

Lancashire County Council

Internal Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Friday, 16th March, 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 Gibson	A Riggott
S Holgate	M Salter
E Lewis	D Whipp
J Mein	P Williamson
E Nash	G Wilkins
J Purcell	

1. Apologies

There were no apologies.

County Councillors Julie Gibson, Jennifer Mein, Jenny Purcell and Phillippa Williamson replaced County Councillors John Fillis, Azhar Ali, Paul Rigby and Jayne Rear respectively.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None were disclosed

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 January 2018

Resolved: That the minutes from the meeting held on 19 January 2018 be confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

4. HS&R Update on the Preparedness of the County Council

The Chair welcomed Paula Bull, Resilience Service Delivery Manager; and Mark Taylor, Emergency Planning Manager, to the meeting.

The report presented explained that over recent years the Resilience Team within the Health, Safety & Resilience Service (HS&R) had, within the confines of delivering work to meet statutory responsibilities (Civil Contingencies Act) and satisfy external regulators and partnerships, continued to develop and improve the preparedness of the county council.

The report summarised the current position of the county council with respect to preparedness in these arenas and was broken down for ease into specific functional areas.

Members enquired how businesses were supported in emergency situations. Part of the Resilience Team's responsibilities was to provide support to people affected during an emergency and this was done through an Emergency Response Group. This was a group made up of volunteers who would provide emotional and practical support to people impacted by an emergency. The volunteers were LCC staff or ex-employees. There were over 70 members in the group.

It was highlighted that support materials for schools had been developed. The School Emergency Plan Template had been reviewed and refreshed and was uploaded onto the School's Portal in June 2017. Further discussions were underway around a training package teachers could use with primary school children about resilience.

Members enquired what support there was for businesses badly affected in emergency situations. It was confirmed that discussions would take place between authorities in two-tiered authority areas to see who would take the lead in support of businesses. If more than two districts were affected then LCC would step in and lead. LCC would provide business continuity advice before emergency situations occurred.

The question of the team's resilient capacity for responding to wide scale emergencies was raised. Members were advised that when there was a wide scale event, there was a strategic group which came together for response. All affected district councils were in this group along with LCC. It was important to identify needs and respond accordingly. Emergency response teams now wore tabards so they could be easily identified.

In terms of preparedness, Members asked how LCC supported the volunteer groups. The Resilience Team provided training for these groups, advised on assistance and signposted to funding. It was important to link the groups into LCC's response. In addition there was a substantial support package in place for these volunteer groups.

It was noted that flood action groups had their own updated lists of vulnerable people and the question was raised as to what contact the Resilience Team had with these groups. Members were advised that community involvement and resilience groups were largely driven by experience of emergencies.

It was pointed out to the Committee that the Resilience Team operated in compliance with the law. Scrutiny for the CoMAH Regulations and the REPIR Regulations for nuclear and chemical sites was done by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the Environment Agency (EA) and gave the Resilience Team a rating. The CCA was currently not under any scrutiny from central

government. There was a Resilience Capability Survey carried out every two years which reviewed LCC against other local authorities in the country

It was noted that the Resilience Team was doing considerable work on emergency responses with local groups. The committee stated it would be a good idea to link county councillors into the work being done with local groups.

The Resilience Team was working on better publicity and promotion for its 'Stay in the Know' website. The website had been running through the Lancashire Resilience Forum for about two years.

Resolved: That;

- i. The report presented be noted.
- ii. It be noted that the Authority is currently meeting all its legal and contractual requirements in relation to resilience (emergency preparedness).

5. Health, Safety & Resilience Overview and Risk Register

Paula Bull, Resilience Service Delivery Manager; and Mark Taylor, Emergency Planning Manager, presented a report which gave an overview of the Health, Safety and Resilience Service (HS&R Service) which operated within a plethora of legislation and internal policy to help protect the wellbeing of LCC staff, by providing a safe and supported work environment; and the wellbeing of the population of Lancashire by ensuring robust plans (and a resilient response) were in place to help mitigate the effects of natural and man-made incidents and large scale outbreaks of disease.

Much of the work of the Resilience Team within the service was linked to internal and external risk registers which provided a basis for much of the work production and through the Community Risk Register in the form of 'Preparing for Emergencies in Lancashire' provided the public with a link to risk based information.

It was noted that there was tremendous support from voluntary agencies for aiding the Resilience Teams response. The team was now looking at taking the care to the people, instead of the people to the care.

Members felt there could be better ways of publicising the emergency contact numbers, maybe in business card format.

Members raised their concerns over the 101 phone number service and stated that it was swamped in times of emergencies with long waiting times. A request was made for LCC to explore the option of a dedicated number that would be open to the public.

Resolved: That the;

- i. Report presented be noted.

- ii. Uptake of places on the specific LCC elected member training amongst their colleagues be promoted.
- iii. Use of 'In The Know' to be public be promulgated.

6. Progress Report on the Reopened Libraries

The Chair welcomed Julie Bell, Head of Service – Libraries, Museums, Culture and Registration Services; and Steve Lloyd, Libraries, Museums, Culture and Registration Services Manager, to the meeting.

The report presented provided information and progress on the reopening of libraries across Lancashire. Regarding the next steps the libraries that had reopened had upgraded public library network computers. Another key delivery service was mobile provision and home library service and the team was working on a review of this. The committee was informed that LCC delivered a prison library service to five prisons in Lancashire. Friends groups were key to moving forward. Workforce development was also vitally important particularly around information and digital.

The committee was informed that there was coordination between libraries in different geographical areas for different late night openings and different closed days.

Sustainability of the libraries was a major concern. The team was working closely with friends groups around sustainability. Councillors could get involved with communities in forming more friends groups. It was also working with volunteers and the issue around self-service machines. It was vital to work collaboratively with communities. The team was also working closely with the Asset Management Team.

Members were informed that a performance tool was in place which collected information for each individual library to see how they were performing. This information was available for county councillors, management team and the staff of the libraries. It was highlighted that performance was not just about issuing books but also what activities were taking place in the libraries.

The committee praised the prison library service as this had proved a very successful delivery service. The service was nationally recognised as well as the home delivery service and the mobile library service. It was noted that the digital library service was a growth service and an extremely successful and accessible service.

Resolved: That the progress on the reopening of the libraries programme be noted.

7. 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 requested the topic of Winter Service Plan be brought forward.

In relation to the 'grit bin' task group, it was requested that it be noted that the issue was much broader issue than grit bins. And that it should also include prioritisation of routes.

Resolved: That the work plan be noted.

8. Urgent Business

There were no items of Urgent Business

9. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee would take place on Friday 18 May 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