Meeting of the Scrutiny Management Board (Thursday 8th November 2022)

Chair: (County Councillor David Westley)

Part I (Open to Press and Public)

Cabinet Member Portfolio Update

County Councillor Michael Green, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing and County Councillor Graham Gooch, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care were welcomed to the meeting to provide the Board with details on recent and forthcoming activity within their portfolios.

Resolved: That the verbal updates be noted.

Budget Scrutiny

A report was provided with the agenda on the Budget and Savings Proposals 2023/24 which was considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 3 November 2022.

Resolved: That

i.   The Money Matters 2022/23 Position – Quarter 1 report be noted.
ii. The tracking of budgeted savings agreed, and budget growth items be noted.
iii. Further information be provided from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change to assure the Board that there would be no detrimental impact as a result of the proposed saving identified (as at PE002).
iv. Further information be requested to determine how robust the projections are and how work would be undertaken with the district councils (as at W001).

Meeting of the Children, Families and Skills Scrutiny Committee
(Wednesday 26th October 2022)

Chair: (County Councillor Andrea Kay)

Part I (Open to Press and Public)

SEND and Specialist Provision Update

The report presented was concerned with the county council's provision for children and young people in Lancashire who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and particularly those with education, health and care plans (EHCPs). A presentation was also delivered to the committee on SEND and Specialist provision.

Resolved: That:

i) The following recommendation be shared with the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills: that consideration be given to making extra resource available to support the work of the Inclusion Service on SEND and Specialist Provision, and that any proposals should be considered by scrutiny before a decision is taken by Cabinet;

ii) Data on the county council's performance in relation to assessments and provision of Education, Health and Care Plans be shared with committee members;

iii) Further information on the process associated with Education, Health and Care Plans be made available to all county councillors, either through a Bite Size Briefing or vodcast; and

iv) Financial data highlighting the challenges facing the county council in relation to SEND and Specialist Provision be provided to committee members.

Meeting of the Health and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee
(Wednesday 2nd November 2022)

Chair: (County Councillor David Westley)

Part I (Open to Press and Public)

Update on Social Care Reforms and the Impact on the Care Market

Members were provided with a report on 'Social Care Reforms and the Impact on the Care Market'. The report provided an outline on the Actions the county council is undertaking in order to remain compliant and respond to the predicted increase in demand on its Adult Social Care Services.

Resolved: That;

i.   The national picture in relation to social care reforms and the potential impact the Fair Cost of Care exercise and the Market Sustainability Plan will have on the Local Authority and the care market be considered.
ii.   Further detail on the online assessment process be provided to the March 2023 meeting of the committee.
iii. Detail on the Fair Cost of Care exercise be reported back to the committee in March 2023.

Meeting of the Environment, Economic Growth and Transport Scrutiny Committee (Thursday 20th October 2022)

Chair: (County Councillor Rupert Swarbrick)

Part I (Open to Press and Public)

Highway Safety Inspection Policy, KPIs and Lovecleanstreets App

The report provided an overview of the current Highway Safety Inspection Policy and set out how the new Lovecleanstreets App would be included in the policy.

Resolved: That;

1. The Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport give consideration to;

   a) Introducing new key performance indicators on recurring visits to both potholes and gullies and another for gully repairs on both gritting and non-gritting routes.
   b) Ensuring that all key performance reporting to the committee includes RAG rated tables and for briefing notes to be circulated to the Environment, Economic Growth and Transport Scrutiny Committee at regular intervals.
   c) Expanding the functionality of the Lovecleanstreets app to provide more detailed communication to councillors on progress with casework reported via the app.
   d) Modifying the app to take account of the suggestions as set out in the minutes.
   e) Setting a timescale for integrating Public Rights of Way reporting within the Lovecleanstreets app.
   f) Writing to the Secretary of State for Transport to request a change in legislation to extend the defect liability period currently applied to reinstatements by utility companies.
   g) Amending the Highway Safety Inspection Policy to include a specified timeframe for when repairs in conservation areas should be completed by.

2. A briefing note on defence against highways claims be circulated to the Environment, Economic Growth and Transport Scrutiny Committee.

Meeting of the Community, Cultural and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee (Thursday 29ᵗʰ September 2022)

Chair: (County Councillor Ged Mirfin)

Part I (Open to Press and Public)

Use of Buildings and the Council's New Ways of Working

The report provided a summary of data about the use of county council assets, how that information might help the development of options for the county council to better utilise its assets as part of the improvement journey, and the disposal or transfer of council owned buildings.

Resolved: That the following recommendations be shared with the Cabinet Member for Resources, HR and Property (Deputy Leader):

   i.   That the PowerPoint presentation shared during the meeting is updated on a regular basis and made available to all county councillors through C-First.

   ii.   That a regular update is presented to Cabinet on the council's use of buildings as part of the Money Matters report.

   iii.   That the following information be made available to committee members after the meeting:
        a. A list of buildings that the council is expecting to dispose of;
        b. The cost of unused council buildings; and
        c. Buildings that are not being used by the council and which could be made available to other partners, including district councils.

   iv.   That the committee is updated on officers' work and future corporate policies and guidance relating to occupancy levels in council buildings, with agreement from the Scrutiny Management Board, at a later date.

Think Councillor

A report was presented on 'Think Councillor', the council's approach to ensure that the needs, interests and views of councillors were prioritised and promoted in all aspects of the council's work.

Resolved: That;

   i.   The report on Think Councillor be noted;

   ii.   Officers be asked to consider the following:

a. The technology difficulties councillors face in accessing their emails and the information available online.
b. That the development of the online County Councillor "Dashboard" includes a function that allows councillors to access and search for all the information related to their divisions in one place.
c. Formally setting out the time period in which officers should respond to correspondence from councillors.
d. Ensuring that the information that is shared with councillors is relevant to their divisions, so that councillors do not receive unnecessary emails.
e. That, where officers are already planning to visit a site or division, the relevant county councillor is informed and invited to attend.
f. That a weekly activity list be produced and circulated to councillors relating to highways work in their divisions.
g. That a 'meet the officers' event is held for all county councillors to meet officers within different council services.

iii. With agreement from the Scrutiny Management Board, the Head of Service for Highways be invited to a future committee meeting to report on how the council's Highways Service is engaging with and informing county councillors.

Meeting of the Community, Cultural and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee (Thursday 10th November 2022)

Chair: (County Councillor Ged Mirfin)

Part I (Open to Press and Public)

The Council's Approach to Data and Analytics

The report presented provided the committee with an overview of the county council's current position regarding its use of data and analytics.

Resolved: That the following recommendations be shared with the Cabinet Member for Community and Cultural Services:

i.   That the council's Audit, Risk and Governance Committee should consider the risks and governance associated with the council's data and analytics;
ii.   Regarding Figure 3 in the report, that a further report is provided to the Community, Cultural and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee on the costs associated with reaching each of the milestones set out;
iii. That a list of all the data dashboards developed to date, including the indicative costs of developing each of them, be shared with committee members after the meeting;
iv.   That information on the steps that are taken to develop the council's data tools, and how work in this area for different council services is prioritised, be shared with committee members after the meeting;
v.   That, when the data dashboards are launched, training is provided to county councillors on how to use the dashboards relevant to their roles and work areas; and
vi.   That the possibility of utilising AI (Artificial Intelligence) be considered, to respond to the current gap in the council's capabilities relating to data.

Libraries and Library Friends' Groups

The report presented provided a response to the committee's request to review how the Library Friends' groups supported the county council to deliver library services, and how the council in turn supports them.

Resolved: That the following recommendations be shared with the Cabinet Member for Community and Cultural Services:

i.   That consideration be given to how the relationship between Library Friends' Groups and local Parish, Town and Borough Councils could be improved;
ii.   That additional information on establishing Library Friends' Groups be provided to committee members after the meeting;

iii. That information on constituting Library Friends' Groups and the council's Premises Use Policy be circulated to all Friends' Groups; and

iv. That the recommendations and plans moving forward, as set out in the report, be endorsed.

Report on the Work of the Warm and Welcome Warm Places Task Group

The Chair presented a report that provided an overview of the work undertaken by the Warm and Welcome Public Spaces Task Group at its meetings held on 1, 15 and 29 September 2022.

Resolved: That the work of the Warm and Welcome Public Spaces Task Group to date, as set out in the report, be noted.