

BOROUGH OF BARROW-IN-FURNESS
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting:- 12th September, 2013
at 2.00 p.m. (Committee Room No. 4)

A G E N D A

PART ONE

1. To note any items which the Chairman considers to be of an urgent nature.
2. To receive notice from Members who may wish to move any delegated matter non-delegated and which will be decided by a majority of Members present and voting at the meeting.

3. **Admission of Public and Press**

To consider whether the public and press should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any of the items on the agenda.

4. Declarations of Interest

To receive declarations by Members and/or co-optees of interests in respect of items on this Agenda.

Members are reminded that, in accordance with the revised Code of Conduct, they are required to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests or other registrable interests which have not already been declared in the Council's Register of Interests. (It is a criminal offence not to declare a disclosable pecuniary interest either in the Register or at the meeting).

Members may however, also decide, in the interests of clarity and transparency, to declare at this point in the meeting, any such disclosable pecuniary interests which they have already declared in the Register, as well as any other registrable or other interests.

5. Apologies for Absence/Attendance of Substitute Members.
6. Confirmation of Minutes of the meeting held on 4th July, 2013 (copy attached).
- (D) 7. Cultural Services.
- (D) 8. Annual Report.
- (D) 9. North West Strategic Scrutiny Network.

**NOTE (D) – Delegated
(R) – Referred**

Membership of Committee

Councillors Roberts (Chairman)
Cassidy (Vice-Chairman)
Derbyshire
Hamilton
Husband
Johnston
R. McClure
Maddox
Opie
C. Thomson
M. A. Thomson
Wall

For queries regarding this agenda, please contact:

Sharron Rushton
Democratic Services Officer
Tel: 01229 876321
Email: srushton@barrowbc.gov.uk

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BOROUGH OF BARROW IN FURNESS
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting, Thursday, 4th July, 2013
at 2.00 p.m.

PRESENT:- Councillors Roberts (Chairman), Cassidy (Vice-Chairman), Derbyshire, Hamilton, Johnston, Maddox and M. A. Thomson.

5 – Apologies for Absence/Attendance of Substitute Members

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors Husband, Opie, C. Thomson and Wall.

6 – Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd May, 2013 were taken as read and confirmed.

7 – Performance Management

The Policy Review Officer provided Members with the Council's Performance Management report.

It was reported that the Council's Key Priorities for 2012/15 were as follows:-

1. Provide good quality efficient and cost effective services while reducing overall expenditure;
2. Continue to support housing market renewal including an increase in the choice and quality of housing stock and the regeneration of the Council's oldest and poorest housing;
3. Work to mitigate the effects of the recession and cuts in public expenditure and their impact on the local economy and secure a sustainable and long term economic recovery for our community; and
4. Continue to improve and enhance the built environment and public realm, working with key partners to secure regeneration of derelict and underused land and buildings in the Borough.

The proposed actions for 2012/13 (although some of the actions would take longer than one year to complete) along with any progress made had been reported as follows:-

KP 1:

- Complete the all-weather soccer centre. This was due to be completed in December 2012 but had been subject to delays and would be completed in the first quarter of 2013/14.
- Renegotiate the Council's catering contract. New contract proposal went to the Executive Committee on 26th June.
- Carry out a Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR survey) to understand the expectations and aspirations of the Council's tenants. Complete and results had been published.
- Review recycling collections to maximise recycling income and mitigate the impact of a reduction in the value of recycling rewards. This review had been delayed and would continue in 2013/14.
- Actively encourage all Members to access the Modern Councillor online 'e-learning facility'. This had been deleted because the Council does not subscribe to this package.

KP 2:

- A two year project to carry out Group Repair Work to 240 properties in sub areas A and E including:
 - Chimney stack repairs
 - Door and window replacement
 - Rendering and new rain water goods
 - Cavity wall insulation
 - On-going
- Identify appropriate sites in partnership with Accent Housing to build 27, 3-bedroom social houses. The sites had been identified and construction had started.

KP 3:

- Transfer management of Waterside House to BAE Systems as part of the lease agreement. Complete
- Complete refurbishment at Phoenix Park Business Centre. Complete
- Agree local arrangements to mitigate the impact of the Council Tax reduction scheme, which replaces the current Council Tax Benefits. Complete and was covered in the budget.

KP 4:

- Complete the external refurbishment of 102 Abbey Road. This project was complete.

- Two year project to construct a roof on level C of the multi storey car park. This was currently being reviewed and it was unlikely that it would continue.







Referring to Key Priority 2 regarding a survey of tenants and residents (STAR survey) it was noted that a Tenants' Compact Group had been established.

Management Board would review the Key Priority Action list for 2013/14.

Key Performance Indicators

Table 1 below shows performance against a selection of existing indicators:-

Local indicators

Indicator	Description	2011/12	2012/13	Change
9	Percentage of Council tax collected	96.8	96.9	
10	Percentage of NNDR collected	98.0	98.0	
12	Average number of days sick per member of staff	8.19	12.03	
NI 191	Residual waste per household	532	511	
NI 192	% of waste recycled, composted	37.1	36.4	
	Weight of waste recycled and composted	10207	9720	

The Council Tax and NNDR figures for 2012/13 were the same as 2011/12.

The sickness figure was significantly worse than last year.

The percentage of waste recycled was marginally lower and the tonnage was 5% lower and this would impact on the future value of the recycling rewards.

It was noted that concerns regarding the mis-use of bring sites would be looked into and initiatives actioned to try to rectify the problems.

RESOLVED:- To note the report.

8 – Cultural Services

The Policy Review Officer provided Members with an update of the scrutiny review into Cultural Services.

The work group was scheduled to meet on 2nd July, 2013 to agree the scope for the Cultural Services review.

The following Terms of Reference had been recommended:-

1. Gain a clear understanding of the leisure services the Council provided at the 3 core venues, namely, Forum, Dock Museum and Park Leisure Centre;
2. Examine performance of each venue in terms of costs, income and number of users;
3. Establish what residents expect from the Council's leisure services in terms of provision and cost; and
4. Identify areas where potential improvements in performance, value for money and public satisfaction could be achieved.

The plan for the Overview and Scrutiny review was:-

1. Visit each venue to collect information including:
 - a) What facilities they provide?
 - b) How they operate the service?
 - c) What the income streams were and how they were performing?
 - d) Where the money was spent?
 - e) Determine how the Council facilities compared with others in the area and in neighbouring areas?

In the Park Leisure Centre part of the service was provided by the Council and part was provided by the private sector. Catering at all venues was provided by the private sector and there were a number of contractors that provided the cleaning service.

Feedback from users and staff would assist in determining who used the facilities and what they thought of them.

The Group would then need to agree what to do next with the information.

RESOLVED:- To agree to continue with the review of Cultural Services.

The meeting closed at 2.35 p.m.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	(D) Agenda Item 7
Date of Meeting: 12th September, 2013	
Reporting Officer: Policy Review Officer	
Title: Cultural Services	
Summary and Conclusions:	
Provide Members with an update of the scrutiny review into Cultural Services.	
Recommendation:	
Members are invited to consider the information and determine how this review should be progressed.	

Report

The work group is scheduled to meet on 5th September to agree the scope for the Cultural services review.

The following Terms of Reference have been recommended:

1. Gain a clear understanding of the leisure services we provide at our 3 core venues.
2. Examine performance of each venue in terms of costs, income and number of users.
3. Establish what residents expect from our leisure services in terms of provision and cost.
4. Identify areas where potential improvements in performance value for money and public satisfaction can be achieved.

The work group will be visiting the Park Leisure Centre on 5th September to discuss opportunities and issues with management and staff. I will provide a verbal update on that visit at this meeting.

Background Papers

Nil.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	(D) Agenda Item 8
Date of Meeting: 12th September, 2013	
Reporting Officer: Policy Review Officer	
Title: Annual Report	
Summary and Conclusions:	
To present the Scrutiny Annual Report for 2012.	
Recommendations:	
1. Members are invited to note the annual report	
2. To agree to present the annual report to full Council.	

Report

Annual report from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees

2012

Foreword

The Council has one overview and Scrutiny Committee with the remit to investigate, scrutinise, monitor, oversee and comment on service delivery mechanisms, policy implementation, or any other issue affecting the Borough or its residents provided that they have previously been considered by either the Executive Committee or Council.

Membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2012/13:

Councillors Roberts (Chairman)
Doughty (Vice-Chairman)
Biggins
Derbyshire
Hamilton
Husband
Johnston
Murphy
R. McClure
Opie
Preston
C. Thomson
M. A. Thomson

Members had previously agreed to develop a four year work programme up to March 2015 and identified topics for review these are presented in Table 1.

The Committee recognises that additional urgent items may be identified during the period and they will be considered in an appropriate timeframe.

In October the Executive Committee requested that this Committee considered the impact of localised flooding as an additional item.

Item	Topic	Scope of the review
1	Allotments.	To review the Council's arrangements for managing tenancies and the waiting list. Ensure the allotment service is financially sustainable
2	Street cleanliness.	To review to Council's arrangements for working with the contractor to deliver a higher standard of street cleanliness. To ensure appropriate arrangements are in place to manage external factors the impact on street cleanliness e.g. seagulls and fly tipping.
3	Coastal protection.	The implementation of phase four of the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy has resulted in changes to way in which coastal defence projects are funded. The review will focus on our medium term project plan and how it will be funded.
4	Estates and asset management.	To review arrangements for maximising income from our assets and the potential for the disposal of redundant assets.
5	Town centres development and supporting local traders.	Review arrangements for supporting local traders in the current economic climate.
6	Highways and car parking	Review the provision of highways maintenance by Cumbria County Council. Review street lighting and on-street parking arrangements.
7	Economic Development, planning and development control.	Review arrangements for planning and economic development in light of the reduced funding as a result of the Governments deficit reduction programme. Ensure the Council still has appropriate arrangements in place to access development funding
8	Cultural Services	Review the impact of the Council's service review on cultural services. The review will consider events, distribution of funding and service charges.
9	Policy and strategy	Monitor the development of and performance against the council's key priorities.

10	Housing strategy	Review availability of private sector and socially housing and consider partnership arrangements to ensure that the availability of housing in the borough meets demand.
11	Localised flooding	Review arrangements to protect residents and property against local flooding.

The review of Tenant's participation was completed in March and recommendations were submitted to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee suggested minor changes to the recommendations which were agreed and they have now been implemented.

Members agreed that the street cleanliness review would be an on-going standing item at every meeting so they could monitor this essential Council service.

The Local flooding review is on-going; Members attended a presentation by the Environment Agency. Members agreed that although the Council does not have a lead role in flood protection strategies this committee should continue to monitor the arrangements that have been put in place by other agencies.

In May 2013 Members agreed that this Committee would review Cultural Services and asset management in 2013/14.

Background Papers

Nil

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	(D) Agenda Item 9
Date of Meeting: 12th September, 2013	
Reporting Officer: Policy Review Officer	
Title: Northwest Strategic Scrutiny Network	
Summary and Conclusions:	
Inform Members of the North West Strategic Scrutiny Network and provide them with the current "terms of reference".	
Recommendation:	
Members are invited to consider whether members of this Committee should participate in this group.	

Report

The Strategic Scrutiny Network was established by North West Employers.

The role of the group is to support Councillors in their development of their scrutiny role, share good practice and advice and highlight local and national drivers.

Their aims are:

1. To increase collaboration between authorities to ensure greater efficiencies and explore value for money approaches.
2. To support the value overview and scrutiny.
3. To share intelligence, knowledge, resources and generate ideas to improve scrutiny function.
4. To disseminate information on national and regional initiatives to ensure equal opportunity.
5. To share strategic and practical contributions and recognise the value of listening to experiences.

In the past Members have agreed that membership of this group is of limited value to scrutiny at Barrow because the scrutiny practises used at other authorities are not effective at Barrow Council.

The majority of other Councils in this group operate a single political group cabinet system and the role of their Scrutiny Committees is to hold the cabinet to account and to challenge their decisions.

Barrow Council operates under “alternative arrangements” and the role of the overview and scrutiny committee is to assist the Executive Committee in policy development and to review and examine matters of wider local interest.

I have attached the “terms of reference” of this group for information (**Appendix 1**).

Background Papers

Nil

Name of Group: Strategic Scrutiny Network

Title: Terms of Reference January 2013

1. Purpose / Role of the Group

The Strategic Scrutiny Network was established by North West Employers and remains part of our core offer.

The role of the group is to support councillors in their development of their scrutiny and function role, share good practice and advice and highlight local and national drivers.

Aims

1. To increase collaboration between authorities to ensure greater efficiencies and explore value for money approaches.
2. To support the value overview and scrutiny.
3. To share intelligence, knowledge, resources and generate ideas to improve scrutiny function.
4. To disseminate information on national and regional initiatives to ensure equal opportunity.
5. To share strategic and practical contributions and recognise the value of listening to experiences.

2. Membership

The network is open to both councillors and officers in organisations who hold membership with North West Employers.

The network is primarily for councillors but feel it would also benefit with the support from officers.

All those interested are encouraged to attend regularly to enhance contributions and enable growth of the agenda however it is recognised that others may attend based on agenda items, interest, relevance and expertise.

3. Accountability

The network is facilitated by North West Employers and the Steering Group and communication, agendas and any associated actions will be coordinated by North West Employers.

Attendees are encouraged to bring agenda items to the network's attention to advance best practice, innovation and engagement of the aims of the group as set out in no. 1 above.

The North West Employers representative is responsible for taking action notes and disseminating key messages / learning to the rest of the network. This will be supported by an electronic summary from North West Employers, highlighting key sources of information, requests from the group and materials agreed to be shared normally within 2 weeks of the network taking place.

4. Review

The terms of reference will be reviewed by the steering group and wider network every 12 months and will be preceded by a short survey to assess the purpose and role of the network.

This will be collated on an anonymous basis by North West Employers and all contributions will be used to ensure the value of the network is maintained for all network members.

5. Working methods / ways of working

The network works via a scheduled agenda which encourages contributions and discussion on an informal basis to encourage sharing of ideas and exchanges across the group. The agenda will be formed on an interest and topical based approach designed by the steering group.

The meeting will be facilitated by a North West Employers representative and the network is lead by the Chair of the network.

The network is supported by a steering group made up of councillor and officer representatives from across the region to develop the agenda and to provide feedback on key issues and topics for authorities to consider. It also strengthens the ties and connections to the Officers Scrutiny Network to ensure it compliments and does not conflict with its working methods and agendas.

The steering group will meet three times a year as a physical group to design and progress work programmes and support the aims of the network.

Election of Chair and Vice Chair takes place within the municipal timetable – June/July to fit in with local government timetable to enable new councillors to be involved.

6. Meetings

The network will meet 3 times a year and North West Employers will organise and facilitate. The format of meetings will be short input sessions and discussions and follow up information will be circulated electronically.

Agendas will be circulated 4 weeks in advance and meeting dates will be set in advance for the municipal year.

There is no upper limit to the numbers who can attend the network meetings, however, if the numbers registered for attendance one week prior to the scheduled date are less than 10, North West Employers, in conjunction with Chair and Vice Chair of the steering group, may reserve the right to cancel the network or offer alternative meeting arrangements.

7. Sharing information and resources

Information and resources are circulated and shared with the group, either by request from network members or as part of the follow up from meetings. Network members are responsible for sharing the learning within their own organisations.

Network members may be asked from time to time to share resources, develop and / or contribute to promote network meetings.

Once a year the contact list for the group shall be reviewed and this will be shared with the group. This is likely to happen post election time.