

At a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held in the Council Chamber, Allerdale House on Friday 16 September 2022 at 1.30 pm

Members

Councillor Carni McCarron-Holmes (Co-Chair)

Councillor Barbara Cannon

Councillor Allan Daniels

Councillor Malcolm Grainger

Councillor Jimmy Gridale (Sub)

Councillor Peter Kendall (Sub)

Councillor John Cook

Councillor Patrick Gorrill

Councillor Iain Greaney

Councillor Daniel Horsley

Councillor Paul Scott

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Michael Heaslip, Councillor Carole Armstrong and Councillor Sally Lansbury

Staff Present

I Brogden, B Carlin, H Davies, N Hardy and G Roach

A Minute Silence was held in honour of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

153. Minutes

The minutes for the meetings held on 22 July and 19 August 2022 were signed as a correct record.

154. Declaration of Interests

None declared.

155. Questions

None received.

156. Public Participation

None received.

157. Safer Streets Project Presentation and Responses to Questions from the Committee

The Committee considered a summary of responses provided by the Safer Streets Co-ordinator to the questions raised at the previous meeting.

Members commented that a number of their questions had not been answered in the response received, in particular there was no quantitative information provided to the questions asked.

Councillors had asked what had been spent and why the bid only focused on burglary, robbery and theft when there was other crime such as anti-social behaviour, drug supply and drug taking, violence and domestic violence in the area and would the money be best put to other areas of crime?

Members felt there was no justification provided to provide assurance of value added spend.

Members agreed to defer the item for discussion until further information had been received.

Resolved

That the item be deferred until more information received.

158. Quarter 1 Performance Report

Members considered the Quarter 1 Performance Report 2022/23 as measured by key projects/activities and key performance indicators (KPIs) set out in the Delivery Plan 2022/23.

The Assistant Chief Executive (Policy, Performance and Economic Strategy) provided a brief summary on Performance Goal confirming 43 out of 47 KPIs were Green (on track) and 3 Amber (close to target). One project had been completed.

Discussions took place regarding the 3 red KPIs including:

- % of abandoned calls
- % of homeless decisions made within guideline of 56 days
- Time taken to process Housing benefit new claims (no. days)

With regards to the project 'Deliver Green Homes and other affordable warmth grants to address fuel poverty and help deliver environmental benefits' the Committee asked what was the Council doing to increase the visibility of the scheme and promote more uptake?

It was agreed a written response would be provided following the meeting.

On discussing the number of fly tipping incidents, members requested more information on what type of scenarios were Fixed Penalty Notices being issued? Was the increase due to easy targets or actual fly tippers?

It was agreed a written response would be provided following the meeting.

Agreed

Members noted the contents of the report.

159. Inflation and Cost of Living Impact on Council Services

The Assistant Chief Executive (Innovation and Commercial) attended the meeting to assist in providing answers to questions raised by the Committee around the cost of living crisis.

The Chair informed the Committee that Cumbria County Council had set aside some money from reserves and a recent meeting of the Local Area Committee had considered how best to distribute that money and to which organisations such as foodbanks, to best provide support to those in need.

It was agreed to contact the County Council to find out what was available and where the money was going to and that the item be deferred until the next meeting for a fuller more informed discussion.

The Senior Management Team (SMT) at Allerdale had recently discussed in detail what response the Council could be taking. The Policy Officer was pulling together trend data to report back to SMT and had also been tasked to look at the wider action and interventions that others were undertaking, for example the County Council and Citizens Advice Bureau, for the Council to understand the local issues and see how it may be redirecting some resources in community budgets and from the lottery to fill gaps once identified.

Members also said it would be good to understand how services linked up, for example a member of the public using a foodbank, are they then referred to the Council for other support such as financial support or home insulation advice etc.

It was agreed that the collated information be provided to the Committee at their next meeting and that this item remain on future agendas to continue the focus.

Resolved

1. That the information concluded from the mapping exercise be brought to the next Committee meeting for consideration;
2. That the Cost of Living Crisis remain as a standing item on the agenda.

160. Verbal Update on Local Government Reorganisation

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

The online consultation on the new Council Plan had been accompanied by a number of drop in sessions in various key locations, as well as Q & As with staff, partners, parish councils and members of the public, 580 responses had been received and were being collated and analysed for use in the final version of the plan which would be considered at the next Shadow Executive meeting and agreed by the Shadow Council in October.

The Latest version of the plan had been amended and included the addition of priorities around climate change and resilience and the local economy.

Also at the Shadow Executive meeting next week to be approved was the new devolved HQ model from vesting day. The HQs would be known as anchor buildings and include Allerdale House, Workington, Civic Centre Carlisle, Cumbria House, Carlisle and The Market Hall and Copeland Centre, Whitehaven.

Today also marked the end of engagement on the Senior Structures for the new organisation with the intention to appoint the senior team by April next year, the process for which was well underway.

Resolved

That the update be noted.

161. Forward Plan

The Forward Plan was noted.

162. Work Programme and Outcomes Monitoring

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

It was agreed the Portfolio Holder was to attend the next meeting to provide the Committee with an update on the plan for moving forward following the completion of the Gypsy and Traveller Site report.

163. Task and Finish Group/Working Group Updates

The Chair provided an update on the TFGs;

Access to Health Services

- 54 responses were received from members of the public from the call for evidence press release and associated media coverage at the end of August
- Discussions were taking place with the NHS commissioners to schedule a meeting with both Dentistry and GP Commissioners in early October

Customer Services

- The Chair Cllr Grainger had met with the Programme Director, Transformation & Operating Model on Monday 12 September. It was agreed that TFG members would have an opportunity to visit the Council call centre and listen in on live calls to help understand the work undertaken
- The first full meeting of the TFG would take place on Thursday 29 September at 3pm in Allerdale House.

The meeting closed at 2.35 pm