

At a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held in Wigton Market Hall, CA7 9AA on Thursday 2 September 2021 at 4.00 pm

## **Members**

Councillor Michael Heaslip (Chair)

Councillor Tony Annison

Councillor Patrick Gorrill

Councillor Iain Greaney

Councillor Ron Munby MBE

Councillor Andrew Semple

Councillor Carni McCarron-Holmes (Co-Chair)

Councillor Allan Daniels

Councillor Malcolm Grainger

Councillor Hilary Harrington

Councillor Paul Scott

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Markus Campbell-Savours and Councillor Daniel Horsley

## **Staff Present**

A FitzGerald, N Hardy, I Hinde, L Jardine and L Tomlinson

## **Also Present**

A Tyson

### **155. Minutes**

Matters Arising from the minutes

Councillor Pitcher will be meeting with the Local Hub Manager and Head of Governance to provide a written response to questions raised in relation to Hub Management and the role of the Hub Manager.

The Co-Chairs of Overview and Scrutiny have not yet met with the Chair and Deputy of the Audit Committee; however, they will be meeting ASAP.

The Chair also sought an update from the Executive Meeting held on 21 July 2021 in relation to the contractual arrangements with Mott McDonald who were appointed Strategic Delivery Partner for the delivery of regeneration projects.

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2021 were signed as a correct record.

### **156. Declaration of Interests**

None declared

### **157. Questions**

None received

### **158. Public Participation**

None received

**159. Capital Outturn 2020/2021**

The Chair advised that the Capital Outturn 2020/21 was added as an agenda item for information and to provide members the opportunity to raise issues and ask questions.

Members asked questions in relation to the conversion of Otley Road, Disability Facility Grants, members will be provided with an update from relevant officers.

Members noted the Capital Outturn 2020/21.

**160. Revenue Outturn 2020/2021**

As the previous item (Capital Outturn 2020/21) the Chair advised that the Revenue Outturn 2020/21 was added as an agenda item for information and to provide members the opportunity to raise issues and ask questions.

Councillor Greaney requested the breakdown of subsidy costs paid to each individual leisure centre in Allerdale.

Councillor McCarron-Holmes then asked to be provided with figures relating to building control and the percentage of work undertaken by the private sector.

Members also asked questions in relation to off street parking, the transfer of assets and whether the Helena Thompson Museum is Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant.

The responses to the questions raised will be circulated to members.

Members noted the Revenue Outturn 2020/21.

**Councillor Gorrill joined the meeting**

**161. Outside bodies reports - to receive any final responses from Councillors**

The Chair advised that two reports were outstanding from Westfield Housing Association and Maryport Harbour Authority. Both members had been sent reminders to provide updates, and due to the lack of response the committee will report this back to Executive or Council depending on which is the appointing body.

**162. Referral from Council, 27 July 2021 - to determine how the Committee will respond**

The Chair advised that the committee needs to consider how to determine a response to the motion raised at Council on 27 July.

The Chair advised that in relation to point 3 of the motion, this is something that is aligned more to the remit of the Audit Committee, the Chair will discuss this in the meeting with the Chair/Deputy of Audit.

The Chair then recommended that the committee request a report from officers detailing the effectiveness of the current Housing Enforcement Policy and whether recommendations that were provided from this committee are in place and are effective. The Chair advised that this could provide a baseline in assessing the current situation to determine whether a task and finish group is needed.

Members raised questions in relation to terms of reference and whether detailed data could be provided.

Debate then ensued in relation to the proposal from the Chair, Councillor McCarron-Holmes highlighted that the committee needs to consider resourcing as evidence could suggest this is contributing to the current issues.

Members agreed to undertake the proposal offered by the Chair. The Committee will use the report from officers as a starting point and to address the second point raised in the report. Consideration of points 1 and 4 will then follow. Members agreed that the third point raised should be delegated to the Audit Committee.

#### **163. The Final Report of the Response to the Pandemic Task and Finish Group**

The Chair introduced the item, explaining that the document is a summary document that includes the previous reports from the Pandemic Task and Finish Group.

Members discussed the report and the recommendations raised.

Debate then ensued in relation to the access to Council services and communication with Members. Some Members expressed concern that the pandemic has disrupted communication channels and that improvements need to be made, especially when informing Members of issues affecting not only their ward, but the wider Council.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer advised to members that they will be informed via the programme office of the 'new ways of working' and how this affects members.

The Committee accepted the report with an amendment to the conclusion in that the Committee commends the report and its recommendations not only to the Executive, but also to Council.

#### **164. Update on plans for Local Government Reorganisation**

The Assistant Chief Executive (Policy, Performance and Economic Development Strategy) provided an update to members.

The key areas of work involve the mobilisation of the programme of work which will look at the resources/work required to arrive at the new authorities and the structural changes order.

The current work involves four elements:

- High level options appraisal for all service areas
- Collation of information and data needed to allocate resources
- Programme Management/Benefit Realisation Plan
- Gathering information and views for the structural changes order.

The Chief Executive Officers group have also agreed on the key themes of 'place, people and enabling' to gather people and resources going forward.

Members were advised that the key priority is the Structural Change Order, which will contain warding information and the name of the new Authorities. The order will be put to Parliament for approval and once approved, shadow elections will follow.

Following questions, the Deputy Monitoring Officer advised that work is ongoing regarding numbers of councillors per ward and whether County Divisions will be used, the final decision of which will be made by the Secretary of State.

Members asked further questions in relation to cross party consultation, political engagement and 'business as usual activities'.

Debate ensued in relation to Parish Councils, Councillor numbers and responsibilities and the transition from the old to new authorities.

The Chair confirmed that he has initiated discussion with officers and Scrutiny Chairs from Copeland, Carlisle and Cumbria Councils, to discuss joint working. A report will be provided to members at the next meeting.

Officers provided some clarity over the transition and transfer of services from the existing councils to the new Council and the elections processes for both the existing and new authority.

Debate then continued around public perception to the changes and what it means for them. Officers explained that communication strategies are being designed and will be in place, including press/media releases. For members regular briefings are being produced and the Deputy Leader will be providing updates at the next three tier meeting. Members acknowledged that public understanding and engagement is crucial. Officers confirmed that all avenues of communication are being explored and used, including social media.

Members noted the contents of the update and agreed to keep LGR updates as a standing regular agenda item.

## **165. Forward Plan**

The Chair went through the forward plan, asking for comment from members.

Officers confirmed that the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures replaces the previous 'Child Protection and Adult Safeguarding Procedures'.

It was also confirmed to members that the Programme Director for Workington will be attending the December 2021 meeting to present an update on the Workington Town Deal Business Case.

In addition to the published forward plan, the 'Geological Disposal Facility – Formation of a Community Partnership' will be added as an item to be taken to the Executive meeting on 13 October 2021.

Members noted the contents of the forward plan.

## **166. Work Programme and Task and Finish Groups 2021/22**

The Chair went through the Work Programme 2021/22, suggesting that the 'Corporate Charity Trusteeship' is replaced by the Housing Motion which was referred from Council (Item 9). The Corporate Charity Trusteeship will be reviewed by the Constitution Working Group.

Debate ensued over the make-up of the agenda for October 2021 and it was agreed that the Policy Framework item is deferred.

The Chair then sought views on the work of the Task and Finish Groups and whether the work is still relevant with the announcement of Local Government Reorganisation. Members agreed to keep the Task and Finish Groups and the order as suggested.

1. Culture and Leisure Provision
2. Community Leadership and Engagement
3. Young People and Corporate Parenting.

The Chair requested that officers share the scoping documents of the Task and Finish Group with the wider membership and sought volunteers from members at the meeting.

**The meeting closed at 6.10 pm**