

SCRUTINY ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
INTERIM SCRUTINY MANAGER	COMMUNITY FOCUS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	12 OCTOBER 2023	8
COMMUNITY FOCUS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - IN-DEPTH REVIEWS 2023/24			

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

To consider and agree the in-depth scrutiny reviews for Community Focus Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the 2023/24 municipal year.

SOURCE OF REFERRAL

Scrutiny training event - 7 June 2023
Workshop of Community Focus Scrutiny Committee members - 19 September 2023.

FURTHER INFORMATION

None

SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS

To agree that:

1. An in-depth review of LCC's approach to repairing roads in Fylde Borough be established and commenced in the remainder of the 2023/24 municipal year and that a Task and Finish Group from be established to undertake this.
2. The scope and objectives of the review be agreed by members of the Task and Finish Group.
3. Members note the approach as outlined in section 10 of the report in relation to the remaining four review topics.

REPORT

1. [The Constitution](#) sets out the terms of reference of both scrutiny committees (Community Focus and Internal Affairs). Both committees should keep the respective work programmes under review and establish topic-specific in-depth reviews, to be time limited.
2. An in-depth review is a major piece of work involving background research, taking evidence from several sources including face to face witnesses and consulting with relevant stakeholders on the topic under review. Each review is usually undertaken by a task and finish working group of members over several months culminating in a final report being agreed by the parent scrutiny committee which would normally include

their conclusions and a set of recommendations. Given the time and resources involved to undertake and conclude a review each committee would normally only establish 2 or 3 in-depth reviews in each municipal year.

3. A training event was held in June for newly elected members of both scrutiny committees. This was facilitated by an external consultant with extensive knowledge and experience in the operation of local government scrutiny. The session included the opportunity for members to suggest topic areas for in-depth reviews. A long list of suggestions was then prioritised. These suggestions were circulated to members of both committees.
4. Since then, the Interim Scrutiny Manager has met with the chairs and vice chairs of both scrutiny committees to discuss which topics best fit the terms of reference of each respective scrutiny committee and how the member suggestions for in-depth reviews can be further prioritised for agreement.
5. It is best practice in local government scrutiny to have a method of assessing which reviews to proceed with when there are competing demands for resources. Such assessment should ensure that agreed reviews are focused on matters that are significant, important, of public interest and relevant to the community.
6. To help with this a scrutiny topic selection assessment matrix has been developed by the Interim Scrutiny Manager in consultation with the chairs of both scrutiny committees. This is attached at appendix 1 and considers factors such as:
 - Alignment to corporate priorities
 - Is the issue strategic and significant to the borough?
 - Is the issue of public interest?
 - Risk to Council or service delivery.
 - Financial Value.
 - Is the issue of concern for partners?
 - Will the Council be able to achieve an effective outcome?Each of the above factors is scored 1 for low priority/importance, 2 for medium priority/importance and 3 for high priority/importance. The total score for all 7 factors above is then totalled to give an overall score which can be ranked alongside other topics that have been assessed.
7. A workshop of members of the Community Focus Scrutiny Committee was held on 19 September. The main purpose to consider the priority list for reviews (under the terms of reference of the Community Focus Scrutiny Committee) which were proposed at the training event in June. These were:
 - District Parish Liaison
 - Commercial Properties left empty
8. The following additional suggestions for in-depth reviews had been made by other members since the training event in June:
 - Community Governance Review of Lytham and Ansdell – Leader Cllr Buckley
 - LCC's approach to repairing roads – Chairman Cllr Settle
 - FBC's scrutiny of United Utilities - Cllr Joanne Gardner
 - Implications of Morgan/Morecambe wind farms - Cllr Peter Collins
9. Members at the workshop further discussed each of the above topics to better understand and define the focus of each potential review. They also noted that was work underway on some of these topics so as to ensure there was no duplication of work.
10. Members at the workshop made the following observations/comments on four of the above topics:
 - Commercial Properties left empty: Members felt that it would make sense that the topic of commercial Properties left empty, should be included in the scope of the in-depth review on Regeneration that the Internal Affairs Scrutiny Committee was undertaking.
 - Community Governance Review of Lytham and Ansdell: Following the resolution of [Council in October](#)

[2022](#) an updated report is to be presented to CFSC on the nature and scope of further and more extensive public consultation to inform the review. In view of this, it was deemed unnecessary to include this on the list for an in-depth review and members suggested that this be dealt with by a 1 meeting task and finish group 'spotlight' review to achieve this.

- FBC's scrutiny of United Utilities: It was deemed more appropriate in the first instance to be dealt with by a 1 meeting 'spotlight' review whereby UU reps be invited to make a presentation to a future meeting of the committee.
- Implications of Morgan/Morecambe wind farms: Members were advised that a report was considered by the [Planning Committee on 6 September 2023](#). As a result, the Planning Committee had appointed five members with whom the Head of Planning can consult with prior to any future pre-application and application submitted. The Planning Committee also resolved to invite the development team involved in the project to hold a briefing session for all Fylde Council's elected members.

11. The following remaining review topics were taken forward for assessment with the scoring shown alongside:

Topic	Total score
District Parish Liaison	9
LCC's approach to repairing roads	18

12. Members felt that due to the low score for the topic of District Parish Liaison that it should not proceed for an in-depth review at this time and should be held in abeyance.

13. The workshop of members concluded that the following in-depth review be established and commenced in the remainder of 2023/24:

- LCC's approach to repairing roads.

14. The Committee is asked to consider the conclusions of the above workshop and agree the above in-depth review for the Community Focus Scrutiny Committee. As the next planned meeting of the committee is not until January it is suggested that a Task and Finish Group is now agreed, and the scope and objectives of the review be set by members of the Task and Finish Group.

BACKGROUND PAPERS REVELANT TO THIS ITEM		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Fylde Borough Council Constitution	May 2023	https://fylde.cmis.uk.com/fylde/ConstitutionGovernanceMatters.aspx

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
Paul Walker	paul.walker@fylde.gov.uk	22 August 2023

Attached documents:

Appendix 1 Scrutiny topic selection assessment matrix