

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the proceedings at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Friday, 23 April 2021, at 2.00 p.m.

Present

Councillors

Vicky Hughes (Chairman)
Helen Chaffey (Vice-Chairman)

Pat Bell
Eamonn Hennessy
Hazel Hodgson

Janette Jenkinson
Malcolm Lamb
Susanne Long

Mark Wilson

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Brian Cooper, John Holmes, Doug Rathbone and Andrew Jarvis.

Officers

Lawrence Conway	Chief Executive
Linda Fisher	Legal, Governance and Democracy Lead Specialist (Monitoring Officer)
Hannah Girvan	Strategy Specialist (Sustainability)
Dan Hudson	Strategy Lead Specialist
Helen Smith	Finance Lead Specialist (Section 151 Officer)
Rachel Ireland	Trainee Solicitor
Ross Ette	Case Management Officer

Also in attendance were Councillors Giles Archibald, Robin Ashcroft (Economy, Culture and Leisure Portfolio Holder), Jonathan Brook (Leader and Promoting South Lakeland and Innovation Portfolio Holder), Dyan Jones (Climate Action and Biodiversity Portfolio Holder) and Suzie Pye (Health, Wellbeing and Poverty Alleviation Portfolio Holder). Alec Proffitt, Policy and Engagement Officer of Barrow Borough Council was also present.

O&S/46

CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

Following confirmation that the live stream of the meeting had commenced, the Chairman welcomed everyone to the virtual meeting of South Lakeland District Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee, in doing so, thanking all officers involved in the process for their work on the project.

The Chairman referred to the new Government legislation allowing councils to conduct remote meetings and explained in detail to all taking part, and for the benefit of members of the public, the procedures for the meeting. She then invited Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to introduce themselves, to advise whether they were taking part by video or audio and to confirm that they were able to see (where practicable) and hear all Members participating in the meeting. All Members present, including the Chairman herself, having indicated that this was the case, he referred to officers present at the meeting who would introduce themselves when asked to address the meeting.

O&S/47 MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the Chairman be authorised to sign, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15 January 2021.

O&S/48 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED – That it be noted that no declarations of interest were raised.

O&S/49 DECLARATION OF THE PARTY WHIP

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

O&S/50 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUDED ITEMS

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

O&S/51 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No questions, representations, deputations or petitions have been received in respect of this meeting.

O&S/52 SOUTH CUMBRIA COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP REVIEW 2020/21

Alec Proffitt, Policy and Engagement Officer of Barrow Borough Council introduced himself, and provided an update on the work of the South Cumbria Community Safety Partnership (CSP) during the past year.

The substantive report outlined that South Cumbria CSP, one of three CSPs in Cumbria, covered the areas of South Lakeland and Barrow. The CSP aimed to reduce crime and enable local communities to remain safe and reassured, without fear or threat of crime. It did this through identifying priorities (related to crime figures and trends, consultation and the Police and Crime Plan) for its annual Partnership Plan.

Cumbria, being one of the safest areas within the country, still faced community safety issues. The latest crime statistics for South Lakeland (from Cumbria Constabulary) were provided within the report. The Officer highlighted that there was an increase in the number of burglaries and stalking/harassment cases. Due to the impact of COVID-19 community crime monitoring operations were presented with many cohesion challenges.

Details of the projects that had been funded, and actions undertaken, to tackle the CSP priorities were provided within the report, together with other activities supported by the CSP and Cumbria-wide initiatives supported and funded by the CSP.

In respect of questions raised on the success of the tactical Local Focus Hubs, the Engagement Officer explained that Hub meetings had led to an integrated and collaborative approach with the Police and the County Council. However, the Hubs were still a working progress. He explained that from a Local Government perspective, the Hubs should not be a Police-led group and were intended to have a greater focus on community safety. Councillor Suzie Pye, the Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder, and the current Chair of the South Cumbria CSP, echoed this statement and explained that she envisaged the Hubs would be central to the progress of the CSP. In March 2021, the CSP held its first meeting with the new partnership with the Hubs being the operational arm of the CSP. The Portfolio Holder explained that it had been a transitional year for the CSP as a statutory partnership.

Members voiced a strategic approach would be beneficial in focusing the work of the CSP. Discussions took place around how the productive work of the CSP could be communicated to the wider community; the Chair of the South Cumbria CSP explained this would be discussed at the partnership's next meeting in June.

Members raised questions on the resources being invested into County Lines and the rise in burglaries in rural areas, voicing that there was a lack of confidence in Policing operations. The Portfolio Holder brought to Members' attention the newly established child centred policing Hub. Rural burglaries would also be another concentration for the CSP's June meeting.

Discussion took place around harassment within young people and how the CSP supported those individuals seeking help, and how the partnership addressed these crimes in relation to safeguarding. The Portfolio Holder explained to Members the various platforms and contacts that were available to those in need.

Finally, Members requested that an update be provided to the Committee twice per year, both the Chair of the South Cumbria CSP and Engagement Officer were supportive of this proposal. Members thanked the Engagement Officer for his comprehensive report and expressed particular praise to the Portfolio Holder as Chair of the CSP for her hard work and voiced how lucky Members were to have the Portfolio representing South Lakeland as Chair. The Portfolio Holder also undertook to organise a meeting to update Members on the work of the partnership Hubs.

RESOLVED – That that the Overview and Scrutiny:-

- 1) The report be received and endorsed;
- 2) note the contribution made through the CSP to the SLDC Council Plan target: "working with partners to reduce domestic violence, alcohol related crime, substance misuse, child sexual exploitation and anti-social behaviour."; and
- 3) receive updates from the South Cumbria CSP twice per year.

O&S/53

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COUNCIL'S CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY - ANNUAL UPDATE

The Policy represented a public recognition of the importance of Climate Change; an awareness of the economic and other opportunities offered, by both tackling and adapting to meet the challenge of climate change and a series of ways in which the Council could reflect the importance of climate change. Both in how it managed itself and how it worked with partners at the local, regional and national level.

The Climate Emergency and Localism Portfolio Holder introduced the Policy. South Lakeland District Council was the first authority in Cumbria to determine a Climate Change Emergency in 2019. Future goals and actions of the Council were outlined within the Climate Change Policy. The Portfolio Holder explained to Members that in order to achieve sustainable change, it would take support and action from government, adequate resources, and appropriate investment to meet the newly revised climate change goals.

The Sustainability Specialist provided Members with a presentation. Within the presentation, the Council's Carbon Footprint 2030 Target was explained, drawing attention to the declining levels of the Council's Carbon Emissions, notably in relation to

electricity usage. The Specialist highlighted the Council's 40 Point Climate Change Action Plan which was updated quarterly and reported to the Climate Change Board. Internal actions included the installation of Pilio Software to monitor and improve energy efficiency of buildings. Climate Change Literacy training was also being rolled out across the Council to all Officers and Members.

Members raised concerns around waste collection. In order to address these issues by 2030 vast radical changes would be required. Ultimately, waste collection was a large part of the Council's emissions, Members were mindful that minor changes would not make a notable difference. The Portfolio Holder understood Members' concerns and explained the main hurdles were around finances and funding, as well as strategy, settings goals was beneficial, but detailed solutions were required.

The Strategy Lead Specialist understood the points raised by Members, expressing that the 2037 world target would be the real issue in hand. Achieving this would require mass behavioural change in all sorts of ways. However, through the joint working with other Cumbrian authorities, other Councils have been supportive of change and have followed in the footsteps of the Council. The Lead Specialist expressed his optimism for the Council achieving its organisational targets but stated that some issues still required attention. Software was currently in place to assess how to reduce energy usage to achieve the zero emissions goal and funding was available to local authorities from the decarbonisation fund.

RESOLVED – That that the Overview and Scrutiny:-

- (1) Note the progress on the Climate Change Action Plan; and
- (2) Engage with the Plan's development and promote outcomes limiting carbon emissions and supporting residents to play their part.

O&S/54 DRAFT SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2019-21

The Monitoring Officer presented the draft Scrutiny Annual Report 2019-21. The report was required by the Council's Constitution and provided an opportunity for the Committee to demonstrate the work that it had undertaken during the past two years despite the impact of COVID-19. The report also outlined the work planned for 2021-22.

The Scrutiny Annual Report would be presented to the Annual Meeting of Council on 19 May 2021. Those areas of the report highlighted in yellow would be updated, in consultation with the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, prior to its submission for Council.

RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny:-

- (1) Approve the Draft Scrutiny Report 2019-21 attached at Appendix 1 for referral to Full Council, subject to any relevant updates following this meeting.

O&S/55 REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS AND SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT

The Monitoring Officer introduced a report which set out the findings of the annual Review of Effectiveness, as well as a progress report on recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to decision-makers.

The Review of Effectiveness had concluded that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had continued to be effective over the past 24 months, but that more precise timetabling

of the Work Programme would be beneficial in ensuring that resources were available to complete the agreed topics on time.

Despite the impact of COVID-19, the Committee had considered a number of policy documents and workshops within its work setting. The Committee's focus within the past year was the Council's response and recovery to COVID-19, led by the Director of Strategy, Innovation and Resources.

As well as the formal recommendations made by the Committee, a number of comments and/or suggestions had been raised throughout various items considered at committee meetings. In situations where these comments had been raised against executive items, these comments had been highlighted during consideration by Cabinet. Other changes requested of officers, for example in relation to grammatical or presentational issues, had typically been taken into account before the item had been presented to Cabinet. Throughout 2019-21, Portfolio Holders had shown a strong commitment to the scrutiny process, particularly at the COVID-19 Recovery Workshop held in October 2020.

RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny notes:-

- 1) the findings of the Review of Effectiveness, as attached at Appendix 1; and
- 2) the progress made by Cabinet in implementing the recommendations of the Committee.

O&S/56 ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE CALL-IN AND URGENCY PROVISIONS 2020-21

In accordance with paragraph 16(j)(ii) of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, a report on the operation of the provisions relating to call-in and urgency during the municipal years 2020/21 was presented to the Committee by the Monitoring Officer. No call-in requests had been received during this period and the Monitoring Officer reported that the urgency procedure had been used 19 times, with all reports being taken to Cabinet and Council and were distributed to all Members.

RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny notes:-

- 1) the contents of the 2020-21 Annual Review of the Constitution's call-in and Urgency provisions.

O&S/57 WORK PROGRAMME 2021-22

Members were asked to consider the development of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's 2021/21 Work Programme. Due to the impact of COVID-19 and resources, subjects had been subject to an initial prioritisation by the Chairman of the Committee and members of the Council's Corporate Management Team. The Monitoring Officer provided details on the recommendations that had arisen from that prioritisation and how the proposals would incorporate the suggestions submitted during the consultation period. Members also proposed to add to the Committee's work setting a workshop focussed on the District's housing requirements, focusing on affordable and special needs.

RESOLVED – That the 2021/22 Work Programme be agreed.

O&S/58 CUMBRIA HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE UPDATE

Councillor Helen Chaffey provided a verbal update on the work of the Cumbria Health Scrutiny Committee. The Committee met on 23 February 2021 and the agenda and

minutes from the meeting were available on Cumbria County Council's website. Councillor Chaffey highlighted to Members the compelling Health Watch Cumbria presentation from the meeting, which contained videos from individuals on their experiences. The videos provided first-hand insight into residents' lives and demonstrated the invaluable work of those organisations providing health services.

The meeting ended at 4.08 p.m.