

At a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held in Council Chamber, Allerdale House on Friday 17 March 2023 at 1.30 pm

Members

Councillor Michael Heaslip (Co-Chair)

Councillor Carni McCarron-Holmes (Co-Chair)

Councillor Carole Armstrong

Councillor Allan Daniels

Councillor Patrick Gorrill

Councillor Daniel Horsley

Councillor Sally Lansbury

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Barbara Cannon, Councillor John Cook, Councillor Malcolm Grainger, Councillor Iain Greaney and Councillor Paul Scott

Staff Present

I Brogden, A FitzGerald, I Hinde, K Kerrigan, G Roach and L Stamper

410. Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 17 February and 3 March 2023 were signed as a correct record.

411. Declaration of Interests

None declared.

412. Questions

Mr Stephen Harwood, Keswick, submitted the following question in relation to agenda item 6 -

'I would like to thank Councillors and the Team involved for honouring the commitment to progress the project for new Leisure Facilities in Keswick to this stage. Having read the Feasibility Study we support the conclusion that the current site is the preferred option for development of the new facilities. Given the negative financial appraisals put forward, has the Council considered introducing other activities and working in partnership with other interested parties to maximise the site potential and improve the ongoing financial viability of the project?

Our Friends of Keswick Leisure Group remain willing to help to develop a successful project to serve the local community and the enormous potential of the tourist economy for the benefit of the whole region'

On behalf of the PH for Leisure and Tourism the Programme Director provided the following response –

'You will be aware that the Feasibility Study is the first stage in the process, leading on to the development of a Business Case. We have discussed the opportunity to include additional activities and co-location of partner organisations as well as commercial potential to support the feasibility of a new facility. We know there are some great case studies on how this can work. However, the timescales of the work with FMG didn't allow for the depth of conversation or any level of commitment that would have been needed to be

able to include it as part of the options appraisal and robust business case. Equally with Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), some of those partners who might be best placed to increase the potential of any facility weren't in a position to be able to progress those conversations. I am sure however that Cumberland will consider those options as part of the next steps following the final outline business case'.

Mr Harwood then asked for clarification on who would be taking the project forward following LGR in the new Cumberland Council.

It was explained the responsibility in the new Cumberland Council would likely sit under the Vibrant and Healthy Places Portfolio, although that would be confirmed at the Annual Meeting on 13 April, the lead Director would be the Director of Place, Sustainable Growth and Transport and then the Assistant Director of Neighbourhoods.

Ms Debbie Devereux, Keswick, submitted the following question in relation to agenda item 6 -

'Representing the currently non swimming community of Keswick, and the tourists – both day trippers and national / international visitors, who flock to the town all year round – we consider that to build anything less than a 25m pool – tank or leisure with lanes – would be extremely short sighted. The Feasibility Study considers 2 projects ranging from a 20m pool to a 25m pool with a projected cost difference of £4.25million. When building a pool the relative cost difference in going from 20m to 25m is far less significant. However the opportunities would be greater to make effective use of the facility: swim clubs, swim galas, fun sessions, school swimming, canoe clubs, sports clubs, triathlon events and would be significant in standard competition distances. Has consideration been given on how to maximise the greater potential for a 25m pool v 20m pool in the feasibility study / business case?'

On behalf of the PH for Leisure and Tourism the Programme Director provided the following response –

'The full breakdown of the usage of the pool will be presented in the business case. It splits into the current recording groups of casual, membership, lessons and pool hire (for clubs and schools and parties) along with a timetable. The numbers/income are set using market trend, local knowledge and capacity. The figures are realistic but ambitious, having looked at all the potential usage. When looking at the options in accordance with HM Treasury green book guidance we need to look at the best Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR). A calculation taking into account capital revenue costs as well as financial and non- financial benefits. The 20m pool option comes out with the highest BCR score and therefore the budget business case has been developed around that option. The Business Case will be considered by Cumberland Council'.

Ms Devereux then asked which experts had the Council engaged with to explore the potential of a 25m pool v a 20m pool.

It was explained that that would be the work presented in the Business Case.

413. Public Participation

None received.

414. Feasibility Study for new Leisure Facilities in Keswick

Members were provided with a copy of the Feasibility Study carried out for the reprovision of new leisure facilities in Keswick for information.

One member commented that the study options did not include the cost of a new build versus a refurbishment of the old facility and asked whether it had been picked up in the business case. In response it was confirmed it would be covered in the business case.

With regards to siting options, one member commented that it wasn't clear in the report the reasons as to why the current site was found to be the best location, stating there was no clear scoring criteria to help get an understanding of that decision, against the other site options.

The Programme Director agreed to ask the lead officer to provide a response to the query with further explanation following the meeting.

The two Keswick ward members present reiterated comments raised during their consultation with the process and would continue to do so when consulted with on the Business Case.

Agreed

That the report be noted.

415. Quarter 3 Finance Report Oct to Dec 2022

Agreed

That the Quarter three update report be noted.

416. Quarter 3 Performance Report 2022/23

One member referred to the Otley Road, Keswick affordable housing scheme, highlighted on page 168 of the agenda, expressing their frustrations in the hold-up of the flats being ready for tenants and requested that the works be completed as a matter of urgency.

Agreed

That the Quarter three update report be noted.

417. Report from Climate Change Advisory Group

Councillor S Lansbury provided the group with a brief summary presentation on the final report from the Allerdale Climate Change Advisory Group, highlighting their achievements since the adoption of the Action Plan and the recommendations for consideration by Cumberland Council.

Members commended the comprehensive report and thanked those who had been involved with the group.

One member made a comment that there may be a gap in the report with the absence of raising the profile of the work and recommendations with other bodies, in particular with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Local Government Association (LGA).

In response it was explained that the expectation would be, and with agreement from Committee, that a letter be sent from the Chair of the Climate Change Advisory Group to the Leader of Cumberland Council and the new Portfolio Holder. It was therefore suggested that the letter include the encouragement for the new Council to continue raising the profile with local and national bodies.

Agreed

That –

1. The report and recommendations from the Climate Change Advisory Group be adopted;
2. The Chair of the Climate Change Advisory Group forward the work on to the Cumberland Council.

418. Consideration of final feedback from Outside Body representatives

The Committee noted the summary of final feedback provided by current Allerdale member representatives serving on Outside Bodies and Joint Committees.

Agreed

That the summary of feedback received be noted and it be provided to the new Cumberland Council.

419. Verbal Update on Local Government Reorganisation

The Strategic Advisor – Corporate provided the Committee with a verbal update on activity relating to Local Government Reorganisation.

With now only two weeks to go until Vesting day lots of milestones were in progress and projects coming to fruition.

All TUPE letters had gone out to staff and only this week all staff had received information relating to a full Induction, including temporary new Intranet sites for access to important information, an Induction Pack and dedicated pages to support managers.

The new budget had also now been approved for the new authority.

Agreed

That the update be noted.

420. Forward Plan

Members were advised that the call-in recommendation from the 3 March 2023 meeting and referred back to the Executive by the Scrutiny Committee had been approved by Executive on 15 March 2023.

Agreed

That the Forward Plan be noted.

421. Consideration of Democratic Participation in Voting Task and Finish Group Final Report

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 2.17pm to afford members time to read through the TFG report. The meeting reconvened at 2.22pm.

Councillor M Heaslip, Chair of the Democratic Participation in Voting TFG, provided members with a verbal update on the work of the group. He highlighted the three main points of issue that came out of the review were: polling station venues, the new requirement for Voter ID and the governance of Parish Councils.

Councillor M Heaslip moved the final report recommendations; this was seconded by Councillor C McCarron-Holmes.

Agreed

That the final report of the Democratic Participation in Voting TFG and recommendations be adopted and passed on to Cumberland Council.

422. Overview & Scrutiny Committee sign off report

The Co-Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee introduced and moved a final sign off report on behalf of the Committee, which sought to collate together all key points and recommendations that they wished to direct to the new Cumberland Council for action and continued scrutiny.

The report would be updated to include all recommendations endorsed at this meeting.

Agreed

That the final summary report be adopted and passed on to Cumberland Council.

At the conclusion of the meeting the Chair expressed thanks to all those members and supporting officers who had contributed to the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee over the years and wished everyone well for the future.

The meeting closed at 2.35 pm