

Allerdale Borough Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 8 October 2021

Responses to questions raised at previous meeting

Report from	Policy Officer (Scrutiny and Partnerships)
Wards affected	All
Is this a key decision	No

1.0 The reason for the decision

- 1.1 To update the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on responses to the questions raised at its meeting held on 2 September 2021.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Members:
- Note the content of the report.
 - Agree any further actions in response to this summary.

3.0 Background and Introduction

- 3.1 Overview and Scrutiny Committee raised some questions in response to reports presented to the previous meeting.
- 3.2 These queries are presented here with the responses received from officers.

4.0 Content

Local Focus Hub

- 4.1 The Committee had previously had an input from the Portfolio Holder regarding the Local Focus Hub and had raised some questions. Subsequently Members have now provided further details of the background to their questions and a meeting involving the Portfolio Holder, a senior manager and the Local Focus Hub manager has just been held from which the outcome/s will be presented to Committee members when available, either verbally or in a written response.

Capital Outturn Report 2020/21

- 4.2 The Committee asked for the number of disabled facilities grants (DFGs) being dealt with.

The numbers of DFG referrals and approved DFGs in 2019/20 and 2020/21 are given below. The figures for 2020/21 were impacted by the pandemic and restrictions in place for several months of 2020/21.

	2019/20	2020/21
No. of DFG referrals	256	163
No. of DFGs approved	164	108

- 4.3 The Committee requested the costs relating to the Otley Road housing project.

The Otley Road scheme is not yet complete, however, the final costs are largely in line with what was anticipated. The intention was never to build to Passivhaus (see below) standards, but solar panels are being incorporated into the build. The costs are currently circa £220,000 but issues with supplies, as has been well documented nationally in the press, means there may be some slight unavoidable creep on this.

Electric vehicle charging points are not part of the Otley scheme as the parking is private and the accommodation is limited to key workers, but are proposed in relation to the redevelopment and refurbishment of the old Station car park and public WCs.

Passivhaus buildings provide a high level of occupant comfort while using very little energy for heating and cooling. They are built with meticulous attention to detail and rigorous design and construction according to principles developed by the Passivhaus Institute in Germany, and can be certified through an exacting quality assurance process.

- 4.4 The Committee also asked about the progress on the development of the housing company.

An ABC housing Company has been set up, but the business model and funding is still being considered before the model is presented to councillors.

Generally speaking whilst there has been significant progress on the Otley Road Scheme, with regard to other pipeline schemes the onset of the pandemic has not allowed to projects to progress as quickly as intended.

Developing sustainable homes with due regard to carbon footprint is intended as a clear priority for the future.

Revenue Outturn Report 2020/21

- 4.5 Members asked questions about the level of contribution from the Council to the operation of leisure centres broken down by individual facilities.

This information is not available in the form requested because whilst income and certain costs are on a per cent basis, the central management costs of the leisure centres operator are not allocated on this basis.

- 4.6 Members asked whether the Helena Thompson Museum is now compliant with the Equalities Act 2010 after the recent works (sometimes referred to as 'DDA compliance' after the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 which was replaced by the Equalities Act).

The improvements included an accessible toilet at the rear of the building and making the main entrance accessible, all of which is now complete. Inside, because the Museum is an older building, making it fully accessible is not possible and it will be the responsibility of the building managers to make provision for users to access the collection.

Referral from Council 28 July 2021

- 4.7 Members raised a number of questions regarding some of the figures quoted in the cover report. These will be addressed by providing the Committee with a detailed background report supported by a presentation at a future meeting (November or December).

5.0 Delivery arrangements

- 5.1 This report relates to the Overview and Scrutiny work programme which details the work of the Committee over the year.

6.0 Implications and Impact

6.1 Contribution to Council Strategy Priorities, Outputs and Outcomes

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee role is central to contributing improvements assisting the delivery of the Council Strategy.

6.2 Finance/Resource implications

None directly associated with this report.

6.3 Legal and governance implications

None directly associated with this report.

6.4 Risk analysis

Not applicable to this report.

6.5 Increasing satisfaction and service

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee recognises the important contribution it makes to the Council's overall satisfaction.

6.6 Equality impacts

None directly associated with this report.

6.7 Health and Safety impacts

None directly associated with this report.

6.8 Health, wellbeing and community safety impacts

None directly associated with this report.

6.9 Environmental/sustainability impacts

None directly associated with this report.

6.10 Other significant implications

None.

Appendices attached to this report

Appendix number	Title of appendix
None	

Background documents available

Name of background document	Where it is available
None	

Report author(s) and contact officer(s):

Ian Hinde

Policy Officer (Scrutiny and Partnerships)

ian.hinde@allerdale.gov.uk

01900 516664