

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the proceedings at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held in the District Council Chamber, South Lakeland House, Kendal, on Friday, 1 February 2019, at 10.30 a.m.

Present

Councillors

Vicky Hughes (Chairman)
Doug Rathbone (Vice-Chairman)

Pat Bell
Helen Chaffey
Brian Cooper

Anne Hall
Anne Hutton
Janette Jenkinson

Vivienne Rees
Mark Wilson

Officers

Inge Booth	Senior Committee Services Officer
Lawrence Conway	Chief Executive
John Davies	Performance and Risk Officer
Rachel Earnshaw	Public Protection Officer
Ian Hassall	Assistant Director Strategic Development
Lee Hurst	Chief Accountant
Fiona Inston	Public Protection Manager
Anthea Lowe	Solicitor to the Council
Shelagh McGregor	Assistant Director Resources (Section 151 Officer)
Fraser Robertson	Senior Communications Officer
Simon Rowley	Assistant Director Neighbourhood Services
Helen Smith	Financial Services Manager
David Sykes	Director People and Places

Also in attendance were Councillors Philip Dixon (Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder), Andrew Jarvis (Finance Portfolio Holder) and Graham Vincent (Economy and Assets Portfolio Holder).

O&S/51 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Helen Chaffey who was taking Councillor Robin Ashcroft's place on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee following his recent appointment to the Cabinet.

The Chairman also took the opportunity to advise Members that Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust had provided late notification that they were unable to send a representative to make the presentation at Agenda Item No.9. Concern was expressed in this regard and it was suggested that the Chairman write to the Trust expressing the Committee's disappointment that they had been unable to send anyone at all and seeking firm commitment for attendance by a named representative at the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 26 April 2019 to make a short presentation followed by a question and answer session.

RESOLVED – That the Chairman be authorised to write to Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust expressing disappointment and seeking commitment for attendance by a representative at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 26 April 2019 along the lines discussed and outlined above.

O&S/52 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 11 January 2019, marked “to follow” on the agenda, had been circulated prior to the meeting.

RESOLVED – That the Chairman be authorised to sign, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 11 January 2019.

O&S/53 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED – That it be noted that no declarations of interest were raised at this stage in the proceedings.

O&S/54 DECLARATION OF THE PARTY WHIP

RESOLVED – That it be noted that no declarations of the party whip were raised.

O&S/55 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUDED ITEMS

RESOLVED – That it be noted that there are no excluded items on the Agenda.

O&S/56 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Harry Brunskill spoke with regard to the Cumbria Public Health Strategy on behalf of a group – Clean Air for Ulverston.

Mr Brunskill pointed out that air pollution killed more than 20 times more people than road traffic accidents in this country; 40,000 a year from fumes, compared to fewer than 1,800 from road accidents. Air pollution caused a wide range of health effects, including cardiovascular disease, dementia, diabetes, miscarriage, cancer of all kinds and, possibly most worrying, permanent damage to children’s lungs.

Mr Brunskill felt that the fact that the levels of air pollution in Ulverston were lower than in other places seemed of little relevance, since air pollution had recently been shown to be harmful, even at low levels. He stressed that there were no safe levels, so any reduction in air pollution, in Ulverston’s case from vehicle emissions, would lead to a reduction in deaths and other health effects.

Mr Brunskill stated that Mr Cox focussed on particulates from woodburners in the Strategy document. While a reduction in the use of woodburners, if not a complete Government ban, would be welcomed by the group, Mr Brunskill stressed that woodburners must not be used as a reason to avoid action on traffic fumes. The particulates referred to were also, of course, present in vehicle emissions, and not only from diesels or lorries.

Based on the same 2019 Public Health England figures that Mr Cox referred to in the document, the group estimated deaths in Ulverston from traffic fumes to be running at a conservative estimate of about 20 a year. The group was asking for this to be reduced, by pedestrianisation of the town centre and a 20mph speed limit throughout the town. Mr Brunskill said that there seemed to be backing for the 20mph limit from all political

parties in Ulverston. In addition, he pointed out that, according to the figures from the campaign group, "20's Plenty", it would only cost about £18,000 for the whole of the town, so the group did not see why this was not going ahead immediately. Mr Brunskill pointed out that pedestrianisation would cost even less – a few no entry signs. It was also popular – a survey carried out by the group in summer had shown that at least nine out of ten people asked had been in favour of the idea. This was also supported by many traders, who saw the potential of a traffic-free town centre. As Mary Portas had put it, for high streets to thrive, shopping had to be about "the experience". In other words, it had to take place in a pleasant environment, which traffic-free streets provided. Mr Brunskill highlighted that the group had sent studies to Council officers and Members when last addressing the Committee, showing that pedestrianisation increased footfall and trade by up to 40%. So pedestrianisation should increase trade, and certainly could not be worse than present policies, where they existed at all, to combat the two trends of out-of-town shops and, increasingly, online shopping. However, it was the group's view that trade should be a secondary consideration only. The principal one should be to reduce the effects of traffic fumes on the town's health.

There had been calls all over the country for 20mph speed limits and pedestrianisation, which the group believed would soon be the norm as people woke up to the need to do something about climate change, which was impacted on by traffic fumes, as well as wanting to improve their quality of life. These clean air zones could work in other towns and villages in Cumbria, and could put the county ahead of the curve. The group wanted to lead the way in Ulverston. Mr Brunskill pointed out that, if 20 people a year in a small town like Ulverston were dying as a result of road traffic accidents, something would soon be done. So the group was appealing to the Committee to work with it to implement a 20mph speed limit and pedestrianisation as soon as possible.

Mr Brunskill hoped that Colin Cox would address the points raised during his presentation.

O&S/57 WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD PLAN

The Solicitor to the Council provided a verbal update on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2018/19 and the contents of the latest Forward Plan published on 8 January 2019.

As reported at the previous meeting, the date for consideration by the Committee of the Homelessness Strategy 2019-2024 would now be 26 April 2019. In addition, the Committee would, on 26 April, be asked to consider an additional item, the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy. The Solicitor to the Council referred to the Green Team Update which was shown within the Programme as an item for today's meeting. This would also be moved to the agenda for 26 April, however, she advised that the Assistant Director Strategic Development was present to provide a brief update under this item.

The Solicitor to the Council advised that expressions of interest had been sought for the task and finish group on the development of locality working through Customer Connect. It had been intended that this task and finish group would commence in February 2019, however, following a request for an urgent workshop to be held on the potential impact of a no deal Brexit on Cumbria, expressions of interest for which would shortly be sought, the locality working task and finish group would commence instead in March.

A suggestion was raised at this point for Members to give authorisation to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, to continue correspondence with Northern Rail with regard to rail issues, as and when necessary, instead of having to wait until the next meeting of the Committee.

The Assistant Director Strategic Development then provided a brief update with regard to progress being made by the Green Team which had been established approximately nine months ago. The Group, consisting of officers, partners and the Leader had met on a number of occasions, culminating in the production of a draft Climate Change Policy which was due to be considered by Cabinet and Council and which would form part of the revisions to the Council Plan in order to bring the issue to the fore, as well as through various communication channels.

The group had produced a list of activities to assist in influencing behaviours. A large amount of work had been done to support the Climate Change Agenda and a low carbon economy, in relation to, for example, air pollution, cycling, Local Plan development and development standards. There had been engagement with partners in order to seek ideas from the community and to help inform the schedule of actions. In addition, the group was working with Cumbria Action for Sustainability (CAfS). A programme of work was in place with regard to the energy efficiency of Council buildings. Another key issue was that work being carried out in partnership with Cumbria County Council and the Lake District National Park Authority, and a meeting was scheduled to be held the following week for joint discussions.

In response to a query, the Assistant Director Strategic Development explained that although not fully involved to date, there was regular dialogue with the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority. He undertook, however, to follow up a suggestion for engagement with that Authority in addition to Cumbria County Council and the Lake District National Park Authority.

RESOLVED – That

- (1) the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's current Work Programme be noted;
- (2) the Forward Plan published on 8 January 2019 be received;
- (3) the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be authorised, on behalf of the Committee, to continue correspondence with Northern Rail with regard to rail issues, as and when necessary; and
- (4) the verbal update on the Green Team be noted.

O&S/58 CUMBRIA PUBLIC HEALTH STRATEGY

The latest version of Appendix 1 to the report, the Cumbria Joint Public Health Strategy had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder thanked Mr Brunskill for his thought-provoking comments regarding air quality. The Portfolio Holder introduced the item and explained that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was being given an opportunity to consider the draft Strategy prior to presentation of the document to Cabinet. He stressed the importance of the Public Health Strategy and the need for local government to seek to influence people and promote good health. The Portfolio Holder welcomed Colin Cox to the meeting.

Colin Cox, Director of Public Health, who had led on the creation and development of the Cumbria Joint Public Health Strategy, provided Members with a detailed presentation on the draft Strategy which focussed on tackling the wider determinants of health.

The presentation, together with the substantive report, indicated how officers with multi-disciplinary backgrounds and expertise from South Lakeland District Council (SLDCE), the other district councils, Cumbria County Council and the Lake District National Park Authority had contributed to the writing and the shaping of specific thematic areas.

The Public Health Strategy sat under the Cumbria Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2029. This strategy was currently in production, and would be presented to the Cumbria Health and Wellbeing board in April. This was a document which set out how the Health and Wellbeing Board would work together over the next ten years. All Clinical Commissioning Groups, local authorities and NHS England plans would need to take the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy into account.

The vision of the Cumbria Joint Public Health Strategy was to, “enable Cumbrian communities to be healthy and to tackle health inequalities.” This corresponded with the existing SLDC Public Health Strategy, and the proposed Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

The Cumbria Joint Public Health Strategy took a different approach to previous public health strategies as, instead of focusing on individuals, it acknowledged the conditions in which a person was born, lived, worked and how ages impacted on their access and ability to live a healthier life. These were known as the wider determinants of health, and included housing, education, employment, working conditions, the natural environment, food production and water. These were incorporated into Figure 1 of the report – the wider determinants of health and how SLDC interacts with these different layers. Estimates varied, however, it was broadly accepted that health care was accountable for approximately 10% of the contribution to health. This meant that, whilst access to good quality health care was very important, health was primarily determined by socio-economic factors.

The framework of the Strategy was based on the “Five Capitals Model,” which included the following:-

- Natural Capital (Planet): A high quality natural environment that provides opportunities for engagement with the natural world.
- Human Capital (People): People with the skills, knowledge, and experience that give them the capacity to take part in society and have meaningful and fulfilling lives.
- Social Capital (Participation): A good social infrastructure, with networks and institutions that allow people to connect to each other.
- Physical Capital (Place): A good physical infrastructure including housing, transport, and a commercial environment that promotes healthy behaviours.
- Financial Capital (Prosperity): Adequate financial resources that are fairly distributed.

In outlining the Natural Capital (Planet) theme, Mr Cox expanded on the issue of air quality which had been raised by Mr Brunskill at Minute No.56 above. He explained that the Strategy did not focus on woodburning stoves and that transport was a major factor to consider in relation to the impact on health of poor air quality. The impact of traffic in urban areas was complex in nature and required monitoring to ensure that the correct benefits were achieved. For example, with regard to the suggestion for pedestrianisation, this could lead to pushing traffic out into other areas.

This Strategy provided a strong framework which demonstrated the cross cutting nature of the work undertaken by SLDC. Adopting this strategic approach would improve the Council’s contribution to promoting, enabling and providing services which improved the health of its communities.

The Joint Cumbria Public Health Strategy correlated strongly with the developing SLDC Council Plan. The major themes were: health and environment; housing and communities; and economy and culture. These had all been incorporated within the Strategy. It also included sub themes of reducing inequality and sustainability, which were strongly embedded within the Strategy document.

The report detailed the key topics and aims within the Strategy and how SLDC contributed to them.

The current SLDC Public Health Strategy was for the time period 2014-19, and therefore expired this year. The new Joint Cumbria Public Health Strategy had been co-written by SLDC, the other Cumbrian local authorities and other partners. This Strategy provided a well-developed framework for actions on the wider determinants of health. It included many aims which correlated with SLDC's own Council Plan. Due to its wider determinants focus, it was felt to be an appropriate strategy for a district council to adopt.

Implementation of the Strategy would require a collaborative cross-organisational approach, bringing together different sectors and specialisms. Following adoption, SLDC together with other local authorities would work with partners on developing an approach to implement the Strategy. If this was to be through the Health and Wellbeing Forums, then a review of this group would need to take place. A South Lakeland-based group setup around this Strategy framework would need to mirror the different aspects of health which were included in the Strategy.

Mr Cox closed in stressing that the draft Strategy had been strongly influenced by local authorities and drawing attention to the timescales for moving forward.

The Chairman thanked Mr Cox for his presentation.

A lengthy discussion ensued during which Mr Cox responded to questions raised by Members.

In response to a query raised with regard to where the district's particulates were going and whether South Lakeland's air quality was safe, Mr Cox explained that this was a complex issue and that particulates arising from different sources were measured in different ways. With regard to South Lakeland, Morecambe and Lancaster, all councils were engaged and carrying out good work in addressing this matter. Where a challenge was raised with regard to air quality, action was taken.

Reference was made to the first slide of the presentation which appeared to focus on the wider determinants of health and concern was expressed with regard to a lack of detail relating to the other three areas around health protection, health and care services, and lifecourse. Mr Cox explained that the Strategy focussed on the wider determinants of health and that plans in relation to the other three areas were being developed by Morecambe Bay NHS Trust.

The question of how the key measures of progress would be monitored in a useful and engaging way was raised. Mr Cox advised that the key measures of progress were still being drafted but that these would help shape this work. Once identified, there would be regular reporting and monitoring through the Health and Wellbeing Board, fora and other groups. The fora would have the opportunity to engage with local communities and the information would be brought back to councils. Members looked forward to having sight of the lines of communication. It was further raised that the Strategy was being firmed up prior to agreement of triggers and aspirations, and Mr Cox advised that these would be worked up after the decision-making process had taken place, the document becoming a strategy with councils subsequently developing their own monitoring mechanisms.

The issue of social isolation was raised and, in particular, the public transport system. A question was raised with regard to how the relevant decision-makers could be influenced on this topic. Mr Cox said that the issue of transport was a real challenge in a large rural area such as Cumbria. He explained that the Strategy identified this challenge and raised the question of how best to address it through developing more innovative and imaginative ways of providing transport. Mr Cox felt that here was a real opportunity for joint discussions on just this type of issue.

In response to a query on the health of people in South Lakeland, Mr Cox explained how, when looking at large districts, rural areas could mask inequalities in health and wellbeing. He reported, however, that South Lakeland in general showed good patterns in health.

Mr Cox responded to concern expressed regarding how to bring together the relevant people, for example with regard to bus services in rural areas. He supported the need for people to come together and plan jointly and hoped that the Strategy would, in the future, achieve exactly this type of co-ordination.

The Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder addressed concerns in relation to takeaway food businesses, saying that this needed to be dealt with intelligently through policies.

It was questioned why the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority had not as yet been involved in joint discussions in relation to the Strategy. Mr Cox advised Members that the Lake District National Park Authority had been involved in meetings and acknowledged the need to include the organisation moving forward.

Although it was noted that the Strategy was an aspirational document, a query was raised with regard to the cost of the services and where the money would come from. Mr Cox informed the Committee that this was a ten year strategy which set the direction. There were multiple ways in which to achieve the aspirations and the opportunities lay with many people. The Strategy would help draw in additional resources in addition to those which already existed.

Mr Cox acknowledged that exercise was key. The Strategy highlighted the importance of supporting an environment in which people could be active.

A request was made for copies of slides of the presentation to be sent to Committee Members.

RESOLVED – That the draft Cumbria Joint Public Health Strategy be noted.

O&S/59 MORECAMBE BAY NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

As indicated earlier in the meeting, no representative of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust being able to attend to make a presentation, this item would be deferred to the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 26 April 2019.

O&S/60 COUNCIL PLAN PERFORMANCE MONITORING QUARTER 3 2018/19

On behalf of the Leader and Promoting South Lakeland Portfolio Holder, the Finance Portfolio Holder introduced the Council Plan Performance Monitoring report for Quarter 3 of 2018/19. The report highlighted areas of significantly good or poor performance relating to the measures of success set out in the current Council Plan.

The Portfolio Holder reported that the Council continued to deliver on its housing targets. He drew attention to the need to monitor the plateauing figures in relation to waste recycling, however, stressed the fact that none of South Lakeland's waste was currently sent to landfill. He also commended the reduction in the annual target for carbon emissions.

The report also included the latest Strategic Risk Register and the Portfolio Holder drew attention to the recent addition of two further risks which had been included in order to enable officers to ensure that the appropriate mitigations were in place:-

Risk 20 – Capacity for business as usual during the transition to the new organisational model; and

Risk 21 – Accountable body for large value schemes.

The high figure for business start-ups was noted, however, it was queried as to how many of these businesses were still in existence. The Economy and Assets Portfolio Holder explained that the Council was good at nurturing start-up businesses and undertook to provide a written response with regard to the figures.

Attention was drawn to the measure for the overall level of reported crime not exceeding 3,425 and to the actual total of 3,884 crimes to date for 2018/19. It was queried whether the target was realistic and, if so, what lessons had been learnt. The Finance Portfolio Holder undertook to provide a written response.

Reference was made to Risk 9 on the Strategic Risk Register – Essential strategic partnerships required to deliver the Council Plan do not operate effectively – and strong concern was again expressed with regard to the fact that Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust had not sent a representative to make the presentation scheduled for this meeting. The Finance Portfolio Holder acknowledged the Plan's objective for the Council to work in partnership with other organisations, however, pointed out that some of the contents of the Plan were not in the sole control of the Council. The Council, although not responsible for health matters, played a role in this area. The health of the neighbourhood was of great importance and the Council would continue to attempt to drive forward joint working on the issue. The Chief Executive informed the Committee of ongoing work and provided assurance that the Council was involved. Both the Leader and himself had met with the Trust and had made the Council's expectations clear. They had received a positive response and had been invited to the Trust's strategic development day.

A query was raised with regard to the statistics shown within the report relating to the measures of success for Culture and Wellbeing and to the fact that this was old data relating to 2012-14. It had been understood that the figure for life expectancy had since decreased and a request was made for the provision of up-to-date figures. The Performance and Risk Officer advised that the 2012-14 figures were the most recent ones provided by Publish Health England, however, undertook to seek alternative sources of data.

With regard to another question relating to the crime figures provided by Cumbria Constabulary and the need for an explanation as to whether they were good or bad, the Performance and Risk Officer explained that there had been a change in the way crime was recorded and that these latest figures had become the benchmark figures.

The good work carried out by the Council in relation to housing was acknowledged, however, the importance of making parishes and communities aware of what they could do themselves to bring sites in their areas forward for development was raised. The Finance Portfolio Holder acknowledged that this was a good point and undertook to ask the Housing, People and Innovation Portfolio Holder to provide a written response.

RESOLVED – That the following be noted:-

- (1) the Summary of Performance, as detailed within the report; and
- (2) the detailed risks information contained within Appendix 1 to the report.

O&S/61

CORPORATE FINANCIAL MONITORING QUARTER 3 2018/19

The Finance Portfolio Holder presented the third quarter financial monitoring report of 2018/19. The report provided an update on how the financial situation was progressing during this year. In part, it was backward looking, highlighting the Council's expenditure and income during the first nine months of the financial year, but also including the Council's current projections of expenditure during the rest of the year.

The Portfolio Holder provided details relating to the revenue budget, capital expenditure, collection of Council Tax and business rates and the Council's current position with regard to debt collection, details of which were contained within the report and appendices.

Appendix 1 set out the revenue variances to date. Overall, at the end of Quarter 3, budget monitoring had identified a forecast year-end underspend of £260,000. In addition, there was projected to be £273,000 of carry-forward requests. Trends identified in these budget monitoring results had been fed into the 2019/20 budget setting process.

Appendix 2 set out the position on the Capital Programme. The capital budget at Quarter 2 2018/19 had stood at £9.795m. Carry-forwards to 2019/20 of £1.557m relating to the ERDF Flood Alleviation scheme and £300,000 relating to the Cross-a-Moor development and an increase to the Millerground Play scheme of £12,000 due to additional funding had been approved by Council on 18 December 2018 as part of the updated Capital Programme submitted with the 2019/20 Draft Budget. This resulted in a 2018/19 Capital Programme of £7.950m at the end of Quarter 3. Expenditure against this Programme to the end of Quarter 3 had been £3.205m. There was anticipated to be significant expenditure during Quarter 4 and £0.458m of further re-profiling had been identified. A revised Programme was presented as part of the budget process, including any new schemes prioritised against the available funding.

Appendix 3 provided an update on Treasury Management for the quarter. There was one issue to report in terms of compliance with the approved Treasury Management Strategy relating to counterparty limits which had arisen as a result of an administrative error, as detailed within the report. Investments had performed better than the relevant benchmarks except in relation to long-term core investments due to the change in interest rates. No repayment of existing borrowing or new borrowing was anticipated up to the end of the financial year.

The Portfolio Holder closed in thanking the Finance Team for highlighting the challenges in the budgets for the rest of the year and having allowed the Management Team to take corrective action.

A query was raised with regard to the final cost to the Authority in relation to Treasury Management and where the Council had exceeded the counterparty limit with one of its Money Market Funds by £1.2m. The Portfolio Holder explained that there had been no cost as a result of the situation which had arisen as a result of an administrative error, however, that steps had been taken to avoid this happening again.

In response to a question as to why local authority partners were allowed to make late payments on sundry debts, the Portfolio Holder advised that this was not a chronic problem. The Assistant Director Resources (Section 151 Officer) undertook to provide a written response.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the report be noted.

O&S/62

PORTFOLIO HOLDER REPORT - ECONOMY AND ASSETS

Note – During consideration of this item of business, Councillor Janette Jenkinson declared a non-pecuniary interest by virtue of the fact that she was a Board Member of the Ulverston Community Enterprise, which managed the Ulverston indoor and outdoor markets on behalf of South Lakeland District Council. She remained in the Chamber during the discussion and voting on the item.

The Economy and Assets Portfolio Holder presented his annual report on progress made and plans for the future within the portfolio area, and highlighted a number of areas within his report.

The Portfolio Holder referred in particular to the joint work being carried out by South Lakeland, Barrow Borough and Lancaster City councils which had brought the partnership's economic position into sixth place in the North West, behind Manchester, Cheshire East, Cheshire West, Liverpool, Chester and Trafford. Morecambe Bay was establishing a strong economic position.

In response to a query raised, the Portfolio Holder explained that the consultation on ways to improve Kendal indoor and outdoor markets had not yet commenced. This was a protracted process requiring a lot of work, the key aim of which was to establish a clear strategy to take the markets forward to ensure they thrived in the longer term. He provided assurance that the consultation with stallholders and users would commence officially later in the year. It was raised that Ulverston Community Enterprise, which managed the Ulverston indoor and outdoor markets on behalf of South Lakeland District Council, was currently examining ways of increasing footfall. This being the case, it was suggested that there could be joint working between Kendal and Ulverston. The Portfolio Holder felt that this was an appropriate point, and also drew attention to the Council's responsibility for the small market in Ambleside. He felt that there may be benefit from discussion with Ulverston and undertook to raise the suggestion with the Council's Corporate Asset Manager. It was further suggested that Ambleside Together may wish to become involved.

Reference was made to the forthcoming Strategic Car Parking Study and the need to ensure that all areas were taken into consideration. The Portfolio Holder indicated that the study had not yet concluded, however, explained that all opinions would be taken into consideration.

Concern was raised with regard to recent rumours relating to the current restaurant business at the K Village site. It was suggested that approval of the recent planning application for a hotel at the K Village site had included the retention of the restaurant. The Director People and Places advised that he was aware of the situation and undertook to provide a written response once the matter had been thoroughly investigated.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

O&S/63 PORTFOLIO HOLDER REPORT - FINANCE

The Finance Portfolio Holder presented his annual report on progress made and plans for the future within the portfolio area. The Finance Team had continued to be extremely busy throughout the financial year and he highlighted a number of areas.

The statutory Statement of Accounts had been successfully delivered by the end of May, in line with the new deadlines. These had received an unqualified audit report, and the Portfolio Holder commended the Finance Team on delivering these reports one to two months earlier than in previous years, without issue or disruption.

There had been active involvement in reducing the risk of significant overspend during this financial year and, as reported in the earlier Corporate Financial Monitoring Report, the projected overspend had reduced from £600,000 to £100,000 at the end of Quarter 3.

The Medium Term Financial Plan had been the focus of ongoing work and this was allowing the Council to present a balanced budget for next year and to highlight the significant risks of reduced Government funding in following years.

Linked to the Medium Term Financial Plan, supported by its property advisors, the Council had been developing a review and understanding of the Council's long-term capital requirements which had led to approval of a new Property and Land Management Strategy and the extended Capital Strategy which had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee last month.

Both the Procurement and Treasury Management strategies had been updated.

The Finance Team had been working to integrate their processes into the Customer Connect Programme. This would give residents easier access to information and allow customers to directly make arrangements, apply for discounts and notify the Council of changes in circumstances.

In closing, the Finance Portfolio Holder expressed thanks to the Finance Team for their work. His thanks were echoed by Members of the Committee.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

O&S/64 2019/20 PROCUREMENT STRATEGY AND PROCUREMENT SCHEDULE

The Finance Portfolio Holder, reported that the Council's three-year Sustainable Procurement and Commissioning Strategy had been approved in 2016. During 2019, an exercise would be carried out to review the document to ensure that it met the Council's needs in the future under the Customer Connect model. During 2018, the Local Government Association had published an updated National Procurement Strategy. Many of the proposals in this national strategy were already reflected in the Council's Strategy, but some minor changes were proposed around strategic contract management, supplier engagement and social value. References to legislation and the Council Plan had also been updated. Appendix 1 to the report updated the Council's existing Strategy to reflect these changes.

Since April 2016, the Council's Constitution had permitted officers to conduct and conclude the contracting processes without further approval, providing it was in line with the Procurement Schedule, to be approved by Council at least annually. Where a procurement process was over budget, then approval would still be required in accordance with the Financial Procedure Rules. Where an officer sought approval for a waiver or exemption under the Contract Procedure Rules, this was also included in the Procurement Schedule.

The Procurement Schedule for 2019/20 was attached at Appendix 2 to the report. There were 78 procurement projects identified, which was slightly lower than the 83 procurement exercises originally approved for 2018/19.

Concern was raised with regard to the Procurement Schedule and the item relating to the supply of car park tickets. Those currently being provided did not have an adhesive strip with which to attach the ticket to a car windscreen, resulting in the potential for tickets to blow away when closing the car door. The Finance Portfolio Holder believed that this related to the Council's commitment to abolish single-use plastics, however, undertook to provide a firm response in writing.

RESOLVED – That the following be noted:-

- (1) the updated Sustainable Procurement and Commissioning Strategy attached at Appendix 1 to the report; and
- (2) the Procurement Schedule for 2019/20 attached at Appendix 2 to the report.

O&S/65

CUMBRIA HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE UPDATE

Councillor Vivienne Rees, the Council's representative on the Cumbria Health Scrutiny Committee, having been unable to attend the last meeting of that Committee, Councillor Mark Wilson, a County Council representative on the same Committee, provided a verbal update. He made particular reference to two items of business which had been on the agenda for the meeting on 18 December 2018. One had been a report from Healthwatch Cumbria on what a good life looked like for people with learning difficulties in Cumbria. The other had been a very useful presentation from the NHS North Cumbria Clinical Commissioning Group, which had provided an update on healthcare for the future in north Cumbria, similar to that which had been expected from Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust at this meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Councillor Wilson undertook to send a website link to the relevant agenda and reports to Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED – That the verbal update be noted.

The meeting ended at 12.50 p.m.