

# Allerdale Borough Council

Council – 7 December 2022

## Report from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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<b>Report from</b>	Co-Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<b>Wards affected</b>	All
<b>Is this a key decision</b>	No

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### **1.0 The reason for the decision**

- 1.1** To update Council on the activities and recommendations of the Committee since the last meeting.

### **2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1** That Members note the content of the report.

### **3.0 Background and Introduction**

- 3.1** This is a regular report that comes to each meeting of Council. The purpose of the report is to provide Council with an update and overview of the activities of the Committee.

- 3.2** The work of the Committee is described in the paragraphs below. Any member wanting more information on any of the topics mentioned or to see reports or interim reports should contact Democratic Services.

### **4.0 Update on activities since last report**

- 4.1** The last update report from the Scrutiny Committee to Council was to the 21 September 2022 meeting.
- 4.2** The committee have met three times since that last report and below summarises what was considered at those meetings.
- 4.3** They received a summary presentation on the St Michaels Safer Streets Project for consideration of the project scope, any activities completed and outcomes. The committee decided to collate any questions that arose and provided them in advance of receiving a fuller update from the Safer Streets Co-ordinator at their next meeting.

A written response was received which was considered at the September meeting from which it was felt not all questions had been addressed. The item was deferred until further information could be obtained from both the Safter Streets Co-ordinator and the Police. This piece of work is still ongoing.

- 4.4** The Committee received further updates for both the Workington and Maryport Regeneration Programmes, covering the individual projects within each programme, ongoing works and associated costs and timescales about which members had some concerns. They are due to receive further updates later in their work programme.
- 4.5** At the September meeting the group started a discussion around the cost of living crisis, specifically around what measures were being taken to address the crisis by the Council for local residents. Officers then provided a full report at the October meeting which summarised the current packages of support and interventions provided by Government to help households, activity that the Council was undertaking and other activity and support available in the Allerdale area. The committee then had a discussion around what further interventions could be made. Officers were exploring options, in consultation with the Executive, to form a package of additional support. At the November meeting the committee were updated on those agreed arrangements.
- 4.6** At the request of the committee the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Policy, Governance and People Resources attended the October meeting and provided an update on progress with the Gypsy and Traveller Site Report. It was explained that a Needs Assessment was published in 2021, following which the Council had asked for further research to be carried out to better understand the requirements of the traveller community in the local area. That consultation was carried out in May of this year. Members stressed the importance of having a sit to accommodate casual visitors to the area as well as more or less permanent residents.
- 4.7** Also in November, members considered a draft report due for the Executive providing update on progress on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund process and the establishment of governance arrangements to aid delivery of the investment.
- 4.8** The Committee received the quarterly update performance and finance reports and monitor each of the key projects and activities set out in the Delivery Plan.

## **5.0 Update on current Task and Finish Groups**

### **5.1 Access to Health Services – GPS and Dentistry**

The first meeting took place with the lead commissioner for Dental services in Allerdale. Councillors heard that Cumbria is the most challenging part of the area that covers Northeast England and North Cumbria. The commissioners have been unsuccessful in replacing the contract capacity in Workington but continue to use all local tools available to the commissioners within the confines of the national framework. This has included paying dentists for fixed sessions, paying above the average for new capacity, working with UCLAN on training and linking this with trying to attract new dentist providers to the area.

The next meeting will take place with the Director of Place and Primary Care at the NHS with responsibility for Cumbria on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> November.  
The committee is seeking to meet with Healthwatch Cumbria and with the North Cumbria Integrated Care Partnership.

## **5.2 Customer Services**

The Customer services TFG has met with Paul Wood, Head of Paid Service, and discussed the approach of Allerdale to customer services and the problems that have arisen over recent years with tackling the COVID pandemic. The recent mystery shopper survey was shared with the group including how work to improve as a result of the issues highlighted. Staff turnover was being managed and replacement staff were shortly to start and the team would be back to full strength.  
Councillors visited Customer Services on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> November to meet front line staff and listen in on calls. This was facilitated by the Customer & Fulfilment Services Manager.  
The TFG is due to meet shortly to agree its report and recommendations.

## **5.3 Democratic Participation in Voting**

It is hoped that work can commence on this third and final TFG shortly. Any members wishing to be involved please contact Democratic Services.

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

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