

Community Focus Scrutiny Committee

Date:	Thursday, 4 April 2013
Venue:	Town Hall, St Annes
Committee members:	Councillor Kiran Mulholland (Chairman) Councillor Christine Akeroyd (Vice-Chairman) Councillors Fabian Craig- Wilson, Susanne Cunningham, Tony Ford JP, Gail Goodman JP, Kathleen Harper, Paul Hodgson, Angela Jacques, Barbara Nash, Elizabeth Oades, Dawn Prestwich, John Singleton JP, Vivienne M Willder
Other Members:	Councillor Dr Trevor Fiddler (Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development) Councillor Cheryl Little (Portfolio Holder for Social Well Being) Councillor Susan Fazackerley (Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture) Councillor Ben Aitken (Chairman of Development Management Committee) Councillor Kevin Eastham (Vice- Chairman of Development Management Committee)
Officers:	Allan Oldfield, Paul Walker, Mark Evans, Andrew Dickson, Paul Rossington, Lyndsey Lacey
Members of the public:	one member of the public was present

1. Declarations of interest

Members were reminded that any disclosable pecuniary interests should be declared as required by the Localism Act 2011 and that any other interests should be declared as required by the Council's Code of Conduct. There were no declarations of interest.

2. Confirmation of minutes

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the Community Focus Scrutiny Committee held on 7 March 2013 as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

3. Substitute members

The following substitutions were reported under council procedure rule 22.3:

Councillor Elizabeth Oades for Councillor Linda Nulty

Councillor Angela Jacques for Councillor Nigel Goodrich

Councillor Fabian Craig-Wilson for Councillor Tim Armit

4. Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

By way of introduction the Chairman, Councillor Kiran Mulholland made reference to the report submitted to the last meeting. In doing so, he asked the committee to consider appointing a Task and Finish Group to undertake some initial work of examining the circumstances relating to the recent failings of the Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS trust.

Councillor Mulholland referred to an initial outline of activity that could be undertaken by the appointed Group with a view to the interim findings being reported to a future meeting of the committee.

Following consideration of this matter it was RESOLVED to appoint a Task and Finish Group to carry out the review and that the group comprise: Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Committee, councillors Kathleen Harper and Dawn Prestwich.

5. Club Day Support

The Committee was asked to consider a request received from Councillor Elizabeth Oades for an urgent scrutiny review to be undertaken on Club Day Support.

Councillor Oades was invited to comment on the matter. In doing so, she made reference to the matter discussed at the Council's budget meeting regarding the likely police resources available to support these events going forward.

It was felt that this subject is worthy of scrutiny as it is an area that could have a wide impact and is believed to be a concern to a wide proportion of councillors.

It was suggested that the review consider two issues: the policing aspects in liaison with the Lancashire Constabulary and a review of the Council's own Club Day provision and support.

The Committee RESOLVED:

1. To undertake an urgent review on Club Day Support.
2. To appoint a Task and Finish Group to carry out the review comprising: Chairman and Vice-Chairman of committee, councillors Barbara Nash, Elizabeth Oades and John Singleton.

6. Supported Events Review

The Committee was asked to consider a request received from Councillor Elizabeth Oades to consider including in its work plan a scrutiny review on supported events with particular reference to how events come forward for financial support, how they are assessed and then reviewed subsequently.

It was felt that this subject is worthy of scrutiny as it is an area that could have a wide impact and is believed to be of interest to a wide proportion of councillors.

The Committee RESOLVED:

1. To include a review on Supported Events within the scrutiny committee's work plan
2. To appoint a Task and Finish Group comprising: Chairman and Vice-Chairman of committee, councillors Barbara Nash, Elizabeth Oades and Dawn Prestwich.

7. Planning Improvement Plan

The Chairman invited Paul Walker (Director of Development Services) and Mark Evans (Head of Planning and Regeneration) to present the findings and recommendations of the recent planning peer review.

The Committee was advised that between the 15th and 17th August 2012, an LGA facilitated Planning Peer Review took place involving a team of 6 members. The team included both officer and member peers. The team was led by Councillor Neil Clarke, Leader of Rushcliffe Borough Council. It was further reported that interviews and workshops were held with a variety of stakeholders during the visit. Some of the team also attended a meeting of the Council's Development Management Committee on the 15th August.

The report outlined the background, scope and aims of the peer review. It also included an Executive Summary and 13 recommendations. The remainder of the document included the detailed findings which support the recommendations and the notes of the Action Planning Day held on 11 October.

Councillor Trevor Fiddler (Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development) was invited to the table to comment on the content of the report. In doing so, he drew the committee's attention to paragraph 2 of the Executive Summary and paragraphs 9 and 19 of the detailed findings.

Councillor Fiddler went on to say that at times, the Development Management Committee members are not always strategic in their approach to development, resulting in an obvious urban/rural divide and parochialism which he added was detrimental to the process.

Councillor Fiddler further stated that whilst he accepted the report needed to be analysed for scrutiny purposes, some of the key elements contained within the report were not articulated and reflected within the 13 recommendations. He went on to say that whilst he was happy to discourage repetitious debate at meetings, as Portfolio Holder, he could not support a reduction in the size of the Development Management Committee.

Councillor Fiddler also drew the committee's attention to the section of the report relating to the make up of the Local Plan Steering Group which was factually incorrect.

Various members of the committee commented on the content of the report. A number of members were unhappy with the report and found it unhelpful. Some members expressed concern that the report was written with a bias towards the central government growth agenda in planning and failed to reflect some local priorities. The validity of some of the recommendations was questioned along with the source material for the report and the recommendations.

Members then went on to consider each of the 13 recommendations in turn and supported each proposed action.

Following detailed consideration of this matter IT WAS RESOLVED to recommend to Cabinet:

1. To support the 13 recommendations which had resulted from the Planning Peer Review.
2. To support the four recommendations already action planned (1, 4 7 and 13)
3. To request that key stages of progression be reported to future meetings of the Community Focus Scrutiny Committee.
4. To support the Portfolio Holder in seeking to discourage repetitious debate at meetings of the Development Management Committee.
5. To support the retention of the existing numbers on the Development Management Committee.

8. Fylde Coast Bathing Waters

The Committee considered an updated report on the Fylde Coast Bathing Waters.

The Chairman, Councillor Mulholland explained that since the last meeting of the committee, a further meeting of the Bathing Water Scrutiny Panel had been held at Blackpool Council. Councillor Akeroyd represented the borough

council at the meeting. Councillor Mulholland suggested that the Panel had not operated as a joint scrutiny and it was felt that there was further merit in taking a joint scrutiny approach forward.

The Chairman then invited Paul Walker (Director of Development Services) and Andrew Dickson (Head of Technical Services) to expand on the subject. Mr Walker explained that since the last meeting, further work had been done on the Ten Point Action Plan. The latest draft was attached to the report and members were invited to comment on each section of the Plan.

Mr Walker further reported that it is intended that the Plan be finalised and launched at the Fylde Peninsular Water Management Group Workshop (to which key members of the borough council had been invited) on Monday, 22 April 2013.

Councillor John Singleton asked officers whether more low level plans to address flooding matters within his ward were likely to be made available in the near future. Mr Walker addressed this point.

Following detailed consideration of this matter the committee RESOLVED:

1. To note the updated report.
2. To ask the Chairman, Councillor Kiran Mulholland to further pursue a joint scrutiny approach with neighbouring authorities and work with the Director of Resources on the models available.
3. To present an updated report to a future meeting of the committee.

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