asked whether the HCA reported to the LEP. It was explained that any lines of funding secured via the HCA by the LEP meant that the LEP was required to report to the HCA in these instances. It was explained that the HCA was the policy driver around the City Deal initiative and was therefore involved with the monitoring of progress targets, and ensured that the value of the funding remained within Preston. It was summarised that the LEP had control over assets, however the governance structure ensured that the HCA led the governance of the City Deal initiative in particular.

Members expressed the desire for the HCA to attend a future Scrutiny Committee meeting and Democratic Services officers agreed to make the necessary arrangements.

The Committee was delivered a LEP Initiatives Update and it was noted that the LEP was commended in July for the progress that had been made and that there was enthusiasm around another Enterprise Zone being created.

The Committee was informed of the Growing Places Investment Fund, which was highlighted to be a major investment fund of around £20m. It was explained that this had been fully loaned out and that the next phase of new loans had commenced following the acquisition of private sector investment which was highlighted to be a success story.

Members were provided with information around the City Deal and it was explained that everything was on track and the work undertaken thus far had been very well received.

Members were provided with information around the Growth Deal. It was noted that there had been positive projects coming to fruition all around Lancashire

which had the potential to deliver positive outcomes. The Committee was also informed that Transport for Lancashire was on track and well received.

Members made reference to the City Deal citing that the City Deal employment and skills strategy focused upon securing local benefits. It was therefore queried what the LEP's perception of a local benefit was. It was explained to the Committee that the LEP perceived local benefits to be maximising opportunities for local people, creating opportunities, for example, apprenticeships for young people, and the social value of construction programs.

The Committee expressed concerns around agency staff and communicated concerns that employment may be attained by people from outside of Lancashire's boundaries. It was explained to the Committee that effort had been put into ensuring that investment was maximised to create opportunities for Lancashire's local communities, and efforts were being made to provide opportunities to people in Lancashire around LEP projects. It was also conveyed that Graham Cowley would be meeting with the Chair of the LEP Skills Board to investigate ways in which a model could be created to add value and maximise the advantages from investment.

Members expressed that Transport for Manchester had been considered to be successful thus far, and that their plans had been very aspirational. Therefore, it was asked whether Lancashire's ambition was aspirational enough in comparison. Furthermore, it was also queried whether the LEP planned to investigate opportunities between Transport for Manchester and Transport for Lancashire. It was explained that the LEP's Performance Committee would be measuring if the LEP was aspirational enough with its plans. It was highlighted that the LEP's plans were coming together with respect of the level of funding available, and decisions made had been focussed upon economic outcomes. Regarding Transport for Lancashire, it was explained that the first scheme had gone through the LEP's governance process and had reflected the need to work across borders and that effort was being placed into getting this off the ground.

Members queried whether there would be any detail disclosed to the Scrutiny Committee around jobs and their terms of employment. It was explained that the LEP's Performance Committee would be assessing these outcomes and that the LEP desired to inform the Committee of the number of jobs that had been created in the County as a result of the initiative.

The Committee queried what work was being undertaken in the South of the County. Members were informed that meetings had been held with West Lancashire Borough Council's economic development representatives, the Vice Chancellor of Edge Hill University, and Ormskirk and Skelmersdale College to gain knowledge of the areas investment potential. It was also conveyed that the Transport Masterplan for West Lancashire had highlighted the potential for a new train station in Skelmersdale, and the Pan-Lancashire Business Support service had helped over 100 companies in West Lancashire with their businesses. It was explained that similar meetings had been held across the County as the LEP

viewed Lancashire in its entirety, with each area possessing its own requirements and characteristics.

Reference was made to the prospective railway station in Skelmersdale, and that in recent discussions with LCC's Cabinet Member for Transport it was explained that the railway station was expected to be completed by 2026, and therefore it was asked if this was deemed to be aspirational enough. It was explained to the Committee that there was a need to balance aspiration and reality, and it was emphasised that rail projects taken long periods of time to complete and that the planning for such a project was meticulous and time consuming. It was explained that if there was an opportunity to bring the date forward, every effort would be made, however the LEP needed to be pragmatic in their approach. It was also highlighted that it was a huge investment and the project itself was very aspirational. It was expressed that the strategic economic plan of the LEP was a 'moving' document and therefore new benchmarks would be implemented throughout the application of its plans.

Members queried how the Skills Board of the LEP was preparing people for new technologies to ensure the training provided had longevity. It was explained to be very important that maximum benefit was extracted from the investment into the County and an integral part of that was to ensure people's skills were relevant for new technologies. Blackpool and Fylde College was highlighted as an example of the work being undertaken to ensure training was relevant. It was explained that a principle at the college was to constantly engage with businesses to ensure training was relevant to business needs going forward. It was conveyed that discussions would be taking place with the Chair of the LEP's Skills Board to spread the approach found at Blackpool and Fylde College across Lancashire.

Reference was made to the Business Boost Lancashire initiative and it was explained that this had had engagement with thousands of small/medium enterprises across the County, and that this was high on the LEP's agenda. The Committee were informed of the funding from the European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) and it was noted that it had potential to bring significant funds into the County. It was highlighted that a recent announcement had notified of the approval of significant funds coming into the County from ESIF. It was explained that the LEP had a supporting role around ESIF, noting that, previously, the LEP had the ability to allocate funds, however the LEP could now only influence the destination of the funding. It was explained to be a Government/Civil Service task to allocate the funds going forward and that Growth Deal projects within Lancashire could potentially benefit from ESIF funding.

Members quoted a slide presented which stated that the 'Skills board had secured and defined a £30m Skills Capital Programme as part of the Growth Deal, with a £12m call for new investment proposals underway'. Members queried what time frame this covered, and, if it was going to be over a long period, what had been considered around future technologies. The Committee was informed that, in terms of timescales, the Government allocation was to be delivered over the next two years. It was explained that that the LEP's skills

colleagues had expressed confidence that they would be oversubscribed with capital investment bids to achieve the investment and the outcomes that would be associated. It was explained that there was a two year horizon but it was hoped that there would be more to follow.

The Chair thanked Graham Cowley and Martin Kelly for attending to provide the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership update.

Resolved;

That the update on the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership be noted.

5. Learning Disabilities - Challenges and Opportunities Report

The Chair introduced Tony Pounder (Director of Adult Services), Tony Martin (Cabinet Member for Adult and Community Services) and Nicola Clear, (Head of Service for Disability) to the meeting, who delivered a report on Learning Disabilities to the Committee.

It was explained that the County Council had a statutory responsibility to assess and support people with learning disabilities. It was emphasised that over the years the County Council had improved and transformed services that supported Lancashire's communities. It was highlighted that there were a range of services on offer, some of which were voluntary and some of which were major statutory agencies. It was explained that there was an increasing focus upon statutory support around people with complex and profound learning disabilities and that there were around 3,000 adults in Lancashire with the aforesaid characteristics.

It was conveyed that the County Council offered a range of services designed to support families who supported their relatives with disabilities, services that supported people into independence, helped with accommodation options, and in some instances, nursing home services and day services. The Shared Lives initiative was also noted and was emphasised to be an example of the County Council's new ways of thinking.

It was explained to the Committee that, in budgetary terms, Learning Disability expenditure was a major challenge for the County Council, with it being highlighted to be incurring costs of over £109m per annum within the County Council's budget. However, the Committee was informed that the County Council was currently forecasted to spend over £125m in this financial year, and therefore there was a significant projected overspend. It was explained to the Committee that within Appendix 'B' information was present that outlined savings proposals, however it was noted that some of the savings identified had not been deliverable which had contributed to the forecasted overspend.

The Committee was informed that the County Council was investigating ways to safely and effectively reduce the level of personal budgets delivered to service users without impacting upon the quality of their care. Members queried whether work currently being undertaken by independent consultants would help towards

the safe reduction of personal budgets. It was explained to Members that this was a separate piece of work which was being carried out by the County Council itself, along with aid from FACE (Function Analysis of Care Environments) resource allocation system, which supported local authorities around the allocation of systems. It was conveyed that the results of this work would be reported to Cabinet and Full Council.

Reference was made to work being undertaken around the reprocurement of services that the County Council used in the independent sector. It was conveyed that there had been substantial pricing issues uncovered during the reprocurement exercise.

Members were informed that analytical work, which had been undertaken earlier in 2015, had provided the scope for increased productivity across Adult Social Care. It was explained that this work had been undertaken by Newton's Europe, a consultancy that had worked with many local authorities towards reshaping their social care services to ensure improved efficiency, productivity and affordability. The work undertaken was noted to aid the redesigning of social work resources and ensured that the optimum services were offered to different people. A need for consistency was stressed to be important going forward across the County.

It was conveyed to Members that a benefit of the County Council's transformation process had been the close working relationship between child social care and adult social care services, and it was noted that analysis was underway to view how the County Council could work effectively across the age bands and work towards a life-long approach for care services.

Members requested information around what the current level of use was of the Shared Lives initiative. The Committee was informed that the target for Shared Lives was set in 2011, which outlined that the County Council would grow the service with an extra 200 long-term placements created. It was conveyed that since 2011, 120 people had been placed in long-term Shared Lives posts. It was expressed that compatibility issues rested upon finding a family that a service user was comfortable to live with and that their accommodation needs and working arrangements suited all parties. It was explained that the recruitment of families was ongoing and there were currently 276 registered carers within Lancashire and there were 381 people utilising the scheme. It was noted that the majority of people benefiting from the service had long term placements. It was expressed to Members that the County Council was regarded as one of the best in the country with many Local Authorities contacting the County Council to understand its processes to replicate the success experienced. It was stressed that even though it had been successful, there was always room for improvement.

Members queried whether local partnership boards had been converted into one pan-Lancashire Partnership Board as a result of budget cuts, or whether it was deemed to be more effective in this format. It was explained to the Committee that the County Council no longer had the resources to facilitate regional Partnership Boards. It was expressed that the County Council, in an ideal world,

would offer the same number of partnership boards as it had done previously but current agendas were very challenging.

Members were supplied with information around the transformation of social care services. It was highlighted that, following a BBC Panorama documentary regarding people with autistic traits and learning disabilities, there was a large amount of political attention concerning the activities undertaken around social care. It was highlighted that there had been recent focus upon Calderstones, which was highlighted to be a long serving institution within Lancashire which was not intended to be the long term home of people and that it had been initially designed to treat people who had intense needs.

It was highlighted to the Committee that in an attempt to remedy the issue, the County Council, along with Blackpool Council and Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, and all health bodies, had been invited to participate in a fast track programme. It was noted that it had acted as a catalyst across the NHS and the County Council to attempt to assuage issues, such as those experienced at Calderstones. The desire to set an example to the rest of the country was emphasised, this being to reduce the use of places like Calderstones and the successful delivery of services within the community. It was noted that the fast track programme had been well received and there had been some positive feedback. However, it was stressed that there were issues. It was stressed that in order for it to be possible to support people with learning disabilities, the correct workforce was needed, the right providers, facilities and funding, along with meticulous planning for the sake of the individual's happiness and confidence, and the comfort of communities and families.

The Committee was informed that there were 1,000 staff employed at Calderstones and therefore it was emphasised to be a major employer within the County. It was conveyed that, as a result of uncertainty around its future, it had made industrial relations difficult, with many issues materialising. It was explained that Calderstones was faced with plans to reduce bed numbers significantly, and therefore this would reflect on job numbers. It was stressed that it was not only an employment challenge but also a quality, continuity and consistency issue.

It was stressed that there was a need to ensure the NHS fulfilled its obligations with Calderstones and pressure needed to be maintained at a national level as the issue had a national profile and that services needed to be supported towards success.

Members queried if there was a financial risk to LCC within the fast track programme. It was explained that it was a financial risk with consideration of the base budget reductions recently implemented.

Members asked how the financial risks could be offset. It was expressed that on a local level the Health and Wellbeing Board would need to uptake a strong stance and the need was stressed for Blackburn and Darwen Borough Council and Blackpool Council to make their position known.

The Committee enquired how the County Council could work effectively with the NHS. It was expressed that this could be achieved via a close working relationship with the NHS and other local colleagues. Working with representatives of the Local Government Association (LGA) was also suggested as the LGA recognised that this was a local authority issue.

Members raised queries around the community safety aspect of the resettlement of people with consideration of the challenges for the County Council. It was explained that the Ministry of Justice had noted that it was a key issue and they would be overseeing this very closely. It was explained that the Ministry of Justice's plans for discharge had protracted interesting discussions.

The Committee made reference to the increasing demands and additional burdens which had occurred through the funding challenges that had arisen. Therefore, the Committee enquired what the approach would be going forward. It was stressed that, going forward, over the next two to three years there would be a need for support from politicians to ensure proposed difficult savings were fully implemented. It was explained that there had been legal challenges which had been accepted, and therefore the procurement process had been hampered. It was also noted that individuals had taken legal action also. It was explained that the County Council employed over 1,300 staff and they had been made aware of the need for a high level of service despite the reduction in funding. It was also stressed that there was a need for services to be delivered much more efficiently.

Members expressed that there had been previous concerns regarding transition periods between child to adult social care and it was noted that the closer working arrangement was welcomed.

The Committee noted the introduction of the National Living Wage and made reference to certain sectors and industries which had communicated that, due to this, some organisations had been cutting down on staffing numbers. It was therefore asked if any service providers had explained that the introduction of the National Living Wage had impacted upon care workers and therefore patients. It was explained that this was not something the County Council was immediately worried about, and in the short term, the introduction of the National Living Wage didn't offer anything particularly challenging.

The Committee asked what the impact would be from the European Court of Justice ruling that resulted in some staff being paid for their commute. It was conveyed that this was anticipated to have an impact to the County Council's services, but not a significant one. It was explained that the rota for staff would be organised to ensure this would have a small impact. It was explained that this was more of an issue for staff who worked in rural settings, and it was hoped that an understanding could be reached to reduce this impact.

Members queried what planning could be undertaken, with consideration of the County Council's reduced budget, to deal with an ageing population and therefore a larger amount of people who had dementia. It was explained that it was recognised that people were living longer and healthier lives, and it was

acknowledged that as people were living longer, there were more people suffering from dementia. It was explained that there were specialist services that supported people with dementia which varied depending on the level of support they required, for example, if they needed to be placed within a care home setting.

The Chair brought to the Committee's attention a request from Tony Pounder for a Motion to be supported around the future of Calderstones and encouragement of all partners to work within the NHS around the Fast Track Programme.

Members queried who this would be addressed to. Tony Pounder suggested this could be sent to the Secretary of State, Jeremy Hunt, and the CEO of the NHS, Simon Stevens. Tony Pounder expressed that he was unsure if this would be facilitated via the Scrutiny Committee itself, or the Health and Wellbeing Board.

The following wording was supplied to the Committee;

1. Ensure that appropriate public or partner consultations and democratic scrutiny are undertaken by the NHS on the future of Calderstones.
2. Ensure that the additional financial risks to LCC and other partners from the Fast Track Programme are considered.
3. That every encouragement is given to LCC, other Local Authorities and NHS partners to work together to ensure that the programme delivers successfully on its vision and purpose."

Tony Pounder expressed that it be suggested to the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board that a strong stance be taken regarding the financial risks of the fast track programme.

Tony Pounder emphasised the need for LCC, other Local Authorities and NHS partners to work collaboratively to ensure services didn't suffer and suggested that the Health and Wellbeing Board could monitor the progress of the fast track programme.

The Chair thanked Tony Pounder, Nicola Clear and CC Tony Martin for providing the report.

Resolved;

That the report 'Learning Disabilities – Challenges and Opportunities' be noted.

That the Motion proposed be supported by the Committee.

6. Workplan and Task Group Update

Resolved; That the work plan and task group update be noted

7. Urgent Business

There was no urgent business.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee will be held on Friday, 16 October, 2015, at 10:00am at the County Hall, Preston in Cabinet Room 'B'.

I Young
Director of Governance, Finance
and Public Services

County Hall
Preston