

Lancashire County Council

Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Friday, 10th February, 2017 at 10.00 am in Cabinet Room 'B' - The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston

Present:

County Councillor Bill Winlow (Chair)

County Councillors

Ms L Collinge	R Shewan
C Crompton	V Taylor
K Iddon	D Watts
D O'Toole	G Wilkins
Mrs L Oades	B Yates
M Parkinson	

County Councillor Keith Iddon replaced County Councillor John Shedwick for this meeting

1. Apologies

Apologies were received County Councillor Alyson Barnes.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Interests

None were disclosed.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 December 2016

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2016 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

7. Supervision and Support to Front-Line Social Workers

With the agreement of the Committee Item 7 was brought forward to be presented first to Members. The Chair welcomed Louise Taylor, Corporate Director for Operations and Delivery, to the meeting. A verbal update was presented on the supervision and support to front line social workers. This issue was originally discussed at the Audit and Governance Committee on 30 January. A report was also presented that identified progress made against the internal audit plan which highlighted an issue relating to service delivery. In relation to adult services only limited assurance could be determined and Members raised

concerns around the information provided, particularly around case supervision and the lack of responses to the request for sample supervision documentation. Members were informed that the service recognised the issues outlined and the information given in the report had been highlighted to the Corporate Director for Operations and Delivery. It was confirmed that pilot projects were in place to support working practices and processes to address some of the issues highlighted.

Questions and comments by the Committee in relation to the report were as follows:

- Supervision was important because it assures that the practice provided to the people of Lancashire was safe and effective. It also ensured that staff were adequately supported to do the job required.
- The Committee was informed that In 2016 LCC had embarked on a redesign of Adult Social Care in partnership with Newton Europe.
- The number of team managers had increased and no team manager would have more than 10 social workers accountable to them. This would ensure sufficient oversight and control of social work practice. Managers were expected to spend at least 2 hours on supervision with social workers at least 8 times a year.
- Members were pleased to hear that weekly case progression meetings had been introduced, which meant teams sat down every week with their manager to discuss individuals currently being assessed or reviewed.
- There was a principal social worker in place who did an annual health check with all social workers in the county to discuss what support and supervision they had received. The feedback was fairly positive.
- Members were pleased that things had improved greatly since the initial audit had taken place. They also requested a report back to Scrutiny Committee at 6 monthly intervals.
- Regarding the health check instigated by the principal social worker, staff did not have to give their names and it would be an honest appraisal of the feedback.
- In coming up with a new structure financial sustainability was vital. Some savings plans had been foregone from Adult Social Care for support for front line social workers. The new model had been agreed. LCC was satisfied that this was a safer and fairer way of working for staff and managers.

Resolved:

1. The Scrutiny Committee noted the update report
2. A copy of the minutes be sent to Audit and Governance Committee.
3. That the Corporate Director for Operations and Delivery be requested to attend the Scrutiny Committee to provide an update on the issues highlighted in the audit relating to case management in Adult Services.

4. Ormskirk - A market town strategy

The Chair welcomed County Councillor Nikki Hennessy; Cathryn Jackson, West Lancashire Borough Council; and Colin Brady, West Lancashire Borough Council to the meeting to present the report on the market town strategy for Ormskirk.

Members were informed that in November 2016 the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee of West Lancashire Borough Council completed a review entitled 'A Market Town Strategy for Ormskirk'.

In undertaking the review the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee looked at various themed topics that comprised:

- The market
- Car parking
- The environment and special features
- Leisure and the night-time economy
- Technology and marketing (including tourism) and
- The contribution of Edge Hill University as part of the work being undertaken in relation to the Ormskirk Town Strategy.

During the course of the review the Committee held cross party workshops to obtain the wider views of Members and gain an ongoing insight into the progression of the work, particularly related to Ormskirk Town Centre. The strategy had taken two years to complete.

The Committee produced a number of recommendations, one of which was that the County Council's Scrutiny Committee received a copy of the final report. Discussions had taken place with County Councillor John Fillis, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, about the recommendations and he had agreed that things could progress.

Questions and comments by the Committee in relation to the report were as follows:

- Due to the pedestrianisation of Ormskirk town centre, Members commented the Traffic Regulation Orders needed to be sorted out.
- There had been an improvement in the night time economy of the town centre.
- As Ormskirk was a historical market town it was vital that there was a better parking area for coaches bringing visitors to the town.
- It was noted that the discipline of the layout of the market stalls had not been good over the years. Many of them overflowed and caused problems with congestion for pedestrians.
- The Committee was informed that West Lancashire Borough Council was looking at implementing an Ormskirk website to include all information in one portal. A footfall monitor had also been installed in the town centre which provided data on the number of people entering the town centre.
- West Lancashire Borough Council had worked with other partners and consultants on how to brand Ormskirk. The brand had been agreed with councillors and was being rolled out. The Council was looking at the vision of Ormskirk in 10 to 20 years' time.
- Consultations had been held with town centre businesses about no access to the centre between 10:00am and 4:00pm. No serious concerns were raised as business stated they could work around these times.
- Ormskirk was a compact town and the car parks were very close to the town centre and had free parking for disabled people with close, easy access to the town centre. Consultations had been held with disability groups, West Lancashire Borough Council had took on their views and there had been no adverse comments.
- It was noted that one problem for Ormskirk was the lack of accommodation. West Lancashire Borough Council was involved in a project with Marketing Lancashire around the problem of hospitality.
- The Leeds Liverpool canal was close to Ormskirk centre. More buses could be provided for canal users wishing to visit the town centre.
- LCC should be more proactive in promoting regional areas and encourage regional development.
- The Committee welcomed the strategy and requested more feedback. The overall feeling was any redevelopment in any area was a bonus. Town centres had to be progressed and re-energised.

Resolved: The Scrutiny Committee fed back its comments and supported the recommendations contained within the report.

5. Core Systems of the Council

The Chair welcomed Lisa Kitto, Director of Corporate Services, to the meeting to present an update report on Core Systems.

Systems were an integral part of LCC's business. Not only did systems support the way services carried out their day to day business, they also provided an opportunity to carry out tasks more efficiently and effectively and engage with customers and clients in a different way and in a way that suited their needs better. All of this brought challenges for LCC but if LCC got it right the opportunities were significant. This opportunity was being embraced by many other councils as LCC downsized and looked to reduce costs there was a real opportunity to consider what a Lancashire of the future would look like with ICT as an enabler.

Over recent years the County Council had invested significantly in its core systems and a future pipeline was being developed. The report set out the current position in relation to core ICT systems and the opportunities for the future.

Questions and comments by the Committee in relation to the report were as follows:

- The Committee were pleased that LCC was working towards a more consolidated format.
- Regarding iSupplier with the e-Invoicing system it was noted that this functionality had not been exploited enough. As the new system had started more suppliers were engaging with LCC electronically.
- There were still issues around paying suppliers on time. This had been reported to the Audit and Governance Committee. A project group had been set up to look into these issues.
- Regarding Liquid Logic and Children's Services the Committee was informed that a detailed report had gone to the Audit and Governance Committee in September 2016 that set out the work done as part of project accuracy. A health check had been done with Liquid Logic asking them what LCC had in its system that was different to other authorities. A number of actions were picked up on and were changed.
- There were issues around staffing hierarchy. As staff changed and moved on there was no process in place to keep the system up to date. A strong process was now in place.

- The processes that social workers were adopting was looked at. There were different working practices in different offices. Learning and Development was brought in to make sure consistent ways of working were in place. Social workers were trained to learn what the system was about.
- The follow up Ofsted report did not find any issues regarding the system or the data which was accessed. This was now being replicated in terms of Liquid Logic Adults.
- Good feedback had been received regarding the core system of MinkZ. The MinkZ system was being used in services such as transport and social care.
- Regarding Customer Access and the Genesys core system, the Committee was informed that this was a two phase project and phase 2 was now starting. Specific areas of the new functionality were being worked on and one service would be picked to work with. This was to get evidence that it worked. Once evidence had been obtained it would be rolled out in LCC. Once it was successfully rolled out there would be an implementation roadmap that would pull in other services.
- Concerns were raised about bed blocking in hospitals. Members enquired how much priority was being placed on electronic discharges. Electronic hospital discharges were reliant on a piece of software called EI Press which was an NHS tool. LCC was reliant on the NHS to get this product to a level where it can be used for hospital discharges. Electronic discharges was the logical way to go and LCC was reliant on the NHS to develop the software to make this succeed. The concerns around bed blocking would be fed back to the Digital Health Board. The Committee requested a report back in two months on the bed blocking issues.
- It was beneficial that LCC was working in partnership with the NHS but involvement with the DWP was very limited. LCC's focus was mainly around health at the moment.
- In terms of Genesys and agile working the Committee stated that the experience of Members working at home needed to be improved as they had limited access. Work was being done with Democratic Services to improve this.

Resolved:

1. The Scrutiny Committee noted the report.

2. The Scrutiny Committee requested an update report on electronic hospital discharge issues for its March meeting.

6. LCC Savings Programme

The Chair welcomed Richard Hothersall, Head of Service Programme Office, to the meeting. A copy of the LCC Savings Programme presentation, which was given to the Budget Scrutiny Working Group when it met on 12 January, was provided for the Scrutiny Committee.

The combined savings approved by Cabinet covered more or less every area of the Council. It was pointed out to the Group that a new way of working was required. The track record of delivery was not as good as it should be. The immediate hurdles to tackle were:

- Timescales – LCC needed to hit the ground running with immediate savings to manage and minimal time to plan;
- Scope – there were 114 different projects of historic savings and just approved savings;
- Mobilisation – there was lots of activity across LCC so the savings programme needed coordination and management.

The Savings Programme was owned by Management Team. There were dedicated Management Team meetings held every 2 weeks but additional meetings around savings had been added. Portfolios were owned by Directors and there was a specific agenda item at their monthly meetings. The projects for savings were owned by the Heads of Service and they were held to account for the delivery of these projects. The Programme was managed by the Programme Office and it assigned Programme and Project Managers and they worked closely with the Finance Team.

Each saving decision was classed as a project and grouped into the Director portfolios. The Project Managers were assigned to a series of projects. The Programme Managers were assigned to both manage some of the savings projects and also be responsible for oversight of complex portfolios. The Programme Office was a dedicated resource to ensure delivery of the savings.

The Group was informed that there was monthly reporting against:

- Activity
- Financial delivery
- Forecast based on delivery plans and also actuals through finance monitoring
- Report on all but focus discussions on exceptions

The Savings Programme was RAG rated on value and time. Green was for no outstanding issues which threatened delivery, and, Red was when there were outstanding issues which threatened delivery. The Group enquired who actually scrutinised the RAG reports. It was Richard Hothersall from the Programme Office who scrutinised the RAG reports from a Head of Service perspective. The Leader and Deputy Leader were briefed on this. The Group felt it was unfair for one officer to scrutinise.

Regarding the current position the delivery rate of savings equated to 93% and the forecast of less reserves needed was £21m.

There was a reduced delivery in savings for transport for people going to day centres, and, a non-delivery in savings for accommodation and facilities management.

There were delays in the Savings Programme regarding Museums and the Savings Programme Team was in discussions with third parties over this. There were also a delay with the Knott End Ferry due to contractual timescales. The Group was informed that the ferry would probably continue with no financial input from LCC. The Team was also in negotiations over delays with Public Health re-commissioning. This was due to complexity in delivery.

There were risks with Adults savings mitigated by Newton Europe and LCC was working with Newton Europe over this. Regarding library reductions, there was a reduced scope of around £2m. There were cost neutral concerns around bus stations, and, there were community asset transfer costs around Countryside Services.

The Savings Programme Team was working closely with Finance, HR and Zero Based Budget Review colleagues and was also attending fortnightly meetings with Management Team. The Savings Programme Team would ensure robust and honest reporting and continue to work with services to deliver savings. The Team would also attempt where possible to bring forward savings to offset delays to others.

Questions and comments by the Committee in relation to the report were as follows:

- The Committee requested a more detailed list of delays to the Savings Programme.
- It was noted that the national minimum wage was having an impact on the financial situation of LCC. The County Council's income was unsustainable. LCC could not continue for more than 2 years without another settlement from Central Government.
- The Committee was informed that the statutory obligations had been laid out clearly at the Budget Scrutiny Working Group. Some of the obligations

were difficult as a lot of the non-statutory services were necessary to make the statutory ones work.

- Regarding delays in the Savings Programme with museums, and, Public Health Re-commissioning, a follow on update report would be presented at the March meeting of the Committee.

Resolved:

1. The Scrutiny Committee noted and commented on the report
2. The Scrutiny Committee requested an update report on the delays with museums, and, Public Health re-commissioning.

8. Work Plan and Task Group Update

The Work Plan was presented to the Committee regarding upcoming topics and future topics not yet scheduled as well as an update on ongoing Task Groups.

At the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 17 March there would be update reports on electronic hospital discharge issues, and, delays with museums, and, Public Health re-commissioning.

Members requested that when Task Groups met and came up with a set of recommendations, these recommendations were acted on by officers.

The Committee asked if there could be an investigation into what had happened to the books after the libraries had closed.

A report on the joint up work between LCC and the health service would be presented at the April meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

Resolved: The Committee approved the 2016/17 work plan.

9. Urgent Business

There were no items of Urgent Business.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee will take place on Friday 17th March 2017 at 10.00am in Cabinet Room B (The Diamond Jubilee Room) at the County Hall, Preston.

I Young
Director of Governance, Finance
and Public Services

County Hall
Preston