

At a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held in Council Chamber, Allerdale House on Friday 19 August 2022 at 1.30 pm

Members

Councillor Michael Heaslip (Co-Chair)

Councillor Carni McCarron-Holmes (Co-Chair)

Councillor Allan Daniels

Councillor Malcolm Grainger

Councillor Iain Greaney

Councillor Daniel Horsley

Councillor Sally Lansbury

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Carole Armstrong, Councillor Barbara Cannon, Councillor John Cook, Councillor Patrick Gorrill and Councillor Paul Scott

Staff Present

N Hardy, I Hinde and G Roach

123. Declaration of Interests

None declared.

124. Questions

None received.

125. Public Participation

None received.

126. Verbal Update on Local Government Reorganisation

The Assistant Chief Executive (Policy, Performance and Economic Strategy) provided members with a verbal update on LGR.

The LGR programme had now moved from the Design to the Implementation phase, therefore structure of responsible officer boards had been revised to better enable delivery.

The Day 1 Board were managing a list of 200 actions required to be completed for the new unitary councils, and an independent fire service, to begin operating from 1 April 2023.

A new Head of Paid Service had been recruited for both authorities, Sam Plum as the Westmorland and Furness Council's Chief Executive and Andrew Seekings for Cumberland Council. The appointments would start from 31 December 2022. The recruitment process had also begun for the appointment of the statutory officers, the S151 and the Monitoring Officers.

A draft Council Plan had just been released for consultation which was open until 5 September 2022. Members were informed that already nearly 200 responses had been received.

Members asked questions around the workings of the Shadow Executive and future arrangements for Planning and Development.

Resolved

That the update be noted.

127. Forward Plan

The Forward Plan was noted.

128. Consideration of safer streets project presentation - formulation of questions

The Committee discussed presentation slides on the St Michaels Safer Streets Project and collated questions in preparation of receiving a fuller presentation from the Safer Streets Co-ordinator at their next meeting.

The following questions were raised:

- When did the scheme start?
- Is it complete, if so, when?
- Page 13 – Matched funding £77,875 – which budget did this come from
- Page 14 – were the torches deployed in/for just the target area
- Page 15 – CCTV – who operates/looks at it, who maintains and deals with/pays for any issues/breakages
- Page 17 – Safer Street Assistants – who are they employed by and answerable to, when was the recruitment/when did they start, what is their contract term
- How effective has the scheme been, what is the Value for Money
- Regarding the percentages of burglaries – have they reduced
 - Why did Cumbria Police specifically target residential burglary in St Michaels Central and St Michaels South? what was the rationale behind the interventions?
 - Why were 150 homes specifically provided with interventions and what was the highest reported crimes in that area?
 - Residents I have spoken to in this area about crime are more concerned about violence/assault/anti-social behaviour and supply of drugs. Police records show that the highest number of reported crimes in the area and in fact across the district is about violence and sexual assault. Perhaps it would be a good idea for staff to provide OSC with local police data (or heat maps).
 - What are the police doing to:
 - prevent the drug supply trade in Workington?
 - reducing incidents of domestic violence?
 - using its powers to close down rental properties where residents are known to be causing disturbance/offences?

Resolved

That the questions and comments be forwarded to the Safer Streets Co-ordinator ahead of the next meeting.

129. Work Programme and Outcomes Monitoring

Members noted the work programme and discussed the expected items for the next meeting.

The Chair requested that the S151 Officer and the Head of Procurement be invited to attend the next meeting for the 'Inflation and Cost of Living impact on Council Services' item. Members would like a response on what the council was doing in preparation for the impact on services and the budget.

130. Task and Finish Group/Working Group Updates

The Chair provided an update on the TFGs;

- Access to Health Services – GPs and Dentistry TFG had now met. They were experiencing some difficulties in finding witnesses to attend the meetings, officers were working on engagement and some social media posts had gone out seeking members of the public to get involved,
- Customer Services TFG had a first meeting scheduled in September.

The meeting closed at 2.26 pm