

At a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held in Council Chamber - Allerdale House, Workington on Friday 17 January 2020 at 1.30 pm

Members

Councillor Iain Greaney (Chair)
Councillor Carmel Bell
Councillor John Crouch
Councillor Joe Holliday
Councillor Adrian Kirkbride

Councillor Nicky Cockburn
Councillor Michael Heaslip
Councillor Daniel Horsley
Councillor Carni McCarron-Holmes

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Alan Pitcher Councillor Malcolm Grainger and Councillor Michael Little

Staff Present

A FitzGerald, I Hinde, J Irving, L Jardine, K Kerrigan and G Wilson

308. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 06 December 2019 were signed as a correct record.

309. Declaration of Interests

None Declared

310. Questions

None Received

311. Public Participation

None Received

312. Presentation from the Head of Place Development on recent development to support town centres

The Head of Place Development attending the meeting to provide an update to members on recent developments to support town centres.

Members were advised of the facelift scheme and that grants had been provided to businesses in Silloth and Aspatria to carry out cosmetic improvements to properties. Going forward the scheme will look to continue but may be funded differently.

The Officer also explained to members that funding for improvements may be available from the Borderlands Scheme and that a funding bid will be made for Wigton and Silloth.

Since events had been brought 'in house' Allerdale has successfully ran Taste Cumbria (both summer and winter) and feedback has been excellent. The Workington Christmas Market was also popular and events like these are important additions to town centres to support economic activity.

The Head of Development then discussed the Town Fund and that Workington was under consideration to receive up to £25 million funding which, if successful will be used on projects in the Workington Town Centre Area. To meet government requirements, a town deal board has been set up with John Coughlan from TSP Engineering appointed Chair, with the first board meeting scheduled for 24th January 2020.

Members asked questions of the officer in relation to the future of town centres and whether caps can be introduced to limit certain business types.

The officer explained the future was unclear but that town centres are changing away from traditional shopping, the challenge is to think about town centres differently. In relation of capping of business types it is not possible, but the planning authority reviews applications based on class use order as part of the planning regime.

313. Presentation from the Programme Director for Maryport Regeneration

The Programme Director attended the meeting to deliver a presentation to members on the Maryport Regeneration Scheme.

Members were provided with an overview of the progress made to date with an update on priority projects which included Curzon Street, Senhouse Street, the Harbour, the Prom and the implementation of a new calendar of events. To assist the officers with and to provide a link to residents the Maryport Advisory Group has been created, which is split into two areas, 'Town Centre' and 'Waterfront'.

To support the regeneration officers have made a bid for funding from the Future High Street Fund. The initial expression of exercise was successful and the team will now develop a business case, the decision to award funding or not will be made in autumn 2020. Further funding may also be available from the Historic England Heritage Fund.

The officer then went on to explain the national issues that are affecting high streets, including online sales and footfall decreases, which in turn affects retail employment and the local economy.

Members were also advised of further plans for Maryport including pedestrianisation, digitalisation, the reuse of buildings, and improvements to the arrival and access to Maryport.

Members then asked questions in relation to potential funding for existing businesses, the Maryport Conservation Area and Community Engagement.

314. To determine future work by the Committee in response to these presentations

Members discussed potential options to support the ongoing work in Maryport and Workington including the implementation of a Task and Finish Group but came to the conclusion that this would be duplicating the work of the already implemented Workington Town Board and Maryport Advisory Group.

315. Update on the Reedlands Road project

The Head of Place Development provided an update to members, advising that the project had been delayed due to the site being on an area of mine working, and that they are still working with Network Rail to mitigate potential risks.

316. Forward Plan

The Programme Director for Maryport provided members with further information in relation to the creation of a new Housing Company. The company aims to address housing shortages in the Borough whilst generating an income for the Council. An Initial three properties have been marked for re-development in Keswick and Maryport which will create holiday lettings and residential units.

The Head of Place Development then clarified the executive decision to move the Market operation 'in-house', members were advised that this move will increase Allerdale's profit share and reduce management fees. An options appraisal had been undertaken and the management of the markets will complement and create opportunities for the Place Development Team.

Members noted the contents of the Forward Plan

317. Work Programme and Outcomes Monitoring

Members were asked to consider items for the 2020/21 work programme and discussed the content of the remaining meetings to be held in 2019/20.

318. Task and Finish Group/Working Group Updates

Updates were provided to members of the work of the task and finish groups,

- Climate Change Group – a climate workshop was held on the morning of 17 January 2020 which included representatives from local schools and various climate change groups. The group will present its report at the next overview and scrutiny meeting, 21 February 2020.
- Procurement Group – the group has continued to meet with officers and are awaiting the release of further documentation
- Future Waste Management Group – officers have begun the TUPE work and are working with employees of the current waste contractor

- Budget Group – the group are going to have fortnightly meetings and will report at the next meeting, members were encouraged to participate in budget conversations.

The meeting closed at 3.30 pm